

SPECIAL EDITION

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THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SPIRIT-LED LIVING

# PRAYER & FASTING

**10 TIPS FOR  
HEALTHY FASTING**  
**CHERIE CALBOM**

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**UNLEASH YOUR  
MOST AUDACIOUS  
PRAYERS**  
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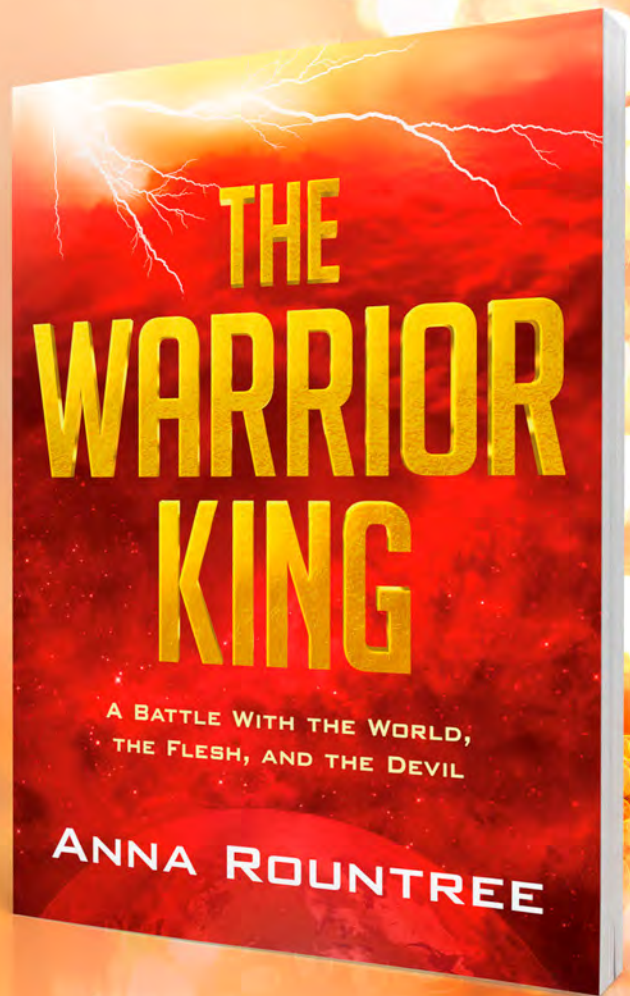
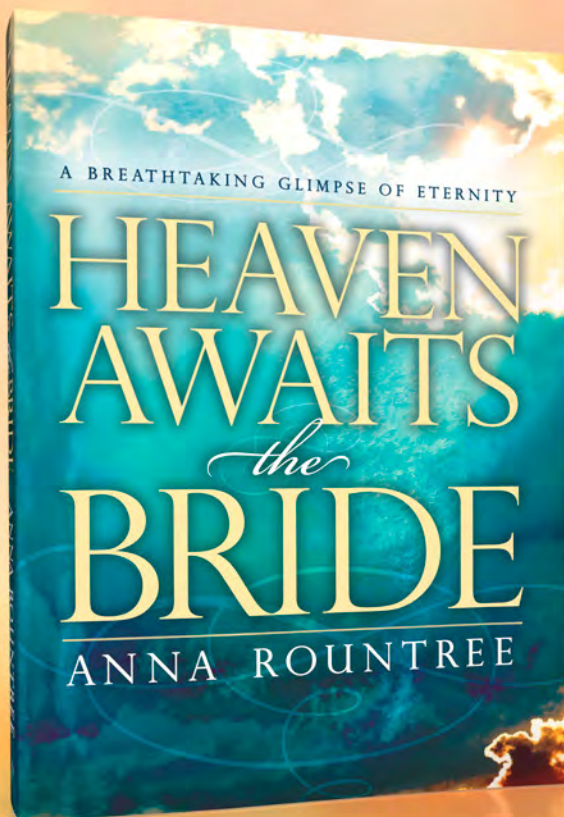
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# FASTING

## FOR A REWARD

If fasting is about denying yourself, then is it wrong to approach fasting with the purpose of earning something? Scripture answers that question with a few keys to this God-given spiritual discipline that could change your life.

BY DAVID IRELAND

**T**wo years ago I was reminded of the power and reward of fasting when a mother came to me seeking healing for her demonized son. No matter how hard this 20-something man tried to turn his life around through counseling and self-help practices, nothing was working. Drugs, pornography, reckless sexual practices and exposure to the world of the occult had taken over.

Along with three members of my ministry team, I rebuked the demons and compelled them to leave. But there was willful opposition like I'd never seen in all my years of leading deliverance sessions. Andy (not his real name) thrashed about like a wild animal. He growled and made other animalistic sounds amid verbal threats expressed in different voices.

After two hours of dealing with this poor young man, a few demons left. But though he now looked and behaved like any ordinary person, it was clear Andy was still not totally delivered.

As I later counseled with his parents, I realized what I had to do. I instructed my team to fast for a week, eating once per day. During our prayer time, we asked the Lord to prepare Andy for a complete deliverance and breakthrough.

Each day I felt myself getting stronger in the Lord and angrier at Satan. *How dare he try to destroy Andy's life and future!* I thought.

When the next Tuesday evening rolled around, we were ready to battle with Satan. *Tonight is Andy's night!* I said to myself. *He will be set free!*

continued »

Immediately after Andy sat down, I asked him, “Are you willing to submit yourself totally to God and resist the devil?” Without hesitation, he said yes. According to James 4:7, this was the doorway to freedom. Andy gave his heart to Christ. This time there was no pretense or faux prayer of salvation. This was the real deal.

Quietly but with complete authority, I began to exorcise the demons that had infiltrated Andy’s life. Within 30 minutes, he was totally healed and delivered. I spent a few minutes teaching him about the baptism of the Holy Spirit—a gift subsequent to salvation (Acts 2:1-4). I then led him in a simple prayer that resulted in his being filled with the Spirit, evidenced by speaking in other tongues. We all walked away knowing firsthand the reward of fasting.

### Fasting Basics

Fasting, at its most basic level, means “to cover your mouth.” Nutritionist and author Paul Bragg, in his classic book *The Miracle of Fasting*, advocates fasting at least one day each week because of its physical, mental and spiritual benefits. According to Dr. Bragg, “Properly conducted fasts purify the body, restoring it to health after everything has failed.”

Fasting rids the body of harmful toxins and gives our digestive system a much-needed rest, which results in the avoidance of many illnesses. Historically, fasting has also been used successfully in other nonspiritual ways. Though not a Christian, Mohandas Gandhi, widely known as the father of modern India, used fasting as a means of political protest. Gandhi described

fasting as “the prayer of a soul in agony.” He mourned and hungered for his people to be freed from subjection to British rule in India.

But the spiritual side of fasting is even more powerful than the natural side of fasting because it directly involves God.

Jesus taught that fasting invokes God’s help. In fact, His exact words were, “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you” (Matt. 6:16-18, NIV).

Jesus allows us to look behind the heavenly veil and learn how God views fasting. It catches God’s eye. He sees when we deliberately choose to abstain from eating for spiritual purposes. He then interprets our fasting as a direct request—a type of prayer of the soul—for His help.

### Fasting Rewards

Jesus concluded the passage in Matthew by sharing that God will reward us for our fast. The Greek word for *reward*, *apodidomi*, means “to perform, render, restore and to give or do something necessary in fulfillment of an obligation or expectation.”

If there is to be an expectation on our part for God’s rewards, why does fasting play such a small role among American Christians? Why

is it seldom practiced? There are three simple answers to this question.

First, fasting is tough when you don’t have a clean diet. If your diet is very unhealthy, which the typical American diet is, fasting is difficult because your body has become addicted to processed foods. The more sugary foods you eat, the more your body craves them. One’s inability to fast successfully, therefore, may not be an indication of an unwillingness but rather of a poor diet that keeps a person in an addictive state of craving more pizza, fried foods, hamburgers and ice cream.

Second, fasting done outside the guidelines of Scripture will not yield any significant benefits. If there are little or no rewards, Christians will not fast. Isaiah 58 (explored in greater depth later in this article) outlines the theological and spiritual guidelines surrounding fasting. When we fast according to these principles, we are assured of God’s promised rewards.

Unfortunately, many Christians fast independent of God’s rules for



fasting, and when they don't see the rewards, they deny the power of fasting and discontinue the practice.

Third, fasting is often ignored because we have forgotten the three primary rewards it yields. I have learned to practice a lifestyle of fasting because 1) fasting produces intimacy with God, 2) fasting promotes humility and 3) fasting yields deliverance and breakthrough. Let's explore each of these rewards in greater depth.

### Reward #1: Fasting Produces Intimacy With God

The very idea of a reward for fasting raises a cautionary flag. The motivation of the Pharisees, Jesus said, was "to show others they are fasting" (Matt. 6:16). They wanted others to see how pious they were. It is a paradox that we lose the spiritual blessings of the spiritual disciplines when our motivation is to show how spiritual we are!

So Jesus goes in the opposite

direction. "When you pray," He says, "go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father" (v. 6). He also instructs, "When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting" (vv. 17-18).

When the Pharisees fasted, everybody knew. When we fast, Jesus says, no one needs to know. Certainly we can share with our family that we're fasting. This will avoid confusion and careless planning when it comes to mealtimes. But what Jesus is teaching here has to do with motivation. When we fast, we do not put our name and discipline up in lights. Instead, our motive is private. We are saying we will partake less of physical joy in order to partake more deeply of the spiritual joy of intimacy with God.

I am convinced one reason more Christians don't fast is they haven't yet realized the race of life can't be won without the energizing, sustaining presence of Jesus in their lives. This is remarkable in light of the fact that Jesus specifically predicted we would fast after He was taken up from the earth, leaving us to run the race without His physical presence. The presence of God in your life produces the necessary feelings of intimacy with God.

John the Baptist's followers asked, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?" (Matt. 9:14). Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom

will be taken from them; then they will fast. No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved" (vv. 15-17).

These inquiring disciples knew fasting had certain spiritual benefits. But in explaining why His own disciples were not fasting, Jesus not only indicated they would one day engage in this spiritual discipline too, but also that the benefit they would eventually experience from it would realize His spiritual presence for them after He returned to the Father. It would become for them a form of denying self in order to experience intimacy and the feeling of connectedness with Him.

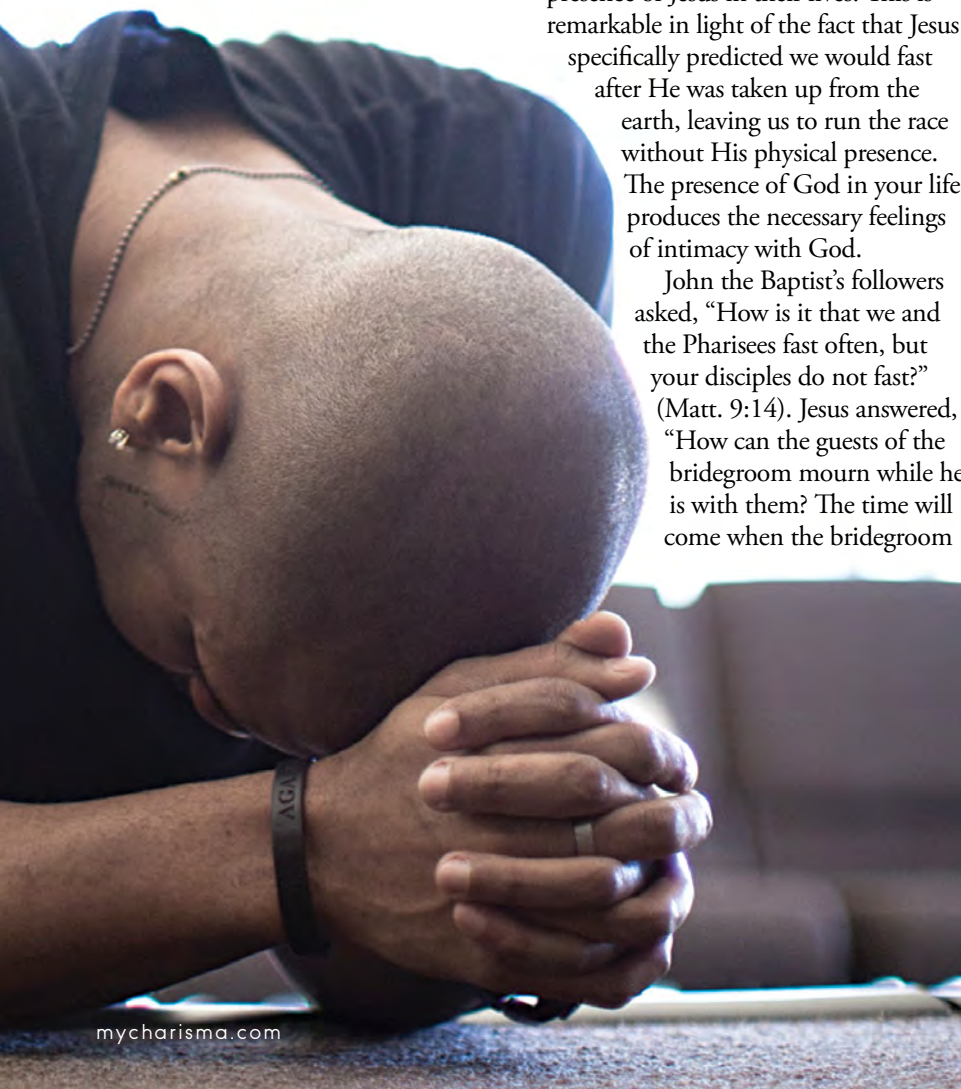
President Abraham Lincoln understood this dimension of fasting. During the crisis between the North and South that would result in the Civil War, Lincoln issued, on March 30, 1863, a proclamation for "a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer." Lincoln mourned the absence of peace and was willing to fast as a means of praying for its presence.

Yet many Christians these days have little sense of the agony of living apart from the presence of Christ. Too often there is little room in our lives for the feeling of "I miss my times with the Lord—times that used to be so passionate, times when hot tears would flow in sorrow for my sins, times when I realized my desperate need for cleansing and for His presence."

I understand we could hardly sustain this kind of intensity on an everyday basis. Yet there could be seasons of fasting, special periods when we give singular attention to our need for Christ's presence as we run the race. Fasting brings this presence closer to us.

### Reward #2: Fasting Promotes Humility

In the time of Isaiah the prophet, God's people were rebelling against Him in their hearts while outwardly



pretending they wanted Him in their lives. Though they had forsaken God for idols, they clung to some of His ways in the hope that an outward show of piety would prompt God to come to their aid against their enemies.

But it wasn't happening because the people's hearts had not been changed. Isaiah records their complaint: "Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we *humbled* ourselves, and you have not noticed?" (Is. 58:3, emphasis added).



Isaiah recorded, God was not blessing His fasting people because they lacked integrity. There was no connection between their fasting and their behavior.

Notice what God goes on to say through Isaiah: "Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high" (Isa. 58:3-4, NIV).

The humility fasting is supposed to produce is also supposed to result in a changed life—in increased sensitivity to God's will and in how we behave toward others. God states this expectation clearly: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter ... ?" (vv. 6-7).

The problem was that God's people had no intention of allowing their

hinders the free flow of God's miracles and promises in a person's life.

My entrance into the breakthrough power of fasting came 30 years ago, when I was working as an environmental engineer and subconsciously knew there was a call on my life to pastoral ministry. After a year or so of living with the gnawing feeling that God had something else for me, I went to the smartest Christian I knew to rid myself of the feeling of frustration and confusion. I wanted to hear his counsel to the question: Should I become a minister or remain an engineer?

This math professor who had memorized most of the New Testament listened attentively to me—a 23-year-old puzzled young Christian. After hearing my dilemma, he said, "David, God has lots of ministers. Serve the Lord as an engineer."

I walked away, relieved I could finally put my confusion and dilemma to rest. However, in less than one week, the confusion resurfaced.

I decided to take three days off from work and spend those days fasting for God's wisdom. At the end of those three days of fasting and prayer, the Lord spoke to me in an audible voice and said, "David, go and preach My word."

And as they say in show business, "That's a wrap!" The issue was settled.

Isaiah said true fasting would provide this kind of breakthrough: "The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail" (Is. 58:11).

Just like the Lord guided me to transition from engineering into ministry. And just like that young man Andy experienced on the day of his deliverance after my team fasted and prayed for his complete freedom. He became like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. ◀

**DAVID IRELAND, PH.D.**, is founder and senior pastor of Christ Church, a thriving 6,000-member multisite and multiracial congregation in northern New Jersey, and author of *The Kneeling Warrior: Winning Your Battles Through Prayer*. Learn more at [davidireland.org](http://davidireland.org).

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## The humility fasting is supposed to produce is also supposed to result in a changed life.

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Notice the people associated fasting with humility. Had they fasted with sincerity, God would have heard their prayer because going without food would have indeed been a sign of humility.

Angel Martinez, a 20th-century preacher, gave us an excellent word picture of humility when he said, "God cannot save peacocks. You cannot strut to Calvary; you must come on your hands and knees." Humility is the doorway to God's grace and blessings. In fact, James tells us, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6, NKJV).

Fasting reinforces in our hearts that we are more dependent on God than on physical sustenance. Fasting with integrity humbles us, and in the situation

religiosity to go that far. They wanted the outward display of going without food to prompt God to rescue them from their enemies. But because their advertised humility did not result in sensitivity to human needs and justice, their voices and pleas were not heard on high.

### Reward #3: Fasting Yields Deliverance and Breakthrough

Notice that God intended for fasting to result in a kind of "double deliverance." First, it should deliver the believer who fasts from dependence on and bondage to the flesh. Then, as God's words spoke in Isaiah 58 of loosening chains, untying cords and setting free the oppressed, it should result in breakthrough from any bondage that

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# 10 Tips for Healthy

# FASTING



How to keep your spirit,  
soul and body at their  
peak while fasting

**BY CHERIE CALBOM**

**M**any people think about fasting in January for a variety of reasons. Perhaps you need to renew your body and soul. Did you gain weight during the holiday season? Maybe you're feeling sluggish or toxic and need to cleanse your body in short order. Or maybe you want to fast for spiritual reasons, such as a breakthrough in your personal life or for revival in this land. continued »



Whatever your reasons for fasting, here are 10 tips to ensure you fast smart.

### 1) Prepare Your Mind

Before you begin, think about why you want to fast. What do you want to achieve? It's important to have the right mindset before you start or you may lose heart early on. Pray for discipline and a strong will to complete the fast.

### 2) Stock Up

Shop for everything you'll need before the day you begin. Not having everything you need on your first day is a sure way to fail. If you're doing a juice fast, for example, look at the recipes you'll be using, and make sure your shopping list has all the ingredients.

### 3) Drink Water

Drink at least eight 8-ounce glasses of purified water while you are fasting so you can flush away toxins and waste. This will also help you stay energized. Dehydration can cause you to feel tired and hungry.

### 4) Go Easy

Gentle exercise, such as walking, is good, but don't overexert yourself. Your body is working hard to eliminate toxins, remove damaged cells and restore vitality. This important work is often not completed when we eat regular meals. That's because the body focuses its attention on digestion throughout the day. Fasting frees your body from this daily chore so it can work on cleansing, repairing and healing. It's like taking a week's vacation to thoroughly clean your home.

While all this important work is going on inside, you want to give your body the rest it needs:

- » Take more breaks.
- » Avoid exhausting work. Go for walks.
- » Get fresh air and sun.
- » Go to bed early, as powerful healing hormones are released while you sleep.
- » Relax before bed by taking a bath,

## The ancient discipline of fasting offers health benefits no other therapy can provide.

.....  
reading a good book or listening to beautiful music.

### 5) Choose a Plan

Many people think fasting means a strict water fast. Some people even try to follow the model of some biblical heroes—no food or water, which can be dangerous. But there is more than one type of fast. Choose the one that is best for you.

» **Water fast.** A strict water fast for more than two or three days is not recommended unless you can completely rest and are medically supervised.

» **Juice fast.** Freshly made juice is rich in antioxidants that bind toxins so they don't damage cells—and those antioxidants are critical, especially during a fast.

Unlike in biblical times, where the air, soil and water were virtually pure, we have thousands of different chemicals pouring into our atmosphere every year. Most of our food is sprayed with pesticides and packaged with preservatives, additives, dyes and fillers. (Therefore, you ought to choose organic produce.) Our water is treated with chemicals, and our air is assaulted with industrial pollution.

Toxins are stored mainly in our fat cells. When we fast, those toxins are released in greater amounts. Without antioxidants to bind up free radicals, our cells can be damaged.

On the juice fast, you can drink vegetable juices, purified water, coconut water, veggie broth and herbal teas throughout the day. I emphasize vegetable juice because fruit

juice has too much sugar, which can cause spikes and dips in blood sugar, leaving you tired. However, you can use a little fruit to flavor and sweeten veggie juice recipes.

All this will keep you healthy, energized and hydrated. To keep from boredom, try new juice and green smoothie recipes, such as those in my book *The Juice Lady's Big Book of Juices and Green Smoothies*.

» **Daniel fast.** As described in Daniel 10:3, the prophet abstained for three weeks from delicacies, meat and wine, which would include all animal products and alcohol. This is a vegan diet, in other words, and includes abstaining from rich foods and desserts.

» **One meal a day.** Everyone can fast for one meal or from certain foods. You can deny yourself coffee, sweets, soda pop, fast food, snack foods and junk food. None of these things are good for your body anyway. And if you can't do a strict fast because of your age or health, choose instead to give up some of your favorite foods. You could also fast one meal a day and drink a veggie juice instead.

### 6) Be Wise


You may have a physical condition that would make water or juice fasting unwise or dangerous. Seek medical advice first. However, be aware that many doctors have little knowledge of fasting or training in nutrition. People who should not do a strict water or juice fast include women who are pregnant or nursing, people who are anorexic or bulimic, anyone who is emaciated or underweight, and those who are on dialysis.

Be aware of medications and their effects while you fast. For example, a vegetable juice fast can lower your blood pressure quickly, so you would need to cut back on medication, for which you should seek your physician's advice. People with diabetes or hypoglycemia can modify a vegetable juice fast and include green smoothies made with avocado for extra protein and fat. This would also be my recommendation for anyone who is elderly or weak.


During your fast, if you become

# American Wake Up Call


## America in the Valley of Decision




On October 14, 2023 over a thousand prayer groups and Churches all over America joined the American Wake Up Call to pray for repentance, return to God, and restoration of America. It seems that things have only gotten worse in America since the October 14, 2023, Day of Prayer. But God is actually moving in answer to our prayers to shine the light on hidden sins so that they can be dealt with (see Ephesians 5:12-13). **Do not be afraid of the shaking, but boldly stand in the gap for America.** Judgement begins in the temple (See Ezekiel 9:6) as the secret sins of some Christian leaders have been exposed. There will be more shaking in the Church world as God cleanses His house. Will Americans leave the Church or remember that you can go to Church with some of the hypocrites or go to hell with all of them?




The October 7 Hamas attack shined a light on a hidden strain of antisemitism which has taken root in America. Years of radical indoctrination at our universities have produced a wave of young people siding with the American Nazis and Hamas murderers against Jews in Israel and America. Even some of our leaders are promoting the "Moral equivalence" canard, claiming the Israel's self-defense against a group of killers hiding behind their own people is the same as the targeting and mass murder of civilians by Hamas. Will America be numbered with the wicked nations in the valley of decision or stand with Israel?



On November 7 our elections brought to light the fact that many Americans, even in red states, want to continue to permit women to abort their babies. Can the Church and the nation be more **supportive of mothers and families, showing God's love to bring change,** or will we continue to sacrifice our children?



America is in the valley of decision, the day of judgement is near (Joel 2:14), and America must choose. "This day I call Heaven and Earth as witness against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings, and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him." Deuteronomy 30:19-20. **Pray that Americans choose life.**



Either way, there are souls to be saved and cities to be reached. We ask you to join the American Wake Up call as we answer God's call for America and prepare for an Isaiah 58 Fast and a Day of Action on April 8, 2024.

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so hungry you could eat the plaster off your wall, you may have parasites or yeast overgrowth. It could be that freeloaders in your body are screaming for food. You may need to do a parasite cleanse or a yeast-control diet to get this infection under control before continuing any other kind of fast.

Please note: Children under the age of 15 should not do a strict water or juice fast.

## 7) Determine the Length

You can fast from one day to an extended period of time, like Jesus did for 40 days. Most people can easily handle a three-day fast. If you work, start on Friday. Then you'll have the weekend to complete the fast at home.

## 8) Know the Symptoms

As your body releases toxins, you might get some detox reactions, such as headaches, tiredness, foggy brain or bad breath. (Chew parsley for your breath.) This can be part of your body ridding itself of toxins that could cause disease, which is a good thing. Don't quit your fast when this happens. The symptoms should pass rather quickly.

## 9) Pray

Fasting and prayer are linked throughout the Bible. Whenever we fast, we are admonished to pray, which facilitates our spiritual growth and renewal.

## 10) Break Smart

How you break a fast is as important as the fast itself. Break your fast the first day with only vegetable juices, green smoothies, raw fruits and vegetables, veggie soups, dehydrated vegan foods or steamed vegetables. Never break a fast with a heavy meal like a burger and fries or steak and potatoes, as you can harm your body and end up with stomach cramps and digestive issues.

## Bonus: Know the Benefits

The ancient discipline of fasting offers health benefits no other therapy can provide. On the physical side, it rapidly rids the body of waste and toxins—like changing old water in an aquarium. It can eliminate edema and lower blood pressure. A study published by the *Journal of Alternative Complementary Medicine* in 2002 found that 90 percent of 174 patients with high blood pressure who incorporated fasting achieved normal blood pressure. Each of the participants who had been on antihypertensive medications were able to get off their drugs.

Fasting also helps rebalance your body's pH level. The typical American

diet is mostly acid forming. A slightly acidic body contributes to weight gain, cancer and a host of other diseases. Fasting facilitates weight loss—water weight first, then fat. This ancient practice appears to reset the metabolism, much like a computer reboot.

A fast also gives your digestive tract a rest. This helps your digestive system heal, which can lead to significant health improvements. Allergy symptoms often improve with fasting. Autoimmune disorders may heal. Fasting improves insulin sensitivity by lowering blood sugar, which helps diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

In addition, fasting is part of our spiritual heritage. It was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament. The Orthodox Church still has four main fast periods during the calendar year.

However, fasting is one of the most neglected spiritual disciplines of the 21st century. It is rarely discussed in most nonliturgical churches or on Christian TV. Yet Scripture admonishes us to fast and pray.

According to Scripture, when God's people fast with the right motive, seeking Him with a broken, repentant and contrite spirit, God hears from heaven (2 Chron. 7:14). He promised He will heal our lives, our churches, our communities and our nation.

Our land is in desperate need of healing. Repentance, fasting and prayer are the only hope for our nation. Fasting and prayer can bring revival and a change of direction in our country. It can also rekindle our love for Christ. Fasting is a powerful spiritual tool to make a difference in our lives. ◀

**CHERIE CALBOM, M.S., C.N.,** is the author of more than 20 books, including *The Juice Lady's Big Book of Juices and Green Smoothies* and her most recent, *Remedies for Stress and Adrenal Fatigue*, releasing this month. She holds a Master of Science degree in whole foods nutrition from Bastyr University. Cherie and her husband, John, offer juice health retreats throughout the year, along with health and healing conferences. For more information, visit [juiceladycherie.com](http://juiceladycherie.com).





# GIVE THE GIFT OF HEALTH THIS *Christmas Season*

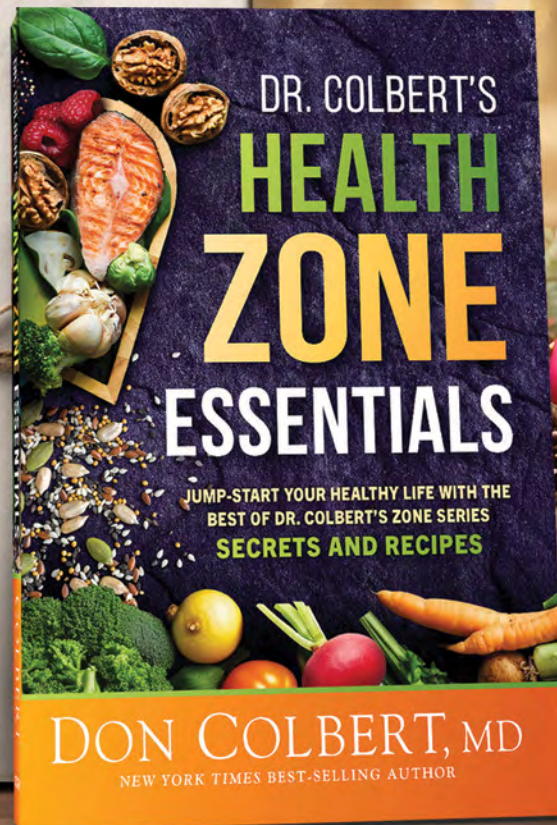
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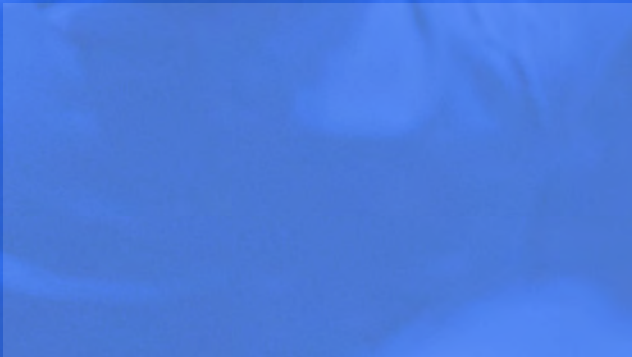


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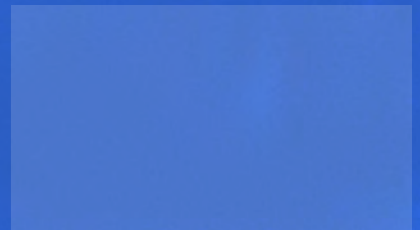
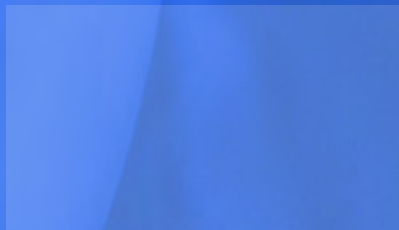
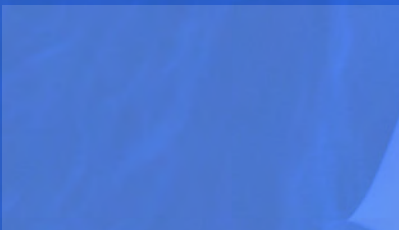
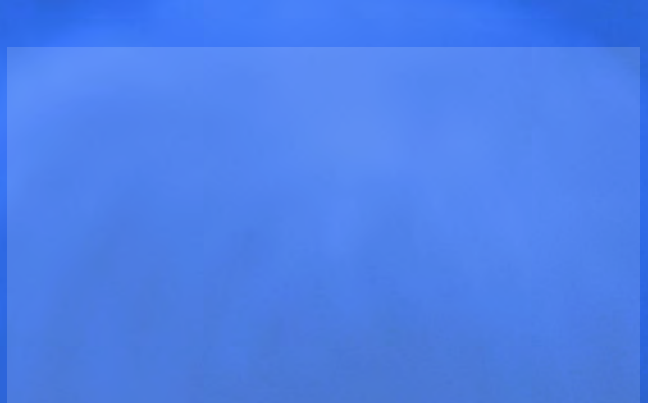
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A person stands in a field of tall grass, arms raised in a gesture of prayer or praise, silhouetted against a bright sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a lens flare effect. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful.

# 40 Days of Prayer

BY DAVE BUTTS

# America

**P**ayer is critical to any nation, especially one that proclaims a connection to God. The United States historically had claimed such a connection, but things have changed. The drift from our Judeo-Christian foundation is evident in almost every aspect of our society. Our only hope of returning to our biblical foundation is through prayer.

With the upcoming political elections possibly determining our nation's future, imagine what could happen if the church stood unified in the spirit of 2 Chronicles 7:14. Beginning Sept. 28 through Nov. 6, you can join the masses crying out for 40 days for God to save America. What follows is a 40-day prayer guide to help you intercede in one of our nation's most critical seasons ever. Use this guide however it helps you most—save this issue or tear out this section, put it by your Bible and pray these 40 different prayer emphases one by one.

If you're more digitally inclined, you can also subscribe to a 40-day newsletter at [40daysofprayer.charismamag.com](http://40daysofprayer.charismamag.com). We'll send it to you daily to make it easier for you to pray whenever and wherever you are. It includes what you see in this article, plus more. Or you can use the Prayer tab on our free Charisma app, available at [charismamobile.com](http://charismamobile.com).

More important than what resources you use to pray is that you indeed pray. With America at a crossroads, prayer is the only thing that will bring real change. Let's not miss this opportunity.

# DAY 1

**PROPHETIC CHURCH** | “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” —Romans 12:2

Our nation doesn’t know it, but America needs the church. Not just as a bunch of good-deed doers, but as those who give direction for the future and who preserve and protect in the present. We’ve not done this well, but that is the place in which God has put us. We are to be light, helping people (and nations) avoid the pitfalls of darkness. We are to be salt, both as seasoning and protection for our society.

The nation cannot afford a sidelined church, taken out by worldliness and confusion. Paul commands us to allow ourselves no longer to be conformed by worldly patterns, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Only then we will understand the will of God, not just for our own lives, but so that we can be a prophetic voice to our nation.

» Repent of the church’s failure to be light and salt in our society.

» Pray for a transformation in the church through a renewing of our minds.

» Ask the Lord for the church to rise up with a strong prophetic voice for America.

# DAY 2

**IMMIGRATION** | If there was ever a nation that understood what it means to be a refuge for the oppressed, it ought to be the U.S. As a nation comprised of immigrants and their descendants, we have been a land of refuge; yet we still struggle with what it means to open our national doors to others. But the Lord is a perfect refuge, a perfect stronghold in times of

trouble. When a nation turns to God, He will be a refuge for them. Amid the chaos of current events—whether financial collapse, terrorism or war—how comforting it is to know that God wants to be a stronghold for our nation.

» Ask the Lord to turn the hearts of America’s citizens and leaders to Himself as we wrestle with immigration policies.

» Pray that our nation will increasingly see that God is our only refuge amid the troubles of this world.



# DAY 3

**GOVERNMENT** | A wise nation takes into account the Word of God as it makes laws. Even a cursory reading of the history of the founding of the United States demonstrates that our Founding Fathers seriously endeavored to base our nation’s laws on their strong Judeo-Christian beliefs. Secularists today often counter that many of those men were Deists and not strong Christians. Their own beliefs aside, our Founders, almost to a man, insisted that laws were based on divine revelation and not on human wisdom. A strong secularist, Thomas Jefferson said powerfully, “And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the

minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that His justice cannot sleep for ever.”

» Pray that the U.S. will repent of its corporate rejection of the Word of God as the basis of law.

» Pray that a fear of God will sweep across our nation, leading us to a place of wisdom.

» Pray that courage born of wisdom will be given to Christians in places of leadership in government, the courts and law schools across the nation so that they will stand for a godly basis for law.

*Father, I give You thanks for the godly foundation of my nation. Forgive us for drifting from Your ways. Raise up a standard of righteousness across this nation that honors Your Word and exalts Your name!*

continued »



## DAY 6 JUSTICE |

Have you considered the fact that a nation committed to justice for all is a nation that God can bless? God is passionate about justice because it is in accordance with His nature to be just in all His dealings. When nations base their laws and institutions on principles of justice for all, the God of justice is pleased.

Of course, this means that the contrary is true as well. When injustice creeps in, it brings with it the displeasure of God. God especially seems to look out for the welfare of those whom society overlooks: the poor, the less privileged, the stranger and the outcast. The nation that wants the blessing of God will ensure justice for all.

» Thank the Lord that He is a God of justice and shows no favoritism.

» Pray for our judicial system and lawmakers, that justice for all, tempered by mercy and compassion, will guide our nation.

*I thank You, Lord, that You are perfectly just in all Your ways. You deal with us impartially, imparting justice while showing mercy and compassion. Help us to be like You in this way. Help us as a nation to offer justice to all and not discriminate in the way that justice is administered. I pray for the judicial system of this nation. Restore godliness to our courts. May a river of righteousness sweep across our nation.*

## DAY 4 ABORTION | “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” —Psalm 139:13-14

Nearly 55 million abortions have been performed in America since its legalization in 1973 following the historic *Roe v. Wade* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. Put in perspective, that’s 20 million more people than the nation’s most populous state, California. In fact, it would take almost 450 Hiroshima-like nuclear attacks to kill as many people as have been murdered in the U.S. through abortions since 1973. God’s heart is to see the act of abortion completely abolished, so we must pray adamantly that hearts and attitudes are drastically changed on every level, from the pregnant teenager to those in legislation.

» Pray that the hearts of our Supreme Court justices are turned so that *Roe v. Wade* is overturned and abortion is made illegal.

» Pray for the hearts of women who have conceived, that Jesus convicts them about the new human life inside their bodies.

» Pray that God’s love is heard when sharing opinions with those who do not agree.  
*Lord, you have conquered death with your resurrection. Therefore, in Your name we come against the forces of hell and the spirit of abortion that has gripped this country for the past 39 years. We break the spirit of indifference surrounding those who work at clinics that perform abortions. We pray that those women who are faced with this critical decision will seek Your guidance. May Your spirit of life reign in their hearts so that they not only see that abortion isn’t an alternative, but that You have made each life uniquely precious.*

## DAY 5 FAMILY | The enemy’s attack on the family

unit is anything but subtle these days. From legalized abortion to redefining marriage to high divorce rates to Internet porn addiction, Satan has successfully assaulted the family from all angles with an overt agenda to pull it apart and even negate its value. To combat these attacks, families must put Christ above all things and make Him a solid foundation. And no weapon is stronger in this war than prayer.

» Pray that parents will adhere to Proverbs 22:6 and train their children in the ways of the Lord.

» Pray that families won’t succumb to the worldly ideals coming from Hollywood, but instead stay true to biblical principles of living.





**DAY 7** **TERRORISM** | Many things can strike fear into the heart of a nation. In the years following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, we have feared off-course planes, envelopes with white powder and threats from extremists around the world. We take precautions, all the while fearing that something, sometime, will slip through and cause harm. Fear is tough to live with and causes a nation to react in man-made ways that aren't always godly.

The Bible often warns us not to be afraid. The reason given is that God is our salvation. Salvation doesn't always refer to eternal life or heaven. It often means deliverance from the enemy. Psalm 32:7 says, "You are my hiding place; You will protect me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance." Isaiah 12:2 reminds us that when a nation (or person) trusts in the Lord, He steps in and brings salvation. When we experience the Lord's deliverance, fear is replaced by songs of joy. Has the Lord become your song?

- » Ask the Lord to help America to learn to trust Him for our salvation as a nation.
- » Confess (agree with God) that the Lord is indeed the salvation for our nation.
- » Pray for a hedge of protection around our nation from the enemy's plans to attack our nation through terrorist attacks—and the fear these can bring.

*Lord, I agree with Your Word that You are our salvation. I believe that for my nation. Help us as a nation to cast aside fear and trust in You. Lord, do a mighty work in the hearts of Your people in the United States that brings about a national shift in priorities and confidence. We trust in You, Lord. Become our strength and our song!*

**DAY 8** **NATIONAL SECURITY** | Fear can paralyze a nation, or it can cause its people to react in inappropriate ways. In Deuteronomy 3:22, God gives us a direct command when we face our enemies: "Do not be afraid of them" (NIV). We don't have to give in to fear. God promises to fight on our behalf—when a nation has committed itself to honor Him and follow His ways.

- » Ask the Lord to pour out a spirit of repentance on our nation.
- » Ask the Lord to help the United States to line up with His purposes so that He will choose to fight on our behalf.

*Father, we turn from fear and turn to You. We indeed have enemies as a nation who seek our destruction. We have attempted to stand against them in our own strength, all the while rejecting Your lordship over us. Forgive us, Lord. Heal our land. Help us to turn back to You, so that You will fight for us.*

**DAY 9** **CHURCH UNITY** | "I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment."

—1 Corinthians 1:10 (ESV)

It's been said that combining church denominations is comparable to mixing oil and water; they simply don't mix. God's will, however, is that His people be of one accord. Jesus prayed that we would "be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You" (John 17:21). First Peter 3:8 says, "Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind." Think of what a mighty weapon a body of people united in Christ would be against the enemy!

- » Pray that denominational barriers are torn down and that believers stand as one in the body of Christ.
- » Pray that petty differences and the spirit of divisiveness—both tools of the enemy—are defeated in the name of Jesus.

*Lord, we know it is Your divine will that the body of Christ stands in one accord. Protect us from the wiles of the enemy and help us to recognize his evil schemes so that we remain vigilant and stand together to fight against him. Let us be in harmony with each other as we walk in the fruit of Your Holy Spirit.*

# DAY 10

## WAITING ON GOD |

**“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope.” —Psalm 130:5 (NIV)** Ultimately, a nation that has learned to wait upon the Lord is a nation that has renewed its hope. No longer rushing about in response to the latest poll or whim, there is a dependence upon the Word of God and eternal matters. A sense of the solid and the stable replaces the fleeting fancies of our current status. Hope is removed from being a campaign slogan to being a lifestyle that centers on the Word of God.

» Pray for the church in America to begin to model the stable lifestyle of waiting on the Lord.

» Pray for a movement of the Spirit that creates a dramatic cultural transformation in the United States, bringing about a nation that has learned to put its hope in the Word of God.

*Lord, it isn't easy to wait. Forgive me for not waiting on You and for running ahead to do those things that seem good to me. Teach Your church to be a good model of those who don't rush into every trend or fashion but who have learned to wait upon You. Lord, show us how waiting on You isn't an activity, but rather an active lifestyle of drawing near and of keeping our eyes upon You. May You so transform Your church that it flows over into the life of this nation. Slow us down, Lord. Teach us to wait on You, so that Your purposes and plans might be lived out in America.*

# DAY 11

## FINANCES |

**“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” —Matthew 6:21** What are we seeking as a nation? God or gold? We've often been known as a nation interested more in money and things than in God and people. This attitude has infected the church as well as the nation. Undoubtedly, the love of money is a major idol in the U.S. standing in the way of another great move of God in our midst.

» Ask the Lord to reveal clearly to you where your treasure is.

» In Jesus' name, tear down the idol of Mammon (money) that has taken up residence in America.

# DAY 12

**RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES |** According to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The Pilgrims escaped from England in the early 1600s for that very reason, but it wasn't until the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791 that the ideal would come to fruition. Our Founding Fathers considered freedom of religion to be a fundamental human right, but it has come under fire in recent years by those who cite the concept of separation of church and state.

» Pray that our freedoms guaranteed in the First Amendment, including that of religion, remain protected.

» Pray that our government officials do not use their power for their own agenda, and that they respect the ideals of our nation's Founding Fathers.

*Father, we know that You are sovereign and in control of everything. Forgive us for taking the simple things for granted, such as those freedoms guaranteed in our nation's Constitution. Help us to stand up and fight for our freedoms while glorifying You every step of the way.*



# DAY 13

**SAME-SEX MARRIAGE |** Same-sex marriage has been one of the hot-button issues around the country throughout the year and heading into the November election. Six of the 50 states in the U.S. have legalized same-sex marriage, and gay-rights advocates continue to push for laws to make it legal nationally.

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, along with other Scriptures (e.g., Deut. 23:17, 1 Cor. 6:9-10), clearly state God's position on the issue, which is not open for interpretation. God defines marriage as being between one man and one woman—period. It's unfortunate that even those within the church claim otherwise, yet believers must stand firm on biblical standards while also walking in love and compassion for those struggling with same-sex attraction. We must also pray in unity for our nation's leaders not to be intimidated by activists trying to redefine the fundamental building block of our society.

» Pray that Jesus convicts the hearts of those in the homosexual community and helps them escape from that lifestyle—and that believers will love them into the kingdom instead of condemning them.

» Pray that advocates of traditional marriage are able to witness effectively to those advocating same-sex marriage with Jesus' love and kind words.

» Pray that the hearts of our country's leaders are convicted and that they come to realize that God's truth must be our standard, not a minority's agenda.

*Lord, we repent of our wicked ways as a nation when it comes to distorting your definition of marriage. Cleanse us from our unrighteousness. Help us as believers to walk in Your love, even when our biblical values oppose others. Forgive us for when we have judged the sinner and not the sin, and give us strength to stand up for Your truth.*



# DAY 14

**POLITICS** | We often forget that it was the politics of His day that were the immediate cause of Jesus' death. The Roman occupation of Israel, coupled with the jockeying for power among several Jewish sects, created a tension that simply couldn't allow for a popular miracle-working preacher who offended all of the powers that were present. Much of Jesus' teaching dealt with how to live in such a politically tense situation.

As we look at Hebrews 12:2, we are reminded how hard it was for Jesus as He struggled with the political system of His day. It led to a cross. We can't assume that just because we pray for our nation everything will immediately get better and we'll all live happily ever after. The truth is, though our prayers can and do make a difference, we must still pay a price.

» Fix your eyes on Jesus and thank Him for enduring the cross on our behalf.

» Ask the Lord to show you how to pray for our nation—especially a political system that seems increasingly ineffective.



# DAY 15

**NUCLEAR WAR** |

**“No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me,” says the Lord.** —Isaiah 54:17 (NKJV)

We live in a day of terrible weaponry. A push of a button from far away can destroy whole cities. No longer is war confined to the combatants, but to entire populations. Years ago, President Ronald Reagan directed our military scientists to develop a shield to protect us, especially from nuclear attack. The “Star Wars” shield certainly could provide some protection, but it couldn't keep us from all attacks. What if there was something (Someone) who could shield us from all attack? The promise of God to His people is astonishing.

No one would suggest that the Scripture above from Isaiah gives a nation some kind of divine protection from physical weaponry or attack. On the other

hand, men and women of God through the years have stood upon this verse to handle the attacks of Satan and have experienced the astonishing protection of God.

What if the unified church began to pray prayers of spiritual protection over our nation? Could we as believers, in prayer, blunt the attempt of the enemy of our souls to sideline our nation and remove us from our place in God's plan?

» Thank the Lord for His promise of protection for the servants of the Lord.

» Ask the Lord to raise up a shield of protection over our nation.

» In the name of Jesus, declare a resistance against the enemy's attacks on the godly foundations of the United States.

*Father, Your promises are always sure. Thank You that You give Your servants the privilege of walking in victory and refuting every word spoken against us. Now, Lord, help us in wisdom to do this on behalf of our nation. Lord, awaken Your people out of apathy and help us to stand against the attacks of Satan against our nation. May no weapon of the enemy prevail against our nation, but may each of those weapons come to naught against our Shield and Deliverer!*

# DAY 16

**SPIRITUAL WARFARE** | **“When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the Lord your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.”**

—Numbers 10:9 The above Scripture speaks of fighting battles within our own land. And though it was written to Israel, we are certainly in a war in our own land. There is a war in the spirit realm for the soul of America.

Trumpet blasts typically called the Lord's people together for battle. But the blowing of trumpets (shofars) was also a call to prayer. Today, I believe the two are merged into one. The trumpet is being blown to fight this battle on our knees.

» Thank the Lord for His promise of remembering us and of rescuing us from our enemies.

*Lord, awaken Your people to the reality of what the enemy is doing to destroy our foundations. Let us heed the trumpet's call to pray as never before, and help us not to wage war in the flesh but in the spirit.*

# DAY 17

**POVERTY** | “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” — Matthew 6:33 (NIV) In a culture that continually strives for more and more, these are radical words. Rather than focusing on our clothes, food or shelter, Jesus said our focus must be on the things of God. With a proper focus on God’s kingdom, we will live in a nation that can care for those who are hurting and still have abundance. This won’t happen because the government has mandated, but because we are seeking first that which is eternal and are then content to allow the Lord to provide everything else we need.

- » Pray for a right focus in America—back to God and away from material things.
- » Pray for the church to be the hands and feet of Christ as we minister to those in need, both spiritually and materially.
- » Pray for a spirit of seeking God first to pervade the church in America.

# DAY 18 PEACE

In John 16:33, Jesus speaks of peace and trouble in the same phrase. We will assuredly encounter trouble, whether on an individual basis (illness, finances, etc.) or a national scale (war, economic crisis, etc.). Yet our peace can be found not by avoiding trouble, but in embracing the Prince of Peace. The peace Jesus spoke of is literally a commodity given to those who follow Him. It is intended to mark His followers. His disciples will be those who have experienced His peace in their own lives and who seek to bring it to the nation in which they live.

- » Pray that you will be a person who brings the peace of Christ into others’ lives.
- » Pray that the church in America will live in such a way that the peace of Christ comes into the councils of our nation.

*Forgive me, Lord, when I walk in anxiety and stress, failing to allow Your peace to rule in my life. Breathe Your peace into my heart. Help me to bring that peace with me into every situation. Lord, may Your peace so pervade Your church in America that it begins to mark us as a nation. Help us in a miraculous way to experience Your peace amid these troubling times.*



# DAY 19 SOCIAL JUSTICE

“Learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” — Isaiah 1:17  
The church must emulate Jesus, who always sought out the least and the lowest. If we listen to Isaiah and seek justice, encourage the oppressed, defend the cause of the fatherless and plead the case of the widow, we would be thought of in a much better way in our society. We might not have such nice buildings or such fancy programs, but our reputation would surely be better. And our nation would be changed!

- Ask the Lord to show you those who are hurting and need you to reach out to them with the love of Jesus. Pray for a spirit of compassion to come over the church in the U.S. so that we will begin seriously to live out the lifestyle of Jesus in our communities.
  - » Ask Him for the strength of His Holy Spirit to enable you to obey His Word.
  - » Pray for a fresh wave of the fear of the Lord to fall upon the church in America.
- Lord, forgive us. We have so often made church about us and our needs and wants. In the process we have ignored those who were hurting right down the street from our buildings. Please help us to see people, really see them, as You do.*

# DAY 20 GENEROSITY

“In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” — Acts 20:35 (ESV)  
God never has and never will need our wealth. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He is Spirit and needs none of the things we need. Giving to the Lord has never been about His needs, but ours. We need to honor the Lord with our wealth. Giving back to God is about restoring our understanding of God as our provider. It places us firmly under His care and lordship.

- When the church in a nation tithes to God and recognizes His provision, that nation is blessed. God is honored, and we find ourselves in a place where God can begin to trust us with more because we are correctly using what He already has given us. Could much of the our nation’s economic turbulence be caused by the failure of God’s people to honor Him with their wealth? The average Christian gives 2.7 percent to his or her church! What might happen in our nation as we offer ourselves and our wealth back to the Lord?
  - » Ask the Lord if you are properly honoring Him with your wealth.
  - » Pray for a spirit of generosity to well up within the church in America.
  - » Pray for God to be honored as we give abundantly and with right attitudes to Him.
- Father, I thank You that You are the giver of every good and perfect gift. All that we have comes from Your hand. I am grateful to you. Help me, Lord, to honor You with my wealth, and to give back with a joyful spirit. Please pour out a spirit of generosity within the lives of Your people, so that You might be honored and our nation might be blessed.*

# DAY 21

ISRAEL | “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: ‘May they prosper who love you.’” —Psalm 122:6 (ESV)

Throughout Scripture we are told to bless Israel and the Jewish people. Simultaneously Israel has long been at the center of wars and rumors of war. It is disheartening to see the threats of violence and bloodshed that have become a part of everyday life for those living in the city of Christ’s return. We must continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem as the news media highlights war brewing between Israel and Iran.

» Ask the Lord for peace and protection for the inhabitants of Israel.

» Pray that the truth of God’s Word would shine brightly in this region.

» Pray that salvation would be brought to the Jewish people living in this nation and throughout the world.

*Lord, please extend your mercy and grace to Israel. We ask You to bless its people and cause them to prosper. Let its leaders turn to You, Jesus, for hope and protection and not trust in man.*

# DAY 22

## GOD’S WRATH |

“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.” —Romans 1:18

Do you suppose that the above verse, speaking of the wrath of God, is true for every nation except the United States? Is there some way that we are somehow exempt from the wrath of God? We don’t like to think about this, but the truth is that there is no exempt nation. Godlessness and wickedness will attract God’s wrath of God, both for individuals as well as for a nation. When godlessness and wickedness are embraced by a nation, then the wrath of God will be directed against that nation.

In the last 50 years, we’ve seen a serious attempt at suppressing the truth in the U.S. An artificial wall of separation between church and state has been built with the intent of removing God completely from the public square. And



this is just one of the ways that truth is suppressed. Because of this, according to the Word of God, the wrath of God is being revealed.

There are a number of ways we can pray over such situations. First, we ask that God’s wrath bring about its purpose of leading people to repentance. Ask that our sufferings not be wasted but be brought to their redemptive purposes. We should also ask that God’s truth be restored to public consciousness and acceptance, so that there be no divorce between the spiritual and secular.

» Repent on behalf of our nation because we have allowed the suppression of God’s truth.

» Pray that God’s wrath on the wicked will bring about repentance.

» Ask the Lord for a boldness in the church to stand for truth in our nation  
*Father, I tremble as I read Your Word today. I fear for my nation as I see godlessness and wickedness on the rise and the increased suppression of truth. I pray for mercy in the midst of Your wrath. Pour out a spirit of repentance, that the people of America may turn our hearts back to You.*

# DAY 23

WISDOM | “Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you.”

—Proverbs 4:6 (NIV)

Biblically speaking, wisdom is looking at things from God’s perspective and making the right choices based on that perspective. How critical it is for a nation that wants to experience God’s protection to love and embrace wisdom. As the United States increasingly accepts a secular mindset and rejects divine revelation as a basis for our laws, we move further away from the protection offered by wisdom.

» Thank God for the gift of wisdom, and for the ability to see things from His perspective as we turn to His Word.

» Repent on behalf of our nation, because we have turned from making Scripture the basis of law, leaving behind wisdom, and looking to ourselves for truth.

*Father, we ask You for wisdom this day. We embrace the wisdom from above that allows us to see matters from Your perspective.*

# DAY 24

**RACISM |** “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” —Galatians 3:28 (NIV) In Luke 10, Jesus uses the parable of the Good Samaritan to give us a model of how to treat one another. He has made it clear that we should love our neighbor, without regard for their race.

Though we’ve come a long way with race relations in America, there is still work to be done—as the nationwide race-related protests to the tragic Trayvon Martin shooting earlier this year proved. The church must lead the way in racial reconciliation, setting an example of unity that crosses ethnic and social lines.

- » Pray that God would reveal and remove any area of racism in your heart.
- » Pray that there would be unity in the body of Christ among races, so we might be a model to the whole nation of true reconciliation in Christ.

# DAY 25

**GODLINESS |** “Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.” —Isaiah 50:10 The Bible tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning place for wisdom. That just might qualify us for being one of the least wise places ever. We live in a day when even something as basic as the Ten Commandments is being removed from public places. This is simply foolish. Perhaps it is time once again to begin to teach and preach about the fear of the Lord.

- » Come before the Lord, confessing that you are one who fears Him.
- » Ask Him for the strength of His Holy Spirit to enable you to obey His Word.
- » Pray for a fresh wave of the fear of the Lord to fall upon the church in America.

*Father, I come before You with fear and trembling. It is because of Your great mercy and love that I fear You. I know You are always right in Your judgments. Help me to be one who obeys Your Word. Enable me through Your Spirit to do what I hear. Lord, our nation needs the moral and spiritual backbone of a people who fear You. May the fear of the Lord fall upon Your people!*

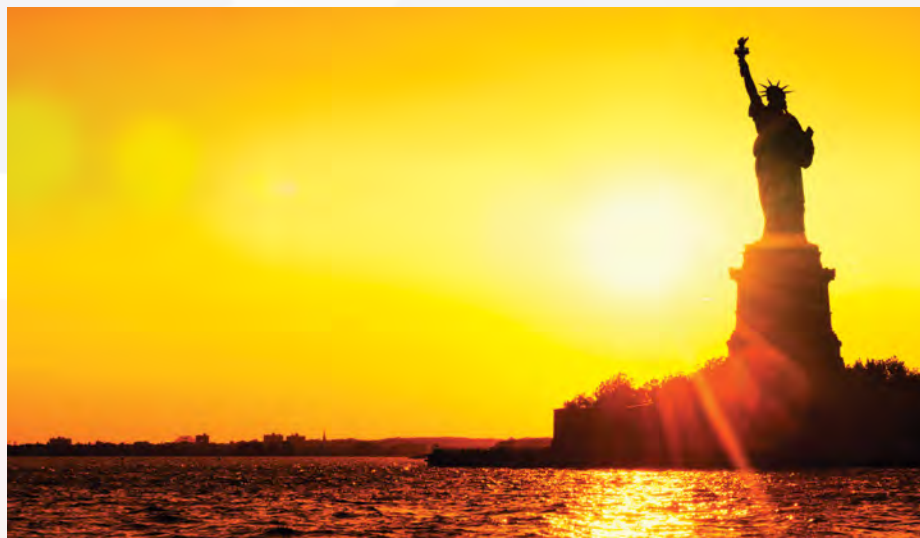
# DAY 26

**WEALTH AND PROSPERITY |** “Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth with turmoil.” —Proverbs 15:16

Is there a better picture of the truth of this passage than Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*? Poor Bob Cratchit with son Tiny Tim and his impoverished family are filled with joy and faith, contrasted with wealthy Ebenezer Scrooge’s miserable existence. The novel isn’t so much against money as it is failing to live a life that uses what we have for others.

The U.S. is in a curious place regarding wealth. We have affluence that is virtually unimaginable. Our ethics regarding the ways we obtain wealth are often highly suspect. Yet, for all our failings in this area, we’re a nation known for generosity. When tragedy strikes, the greatness of America’s generosity kicks in. We have sent American dollars around the world to help those in need. We even provide tax credits for those who give charitably. Yet we can do better—not just in giving, but in our attitudes toward wealth.

- » Repent for any greed or wrong attitudes concerning money.
- » Pray for an increased spirit of generosity in the church.
- » Ask the Lord to pour our godly fear of the Lord throughout our land.



# DAY 27

**PURITY |** “Joshua told the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.’” —Joshua 3:5

Who of us would not like to see the Lord do amazing things in our midst? We certainly need that supernatural work of God in our nation today. Israel received that promise; yet it was a conditional promise. God would do miraculous things if His people consecrated themselves.

Our nation desperately needs a consecrated church, a people set aside for the Lord’s purposes. We are the way God has chosen to communicate His will to nations. But if we are not a consecrated, holy people, the communication becomes garbled and mixed with our unholiness. As you pray today, would you consecrate yourself, so that we might see the Lord do amazing things in our midst?

- » Repent of a lack of consecration and purpose in your life.
- » Pray for a spirit of consecration and holiness to be spread throughout the church in America.

*Father, I am so grieved over my lack of consecration. I have believed and loved You, but I’ve been trying to do Your work in my own strength, and so often for my own purposes. In the name of Jesus, I consecrate myself unto Your purposes. Here I am, Lord. Use me as You will. And what I pray for myself, I pray for Your church. Lord, help us to be holy. Our nation desperately needs a holy people to speak Your Word in these days. Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us that we might be empowered to be used by You. Lord, we need You to do amazing things in our midst.*

# DAY 28

**EDUCATION** | Lascivious behavior, drugs and alcohol have all become strongholds within the American school system. At the same time, we've removed prayer and Scripture from curriculum. Is it any wonder why U.S. students are losing academic ground in comparison to other young people around the world?

We must ask God to forgive us for pushing Him out of our schools. As we ask for His presence to be restored in schools, know that He is able to promote leaders in the education system who fear Him and will fight to return godly principles to the classroom. Let's commit to praying for godly teachers and administrators.

» Pray that God would protect our students from the attacks of the enemy.

» Pray that educators would teach godly principles.

» Pray that our government officials would be able to make wise decisions with regard to our children.



# DAY 29

**TRUTH** | Jesus declared

in John 8:32, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." A nation must believe truth. The authors of our Declaration of Independence appealed to certain self-evident truths. A love of truth is seen as essential to our rights and liberty. These days, it seems that truth often takes a backseat to partisan bickering and positioning. Those who pray for the nation must learn to love truth and pray for it to come forth in power.

» Pray for truth to become valued again in American society.

» Pray for truth to be an established standard in our country's news media.

*I thank You, Lord, that You are the Truth! You are the only one able to set men free. Thank You for the freedom we have in You. I thank You that many of our Founding Fathers understood that freedom ultimately is a gift from You and therefore is dependent upon Your truth. Please restore truth to our nation. Lord, expose the lies of the enemy! Bring a fresh love for truth to those who report the news. Give discernment to those who watch, listen or read the news, so that truth might always prevail.*

# DAY 30

**REPENTANCE** | "Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security." —Jeremiah 33:6 There is a real wave of discouragement and despondency sweeping through America these days. For many, it seems as though our nation is on the path of no return. There is a legitimate concern that we have drifted too far from God and that we might never again see a nationwide spiritual awakening. It certainly is possible for a people to go too far in their rebellion.

But I do not believe the United States is yet at that point. The Lord has many who are crying out to Him. While a global prayer movement is emerging like never before, there is also a growing movement of prayer here in America that is focusing on repentance and turning back to God. (Check out [OneCry.com](http://OneCry.com) for an encouraging viewpoint.)

God's Word to Judah many years ago was both bad news and good news.

The people were going to suffer for their rebellion against God. But amid those tough times, God made a promise showing that He wasn't done with Judah. He promised health, peace and security to a people who didn't deserve it. But such is His mercy and love—both then and today!

» Make a commitment to pray daily for a spirit of repentance to come upon the church in the United States.

» Thank the Lord that His mercy triumphs over judgment.

» Pray for healing, peace and security for this nation.

*Lord, we certainly deserve Your judgment. As a nation, we have sinned against You in virtually every way. We have deliberately tried to remove You from public life. We have squandered wealth, chosen convenience over life, abused the weak, dishonored the poor, and allowed our prejudices and hatreds to divide us. Forgive us! Instead of judgment, pour out Your mercy. We need the healing that only You can provide. Bring again to our nation Your health, Your peace and Your security.*

# DAY 31

**FREEDOM |** “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” —Galatians 5:1 Freedom has a high value in God’s kingdom—not a freedom to do as you please, but rather a freedom to please God. Freedom is a gift of God and is to be treasured. As you pray for America, pray that the spirit of freedom would be rekindled. Paul encouraged the Galatians to “stand firm” against any attempt to take away their freedom. There are certainly many today who fear that our freedom to live lives pleasing to God is being eroded by growing governmental control over many aspects of our lives. Praying for freedom is praying a kingdom value into our nation.

- » Pray for vigilance over any erosion of freedom.
- » Pray that we will not again be burdened with the yoke of slavery.

*Thank You, Lord, that You have set us free from bondage. Thank You for the founders of our nation who built that love and respect for freedom into the core of who we are.*

# DAY 32

**ENVY AND SELFISH AMBITION |**

“For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.” —James 3:16

James speaks with authority and insight as he points out what will happen to a society or group when people begin to envy each other and have ambition that puts self ahead of others. The result is a breakdown of society in which you find disorder and all kinds of evil practices. This can and does happen in local churches, social groups, etc.

As bad as that is, it becomes even more devastating when it happens at a national level. Ultimately, this is a spiritual problem and the only solution is spiritual. America needs Jesus and needs Him badly!

- » Ask the Lord to reveal if you are holding on to any envy or selfish ambition. If so, repent of it now.
- » Pray for the salvation of those who are in leadership of our nation. Ask the Lord to remove all envy and selfish ambition from them.

# DAY 33

**SCANDAL |** “Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.” —Ephesians 5:11

Most serious political scandals involve cover-ups. It isn’t always the misdeed that’s the worst, so much as the lying and manipulation of trying to hide it from the public. Cover-ups always try to keep things in darkness, away from the light where people can really see what has happened.

Followers of Jesus ought to hate cover-ups. We’re called to be children of the light, avoiding the deeds of darkness. Darkness doesn’t push back light; it’s simply the absence of light. It’s time to shine, church. It’s time for the light of Christ to be lived out in our neighborhoods, schools and cities. We don’t need to rail against the darkness; we just need to shine. The Light of the world lives within us, and our nation desperately needs His light to shine in every dark corner.

- » Ask the Lord to shine through you today so others will see Him in all that you do.
- » Pray for an explosion of light in the church, transforming to our communities.
- » Pray that our leaders in both government and the church understand that they are examples and live up to their responsibilities with godly character.

*Thank You, Light of the World, for coming to live in me. Shine brightly in me today. Forgive me for hiding Your light. Forgive me for the times when I preferred the shadows to the brilliance of Your presence. Shine through Your church in America. Help us to live and to love as You did, so that the darkness in our land will flee and Your light will shine.*



# DAY 34

**LEGISLATION |** What makes a nation great? Its military forces or its growing economy? Great natural resources or an industrious people? All of those certainly contribute to the greatness that nations strive for. But the Bible shows us a different perspective. It’s a fascinating national concept found buried in Deuteronomy 4:6-8, which proves the greatness of a nation is directly related to the righteousness of its laws and rules.

As our nation began, our laws were made in recognition of God. Even though a number of our Founding Fathers were not active Christians, they all had a respect for the laws of God and literally based the new nation’s laws upon what they considered divine law. God blessed their decision, and greatness was achieved.

Over the years the making and understanding of law has drifted from that strong godly perspective. Increasingly, lawmakers are looking to other nations or cultural trends for guidelines in laws. It could be argued that our greatness as a nation is drifting with that trend. It’s time to begin praying for a return to laws that have their basis in God’s Word.

- » Thank God for a good foundation for this nation in the nature of its laws, and pray for a return to that solid foundation.
- » Pray for the judges of this nation, that they would seek God’s wisdom.

# DAY 35

**ECONOMY** | America's economy has declined at a rapid pace in recent years. The housing market has plummeted, stocks have spiraled, major industries have neared implosion and unemployment has soared. As believers, however, our trust is in God and not our current resources—whether in a recession or a boom. We remember how Christ provided for the multitude using only two fish and five loaves of bread. We can't forget how God provided for the widow in 2 Kings 4. And we know God can change our economy in a blink of the eye—all for His glory.

» Pray that our government and industry leaders will gain wisdom to create godly legislation to revitalize the economy.

» Pray that the church would trust in God's provision regardless of the economy.

*Lord, we pray that You would give our nation's government and industry leaders wisdom to cause our economy to prosper for Your purposes. We ask that You provide jobs and resources for Your people, so we may be testimonies of Your faithfulness to those who don't know You.*



# DAY 36 REVIVAL |

**"The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." —Matthew 4:16** America needs the light of Christ once again. We need the fires of revival to burn brightly again. It's time to proclaim to those dwelling in darkness that the Light has come! To see true transformation in the nation will require massive church planting and church revitalization. Those dwelling (in America) in the land of the shadow of death must hear the good news that a light has dawned in our land once again.

» Pray that the churches in your community and area will preach the gospel of Christ powerfully.

» Ask the Lord to bring revival to the church in America.

*Father, our nation needs the light of the gospel once again. In so many places, a stagnant church has made the Good News seem like stale, old news. Forgive us for not handling correctly what has been entrusted to us. Bring new life and light to Your church.*

# DAY 37

**LEADERSHIP AND JUDGMENT | "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." —2 Corinthians 5:10**

I remember the day, more than 30 years ago, when I had to stand before a judge to hear his judgment. At issue was an argument over whether I lived in the right district to run for a particular elective office. Even though I hadn't done anything wrong, I still felt anxious. No one likes to hear judgment passed on them. (By the way, I won that case.)

We don't like to think about judgment. But Scripture is explicit that every person on the planet will stand before Christ to be judged. Though our salvation is dependent upon whether Christ is our Savior and Lord, our actions as individuals in life certainly factor into things eternally in a way that we don't

fully comprehend.

How does knowing this fact change the way you pray for governmental leaders and those in authority when you recognize that they, too, must stand before the judgement seat of Christ? We are not called to be accusers but intercessors. The picture of the judgement seat of Christ should drive us to our knees in passionate prayer for our nation's leaders.

» Thank the Lord for paying the price for your redemption.

» Pray for the salvation of local and national government leaders.

*Father, I know that You are the ultimate Judge over all mankind and that You have turned judgment over to Your Son, Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Thank You, Lord, that I face judgment without fear because of Your love for me that brought me into Your family and forgave all of my sins. But, Lord, I fear for the many who do not know You and face a fearful judgment. Help me to pray for those who so desperately need You.*

## DAY 38 HEALTH CARE |

The Affordable Care Act, popularly known as Obamacare, has stirred a divisive, heated debate that continues to be fought in the courtrooms of our nation. For Christians, the moral dilemma is huge, as we could be legally forced to partake in a system that financially supports the killing of babies.

With astronomical health care prices, it's obvious this is not an easy fix. We need government leaders who will implement a just health care plan rather than simply trying to please everyone. We must also pray that a solution will arise that does not force Christians to fund abortion.

» Pray for wisdom for lawmakers to create just legislation for everyone across the U.S. population.

» Pray for wisdom and discipline to care for the body God has given you.

» In Jesus' name, renounce the spirit of abortion that is affecting legislators as they reform our nation's health care system.

## DAY 39 HUMILITY | "This is the one I

esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word." —Isaiah 66:2 All too often Americans are seen as arrogant or prideful. Years ago, there was a book entitled *The Ugly American* that told of how Americans in the foreign service often perpetuated that view. It's time for a new reputation for Americans that is in line with what God desires. But before you nod in passive agreement and move on, consider where pride has seeped into your own life. It's a deep-rooted sin for us.

A spiritual revolution in America will take place when we walk in humility before God and each other. We will find ourselves in a place of receiving blessing from God when we have a contrite spirit. And we can expect revival throughout the land when the church is filled with those who tremble at His Word!

» Humble yourself before the Lord in prayer this day, and recognize the great need you have to be one who trembles at the Word of God.

» Pray for another Great Awakening to sweep the nation as the Lord's people learn to humble themselves.



## DAY 40 INTERCESSION |

The story of Esther becoming queen at a crucial time in the history of the Jewish people has inspired many through the years. The Jews faced annihilation at the hands of their enemies. Esther risked her life if she spoke out, but her cousin Mordecai's words gave her the courage she needed. He appealed to the timing of her part in this drama, "for such a time as this" (Esth. 4:14).

Like Esther, we live in perilous times in which our nation is under assault from foreign enemies and from those within who have failed to understand the critical role of the Christian faith to the greatness of America. It is a situation that cannot simply be fixed by a new leader, new plan or different strategy. We need the intervention of God!

God steps in when His people passionately ask Him to. The most important thing Christians can do for America is to pray. In these days of distress, the Lord is raising up a people who will intercede with faith and fervency! You are answering the call.

» Pray for discernment of the days in which we live and to know how you should pray.

» Pray for a spirit of prayer to come over the church.

*Father, thank You that You hear us when we call. Give us an understanding of the times in which we live and Your purposes for our nation. Align our prayers with Your desires.* ◀

**DAVE BUTTS** is the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee and also president and founder of Harvest Prayer Ministries, which helps to encourage prayer in churches. Dave has served, and continues to serve, in numerous leadership capacities and on boards of directors and committees, such as the Denominational Prayer Leaders' Network. Parts of this article were adapted from his book, **Desperate for Change: 40 Days of Prayer for America** (PrayerShop Publishing, [prayershop.org](http://prayershop.org)).



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# When was Jesus Born?



Most Christians don't know that Christmas was set on December 25, the ancient Roman Winter Solstice date, to displace a Pagan holiday celebrating the birth of a pagan false "Seed of Woman" god. While the Winter Solstice is an important element in the Celestial signs of Christ's Advent, careful study of the scriptures, history, and astronomy prove that Jesus could not have been born on December 25.

The Bible does not tell us when Jesus was born. However, the search for His birthdate can begin with strong scriptural evidence about the year of His birth.

We know from Luke 3:23 that Jesus was about 30 when He began His ministry. The prophet Daniel tells us the year of Christ's anointing would come 69 7's, or 483 years, after the decree which sent Ezra to Jerusalem in 458 BC. (Daniel 9:25) Doing the math, and remembering that there is no year "0", Daniel's prophecy says Jesus would begin His ministry in 26 A.D. This year is backed up by two dates from Scripture. John the Baptist began his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius, 25 AD, (Luke 3:1) and Jesus cleared the Temple the first

time 46 years after Herod began renovating it (John 2:20) in 20 BC (According to Josephus), or 27 AD. Thus, many Bible scholars believe that 26 AD is the year Jesus began his ministry. If He was 30 years old, remembering again that there is no year "0", He would have been born in 5 BC.

Jesus would have been born either in the spring or fall of the year according to the Scripture surrounding the birth of John the Baptist. John's father, Zechariah, was a member of the priestly order of Abijah (Luke 1:5) which, according to rabbinical sources, ministered at the Temple in May and November. The Angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah in the Temple, and Zechariah would have gone home and probably conceived John the Baptist in June or December, who would have been born 9 months later in March or September. We know from Scripture that John the Baptist was six months older than Jesus (Luke 1:26) so Jesus would have been born in September or March of 5 BC.

To find the exact time of year we look to Astronomy and history. We know that there was a star which appeared when Jesus was

born and that Magi from the East, possibly following the prophetic teachings of Daniel the Magi (Daniel 2:48), came looking for Him (Mathew 2:1,2). The Chinese also saw the Star, identifying it as a Nova which appeared in the spring of 5 BC and burned for 70 days. Based on the 5 BC springtime appearance of the Star of Bethlehem, John the Baptist was conceived in December of 7 BC, Jesus was conceived in June of 6 BC, John the Baptist was born in September of 6 BC, and Jesus was born in March of 5 BC.

King Herod, the tyrannical ruler of Judea, had interviewed the Magi when they arrived in Jerusalem. According to our research, described in our book *The Stars of His Coming*, (available at for a free download at (<https://bit.ly/StarBook>)) there were signs in the Sun, Moon, and Stars surrounding the birth of Jesus beginning with Zechariah in 7 BC. The Magi would have testified to the same date, and for that reason Herod ordered all of the Children under 2 years old in Bethlehem to be killed. Josephus tells us that there was a Lunar Eclipse on Passover and that Herod died later that year. This Lunar Eclipse, or Blood Moon, occurred on March 23, 5 BC, concurrent with the Star of Bethlehem.

Scholars have shown that the Passover and the Solstices and Equinoxes were associated with Christ's birth by early Church Fathers, including Clement of Alexandria, Julius Africanus, Hippolytus of Rome, and the author of De Pascha. Some believe that Christ was born on the Passover, while others believe He was conceived on the Passover and born nine months later on the Winter Solstice. The old Roman Solstice date, December 25, ultimately was selected by the Church to replace the pagan holiday, but strong support for the birth of Jesus on Passover remains. Hippolytus stated that the "Genesis", which has been translated as "Birth" or "Conception",

of Christ occurred during a Lunar Eclipse on April 2, 2 BC. Of course the actual date of the Lunar Eclipse was 5 BC, but there is one more piece of evidence to suggest that Jesus was born on March 23 5BC, on Passover.

We find it in Revelation 12:1-2, which describes a sign in the Heavens, a woman clothed in the Sun with the Moon at her feet, at the moment of Christ's birth. The woman clothed in the Sun is the Zodiacal constellation Virgo (The Virgin), which promises that God will send a savior through Virgin birth. Astronomical research shows that the Blood Moon of March 23, 5 BC occurred while the Moon was in the feet of Virgo. Thus, Revelation 12:1-2 presents us with a picture of the night sky when Jesus was born, and that night was March 23, 5 BC.

Of course we know that the whole world will continue to celebrate the birthday of Jesus on December 25. In its way, it is fitting to celebrate the Advent on the old Roman Winter Solstice, when it all began with the conception of John the Baptist around the Winter Solstice of 7 BC and signs in the Sun, Moon, and Stars began to appear. For more information view our youtube presentation "The Story of the Star of Bethlehem" at International Star Bible Society.

So on the Ancient Roman Winter Solstice date of December 25, you're really celebrating the beginning of the "Signs in the Sun, Moon, and Stars" in 7BC which led to Christ's birth on Passover, March 23, 5 BC.

Merry Christmas anyway!

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# What Audacious Prayers Can Do

BY DON NORDIN

Everyday petitions have their place, but few things touch God's heart as much as a believer's bold, desperate cries. The question is: Do you have the audacity to move Him?

**I**n today's culture, prayer has been all but forgotten. Like a powerful muscle that atrophies from neglect, the believer who fails to pray becomes extremely carnal and rife with all kinds of issues. A believer who neglects prayer is like a fish that avoids water. Prayer is literally the lifeline of the Christian.

To top it off, the word *prayer* has become cliché in this culture. It has become a term we use when we want to provide encouragement but have nothing of substance to offer. Believers and nonbelievers alike use it, freely saying, "I'll keep you in my prayers," only to never pray at all. The promise to pray serves as little more than a dismissive end to an uncomfortable conversation for which there are no apparent answers.

When a national tragedy strikes, even those who have had a hand in kicking God out of the schools, the government, the courts and the public arena start talking about prayer. The truth is, God and prayer cannot be expelled from any of these arenas as long as believers continue to walk the earth.

As a pastor I have told people I would be praying for them, and though I diligently followed through to do so, I left the conversation thinking, *I wish I could do something more*. Like others, I sometimes feel praying is the least I can do—when, in fact, it is the greatest and most productive thing we can do for those who are facing the battering ram of life.

continued »

Life has a way of extracting hope from its participants, but prayer re-establishes hope. Hope anchors the soul and allows the fresh sunshine of the love of God to come pouring in. Like the breaking of the day after a dark night of despair, prayer causes the believer to emerge from trouble with a new lease on life and anticipation for the future.

Are you ready for that kind of prayer?

### The Time for Audacious Prayer Is Now

Before reuniting with his brother Esau, Jacob prayed all night. He was determined to receive assurance from the Lord that his brother would not kill him the next day. So intense was that prayer meeting that Jacob emerged with

a name change and a limp that would mark his every step for the rest of his life (see Genesis 32).

Have you ever had the audacity to go before the Lord with such passion for the burden you were carrying that you decided you would not leave until you were able to emerge with an answer? The desperate cry of the righteous in a prayer closet strikes a chord in the heart of God.

The Bible is a book about fervent prayer and the resulting answers to those prayers. From Genesis to Revelation, the power of audacious prayer is emphasized virtually from chapter to chapter and verse to verse. One would be hard-pressed to read the Bible without coming to the conclusion that prayer actually does change things. In fact, prayer changes everything. Faith and prayer are the tandem vehicles that move things from the realm of the spirit to the natural arena. They cause the unseen to become reality.

Contemporary Christians would do well to once again pray over their families and lives in an audacious manner. The promise to reverse negative circumstances is only guaranteed to those who pray: “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14, NKJV).

If we humble ourselves in prayer and turn from our wicked ways, He will “heal our land.” What does God mean by “our land”? Our land is not only our nation and world but also our lives. He has promised to heal the lives of those who are serious about prayer and righteous living.

Jesus Himself implored us to pray audaciously: “Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1). He told His followers, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matt. 7:7-8). These are not the words of some popular success guru; these are the words of Jesus!

Peter Kreeft, author and professor



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of theology at Boston College, made this observation concerning prayer: “I strongly suspect that if we saw all the difference even the tiniest of our prayers to God make, and all the people those little prayers were destined to affect, and all the consequences of those prayers down through the centuries, we would be so paralyzed with awe at the power of prayer that we would be unable to get up off of our knees for the rest of our lives.” What a great admonition concerning prayer! Only eternity will reveal the effects prayer has had on this world and in the lives of untold scores of individuals through the centuries.

### Intimacy Leads to Audacity

For the believer, all intimacy with God is born out of trust that has been developed in times of prayer. Intimacy leads to faith and audacious praying. Faith and audacious prayer produce the miraculous.

Individuals who have a consistent prayer life over the long haul can testify to personally witnessing the power of the living Christ at work in their lives. They trust God, and they trust His Word. Praying people become persons of great faith.

In the first-century church, miracles were in abundance. When one looks at the behavior of these believers, we readily discover prayer was one of the foundational stones of their existence.

I believe God is calling His children back to their prayer closets. If we will begin to commune with Him and possess the audacity to pray, the miraculous will once again become the norm.

Desperation is the environment in which miracles are birthed. Most people never contend for a miracle until the possibility of all human help has been exhausted. That is not intended to be an indictment; it is just a fact. We try everything in our power to alleviate the dilemma that we face. Then, when we have come to the end of ourselves, we turn to God in audacious prayer. That is just the way we are wired. God knows this, and He is always standing at the end of the path with His hands outstretched saying, “Come unto Me” (Matt. 11:28).



### 7 Vital Reasons for Audacious Prayer

The Word of God makes it clear: Prayer is the act of communicating with God. If prayer is the means of communication between an earthly believer and the heavenly Father, the believer should look forward to this means of speaking with the Father who is also our mentor. Let’s explore seven vital reasons for prayer.

**1) Prayer is required to be forgiven.** I’ve spoken to you about miracles already, but the greatest miracle that could ever be performed is for God to forgive sin.

However, one cannot be forgiven simply by thinking he is sorry for his sin. One cannot be forgiven by having good intentions. The only way a person can be forgiven is by confessing sin before a holy God. This requires prayer.

The psalmist provided us with an excellent example of this relationship between confession and forgiveness that comes through prayer when he wrote, “I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,’ and You forgave the iniquity of my sin” (Ps. 32:5).

**2) Prayer is required to develop an intimate relationship with God.** Another psalmist, writing in Psalm 116, describes how the habit of prayer caused him to know God hears and answers prayer: “I love the Lord because he hears my prayers and answers them. Because he bends down and listens, I will pray as long as I breathe! Death stared me in the face—I was frightened and sad. Then I cried, ‘Lord, save me!’ How kind he is! How good he is! So merciful, this God of ours! The Lord protects the simple and the childlike; I was facing death, and then he saved me. Now I can relax. For the Lord has done this wonderful miracle for me. He has saved me from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall live! Yes, in his presence—here on earth!” (Ps. 116:1-9, LB).

As one reads through these verses, the intimacy between the writer and his God is striking. The practice of prayer led to an intimate relationship between God and the psalmist. He says of God: “He answers my prayers.” “He bends down and listens.” “I will pray as long as I breathe.” “How kind he is.” “How good he is.” “So merciful, this God of ours.” “He saved me.”

As I mentioned earlier, for the believer all intimacy is born out of trust. Through this psalmist’s prayer life, he learned to trust God. We should practice prayer for the purpose of developing intimacy with God. No prayer, no intimacy.

**3) Prayer is required to maintain purity.** A believer can break fellowship with God while serving in various roles. Serving does not promote purity, nor does it insulate us from failing. The only thing that can prevent a person from being caught up in a sinful lifestyle is a consistent, audacious prayer life. Believers who have a daily prayer time are much less likely to backslide.

When we are tempted to sin, the fact that we know we are meeting with God later in the day or the next morning can keep us from committing



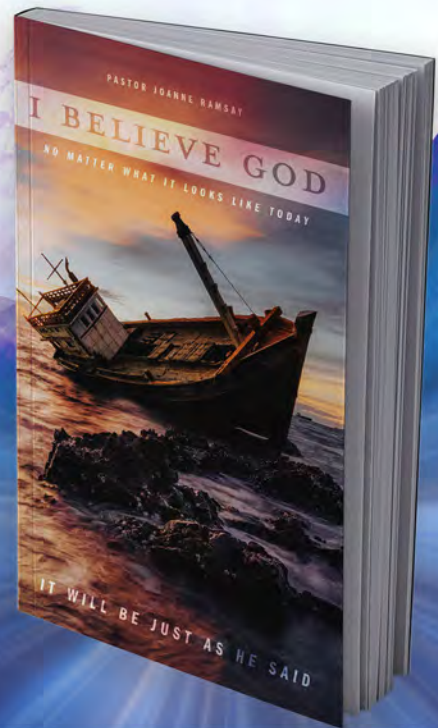
# What you **BELIEVE** determines who you will **BE** and how you will **LIVE**

Friends, there is nothing more important than what you believe in your heart about God!  
No matter what circumstances may look like today, you can boldly declare like  
the Apostle Paul, "I believe God! It will be just as He said!"



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- Recognizing God's protection over you
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that sin. A believer who is consistent in prayer knows that sin causes him to dread his prayer time.

A consistent prayer life causes a believer to quit sinning, or else sin will cause the believer to quit praying. The choice is left to the believer. In our journey, the only way we can hope to live according to God's standards is to have a consistent prayer life that develops purity within and manifests itself in every action we take.

**4) Prayer is required to walk in faith.** In 39 years of ministry, I have yet to meet one person I believed to have great faith who did not have a consistent prayer life.

According to Romans 12:3, every believer begins his spiritual journey with exactly the same amount of faith: "God hath dealt to every man *the* measure of faith" (KJV, emphasis added). When I read this verse, I often picture the Father holding a specific unit of measure and doling out faith to each of us. The level of faith a believer is capable of attaining depends on how one goes about exercising his faith, and the exercising of faith is directly tied to our prayer life.

We should pray, making our requests known to God. When He answers our prayer, our faith rises to a new level. Each prayer we see answered enables us to believe God for larger things. Consistent prayer grows our faith, and our faith unlocks the door to the storehouse of God.

**5) Prayer is required to walk in freedom.** Take a look around you. People are grappling with addictions and phobias of all kinds. Sadly, the bondage of believers often mirrors that of the world. These things can be broken through the power of prayer.

Psalms 34 lays out the freedom God affords through prayer. In this passage we are told the Lord will do the following things in response to the prayer of the believer:

- » Deliver us from fear (v. 4)
- » Save us from our trouble (v. 6)
- » Guard and deliver us (v. 7)
- » Bless those who trust in Him (v. 8)
- » Supply all our needs (v. 9)
- » Hear us when we pray (v. 15)

» Redeem us (v. 22)

But we are to receive these things through crying out to Him (vv. 6, 17), trusting Him (v. 8), fearing Him (vv. 7, 9), humbling ourselves (v. 18) and serving Him (v. 22)—in other words, through being in active relationship with God.

God promises great blessings to His people, but many of these blessings require our active participation. In this instance, our participation is a requirement of living an overcoming Christian life. If we hope to live free, we must be people of prayer.

**6) Prayer is required to persevere.** My definition of *persistence* is "the steadfast determination to complete a task without regard for the sacrifice it will require." By its nature, the Christian life demands a boatload of persistence. Any achievement worthy of the effort it requires merits the investment of persistence.

I believe two things are required for a Christian to make the commitment necessary to persist in achieving the will of God: 1) becoming a person of prayer and 2) knowing whom they serve and whose vision they strive for.

It is a fact that praying people are persistent people. Prayerlessness, on the other hand, produces a lack of persistence. The reason? Persistence is born out of intimacy, and intimacy with God is not possible without a prayer life.

Following that, if we are sure it is God's purpose we are serving and His goals we are striving to achieve, we become confident He will bring it to pass.

No matter what long shot God's will appears to be in one's life, if we are people of prayer and know we are going for His will, we patiently endure the days when there seems to be no movement in the circumstances. We know He will bring it to pass.

**7) Prayer is required to have power with God.** There are no shortcuts to God's power supply. The path to God's power source leads directly through His prayer room.

The bottom line is this: No prayer, no power. This probably answers the

questions echoing through churches all across America: "Where are the miracles?" "What must we do to see His miracles?" "Where is His power?"

Why do you suppose God set up the distribution of miracles in such a way that they flow through those who pray? Well, think about it: Praying people are intimately connected to God to the point of having developed a heart like His. They see things as God sees them. They hear things as God hears them. And praying people are humble, not allowing pride to enter in when a miracle occurs.

The prayers of righteous people are a source of great power to the world. We should pray so we will be capable of allowing God to dispense miracles through us to a world that desperately needs them.

## Will You Be Audacious?

God reacts to our bold, desperate, audacious prayers. It is my hope that your prayer life will be enhanced and your faith will begin to soar once again.

In his book *Master Secrets of Prayer*, Cameron Thompson writes, "There comes a time, in spite of our soft, modern ways, when we must be desperate in prayer, when we must wrestle, when we must be outspoken, shameless and importunate." This statement sums up perfectly what I mean when I talk about audacious prayer. Prayer can take the impossible and turn it into new opportunities for the future.

Winston Churchill is quoted as saying, "The nose of the bulldog has been slanted backwards so that he can breathe while holding on."

We must become people who have hearts that will not be dissuaded from doing the will of God. We must develop bulldog tenacity in pursuing the purposes of God.

We must, my friends, become audacious. ◀

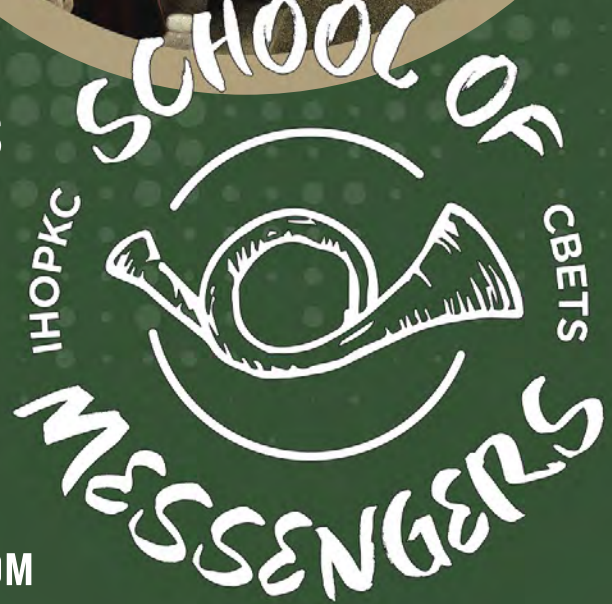
**DON NORDIN** is the pastor of CT Church in Houston and author of *The Audacity of Prayer: When Ordinary People Receive Healing Answers from God, which releases next month. With a focus on training leaders, he travels extensively as a speaker in revivals, camp meetings and conferences.*



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# If My People Will Pray

America may be in crisis, but there is hope: God is stirring hearts to seek Him—even beyond a September prayer gathering in Philadelphia

BY STEPHEN STRANG

**T**hirty-two years ago America was at crossroads. The nation was in moral decline with recently legalized abortion and a drug culture left over from the hippie era, while Americans were still reeling from the aftermath of Watergate and the Vietnam War. Not only that, but communism was a real threat worldwide, terrorists held American hostages in Tehran, the U.S. economy was in the tank and a weak president's policies seemed to make matters worse.

At that time God put on John Gimenez's heart to call America to prayer. He wasn't well-known, but he persuaded leaders such as Demos Shakarian of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, Bill Bright of Campus Crusade and CBN Founder Pat Robertson to join him in calling believers to pray on the mall in front of the nation's Capitol. They called it Washington for Jesus, and many believe it was a spiritual turning point that helped move our nation in the right direction. We elected a new president, the economy rebounded and communism fell a decade later.

Yet not all was right in the world. The entertainment industry continued to go downhill from a moral point of view. The threat of Islamic terrorism continued to grow. What is now called the "gay agenda" was articulated for the first time. And the church reeled from one scandal after another.

## From Bad to Worse

Today the problems of the 1980s seem mild to what is an all-out attack on our Christian values in the culture and even in government. We now have a president who seems to be moving toward some form of European socialism. He has embraced the concept of "same-sex marriage" and enacted laws that force religious organizations to provide abortion services against their will.

There is a feeling that things are bad and getting worse.

How else do you explain the huge outcry a few months ago against Chick-fil-A President Dan Cathy, who mentioned in an interview that he supports traditional marriage? Many in the media called that "hate speech" simply because he doesn't support the radical homosexual agenda.

Thankfully, the public responded. A mass of people showed Chick-fil-A their appreciation and gave them record sales, while a gay activist boycott fizzled. But responding to the culture war involves more than rallying around one of our own who is under attack. More important is what we do in the spiritual realm through prayer. We are in a critical time in which we must seek God and pray that America will turn back to Him.

continued »

## Beyond Philadelphia

Many are responding. All over the nation God is raising up ministries, prayer initiatives and events that are focused on interceding for the nation and are calling America back to God. One of these focal points is the America for Jesus solemn assembly held Sept. 28-29 in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia. It's the vision of Anne Gimenez, who is carrying the mantle originally shared with her late husband, John.

When I heard about this gathering my heart leapt. I knew I had to be



*It's time to fulfill our prophetic destiny to intercede for this nation.*

involved. I remembered the significance of the earlier Washington for Jesus and America for Jesus rallies. And I believe this is needed now more than ever before.

One of the ways we got involved was to dedicate this entire issue not to America for Jesus per se, but to the themes it is emphasizing. We cleared the entire issue so that our quarter-of-a-million readers who cannot attend the gathering in Philadelphia can also be inspired to pray.

When Anne Gimenez heard about this, she suggested we have extra copies in Philadelphia and bind in the printed program for those who attend. That way this special issue and the articles by Jonathan Cahn, Jentezen Franklin and others could go home as a souvenir of the event.

But we know this is far more

important than just an event or special issue. This is a time when believers must hear from God and call the body of Christ to its prophetic destiny to intercede for this nation.

## Rescue Plan

That's exactly what America for Jesus is doing. In fact, the focus beginning on Sept. 28 will be to jump-start a nation into 40 days of fasting and prayer. My friend Rick Scarborough, the fiery Baptist preacher from Houston, says it's "40 Days to Save America" and has launched an initiative by the same name that calls the nation to prayer, fasting and repentance for the 40 days prior to Election Day on Nov. 6. I think it's so important I asked Rick if I could include some of his vision here:

Our nation was established upon a strong religious foundation. Our freedoms, which today are everywhere imperiled, are God-given as expressly stated in the words of what might be called our "National Mission Statement," the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are

endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." They can be sustained only with His mercy.

During the American Revolution, in the darkest days of the Civil War, at the outset of our involvement in World War II, leaders as different as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared national seasons of prayer, fasting and repentance.

Today, our nation faces multiple crises—pending economic collapse, moral disintegration and international terrorism—but all have spiritual underpinnings. Together, they are even more daunting than those Americans confronted in 1776, 1863, and 1941.

Now as then, our national survival is

at stake. Now as then, our destiny rests in God's hands. The crises are beyond the power of human beings to resolve without divine guidance. *Nothing short of a Third Great Awakening can save us.*

That's why the 40 Days to Save America project is so vitally important.

Though voting is both a civic duty and a biblical responsibility, which must be approached with solemnity and due deliberation, something else must happen first if we are to see our nation saved. We must begin by asking God's forgiveness for our national and individual transgressions, and for His guidance in the task of selecting our leaders at all levels of government and, thus, charting our nation's future.

Starting on Sept. 28 and continuing through Nov. 6, we are calling for a Great Religious Awakening through 40 days of prayer, fasting and repentance. This is not a political effort. The political problems that beset us are symptoms of a deeper spiritual malaise.

The place to start isn't with primaries, platforms and conventions, but rather through prayer, fasting and repentance.

» We are calling for pastors, priests and rabbis to open their churches and synagogues throughout America for 40 days for prayer and fasting, each person seeking their own level of unselfish sacrifice as we corporately and individually seek God for His intervention in our beloved nation.

» We are calling for Christian and Jewish voters to make informed choices, voting not as Republicans or Democrats, but as followers of the living God.

» We are calling for our leaders to have the wisdom and discernment to act according to His will and not based on personal or partisan considerations.

I'm joining Rick and the countless others calling upon God during these 40 days. I hope you will too. May we once again change the future of America. ◀

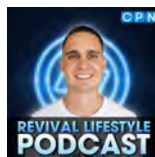
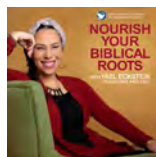
**STEPHEN STRANG** *founded Charisma magazine in 1975. He hosts a Strang Report podcast live on YouTube and Rumble at 4 p.m. EST every Tuesday and Thursday. His important new book Spirit-Led Living in an Upside-World is available wherever fine Christian books are sold including online at [mycharismashop.com](http://mycharismashop.com).*

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# AND HERE

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# CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE



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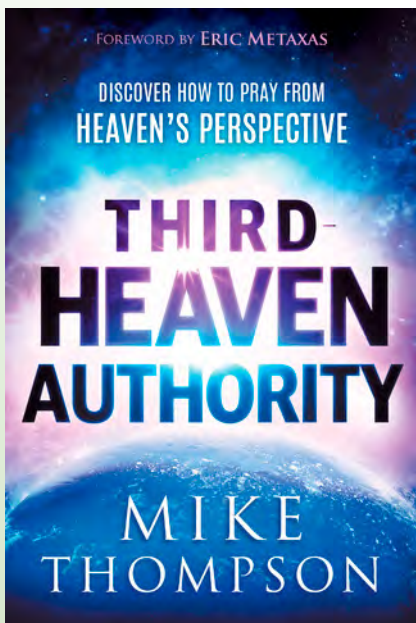
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by Mike Thompson  
(foreword by Eric Metaxas)

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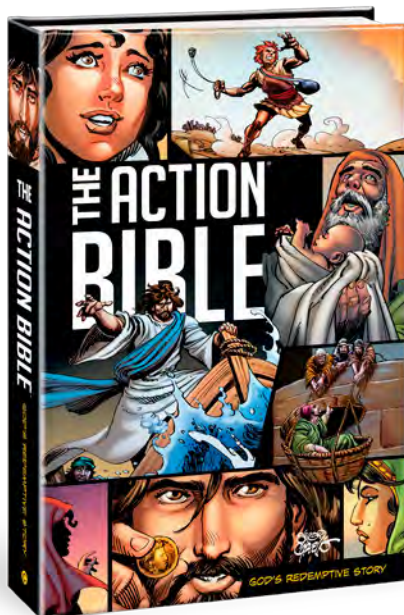
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## CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

### Give Encouragement this Christmas Season!

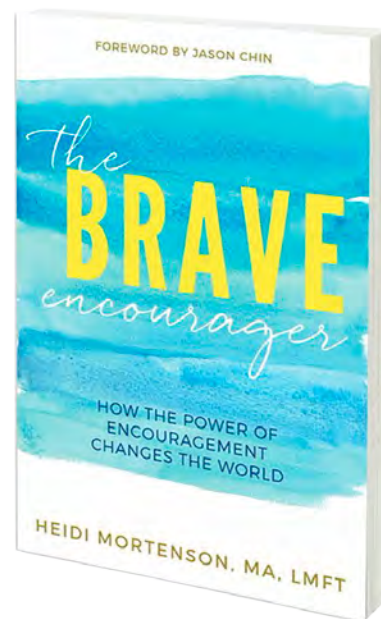
This world is hurting and we need encouragement. The book, *The Brave Encourager*, teaches you how to authentically pull the gold out of yourself and others. The author's experience as a spirit filled mental health therapist will show how we often focus on the frustrations and difficulties we have with those around us instead of what God sees. To truly bring transformation we need to learn to pull the gold and encourage no matter the circumstances.

You will hear authentic and real stories of encouragement and how to unlock the brave encourager inside of yourself. You will explore experiences that have caused you to put up walls with others and walk through declarations of God's truth.

You will be encouraged as you enter the brave world of unconditional, courage and brave love onto yourself and others. The power of encouragement can literally change the world, one word at a time. Give the gift of encouragement this Christmas to yourself and your loved ones!

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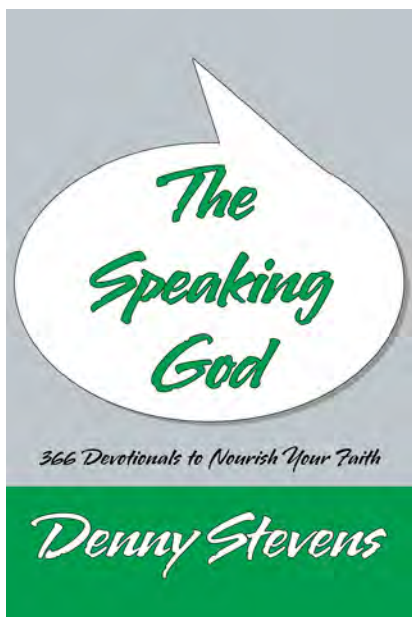
*The Speaking God* brings an insightful perspective on its own, but the uniqueness of this devotional is how it coincides with the One-Year Bible. Read the posted daily passages and progress through the Scriptures in just fifteen minutes. From these daily passages comes a thought-provoking insight from the words you just read! A concluding prayer makes each devotional personal and practical. Make this your year! Let *The Speaking God* accompany you through His Word in daily bite size portions and feast on the wisdom He imparts.

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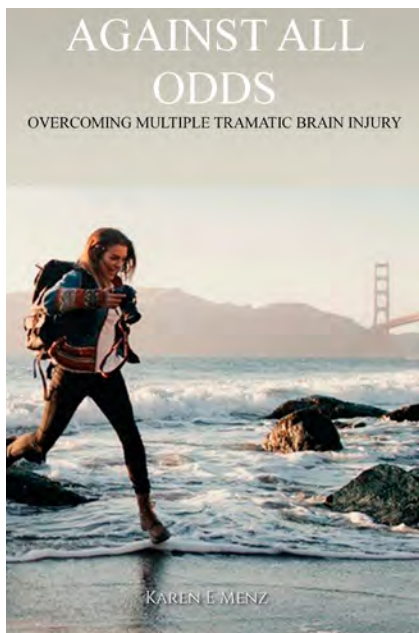
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## CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE



### AGAINST ALL ODDS:

#### Overcoming Multiple Traumatic Brain Injury

This book is the autobiography of Karen E. Menz. Karen has survived multiple traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) and learned to navigate the twists and turns of life.

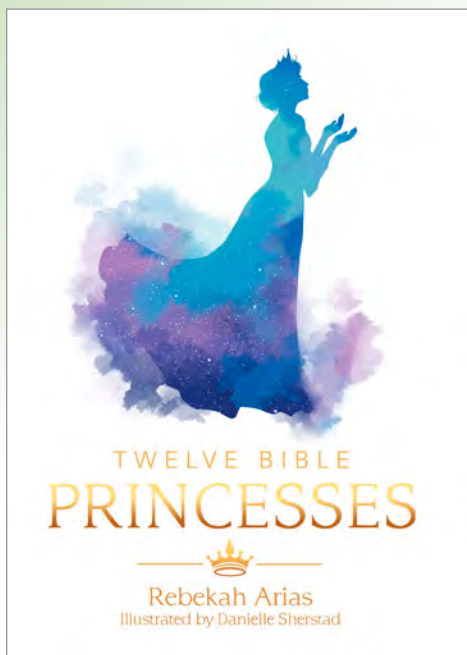
TBI helped build her bravery, created her courage, and most importantly, God planted daily seeds of hope that flourished through the years of recovery.

Karen is now thriving in her deepened walk with God.

Karen shares the strength, faith, and inspiration that made her unstoppable, even in the face of life and death events, tribulations, and tests of her determination. Karen's life lessons have value for those facing TBI and similar challenges who are traveling against the odds to survive and discover how valuable life can truly be.

Karen is a child of God, mom, Domestic Engineer (wife), author, Health is Wealth Agent, Veteran, (TBI) Survivor.

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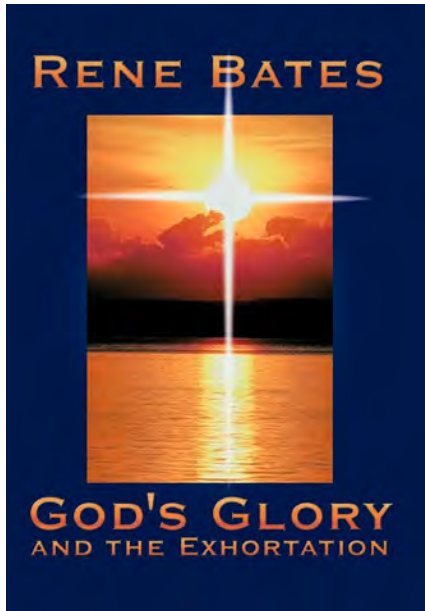
### Twelve Bible Princesses

Are you tired of princesses promoting values that don't align with your family's Christian values? Five years ago, with a newborn daughter in her arms and five-year-old playing nearby, author Rebekah Arias grappled with this question. She searched online for a book that would inspire young girls to live, not following the world's values, but the leading of the Holy Spirit. "Why don't you write it, Mom," her eldest daughter said, looking up from her toys. *Twelve Bible Princesses* was born.

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**Available for purchase on Amazon and Barnes & Noble**



**Cecily Lachapelle, author**

## Your Painful Past Has a God Ordained Future

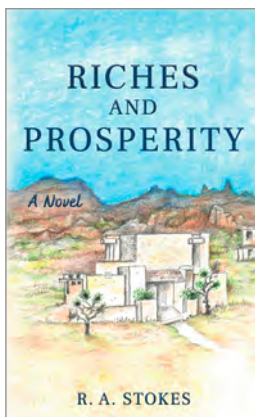
Introducing "Repurpose Your Pain" a book that will empower you to turn your pain into purpose and discover the strength and redemption that God has destined for you through the grace of God!

Have you ever felt like you're constantly hitting the same wall, trapped in a cycle of shame, regret, bitterness, or fear? Do you believe that painful events have shattered your identity or that the effects of rejection are holding you hostage? If so, this book is for you.

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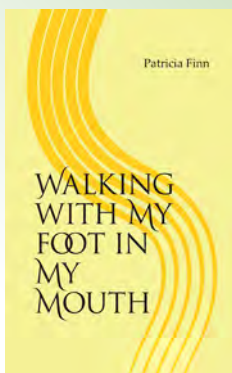
A stock trader/business consultant, aspiring politician, business manager, retired pastor/missionary, and wealthy socialite struggle with trials in their faith, and Benjamin Sharon, a Messianic Jew, ministers in Israel and Europe and finds an unexpected blessing.

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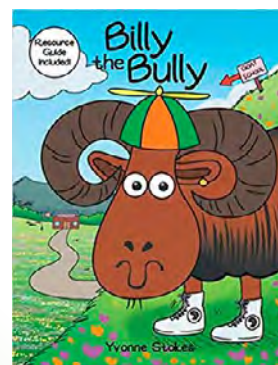
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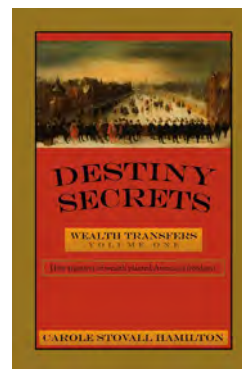
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Watch a boy spy in the rousing fictional adventure of “Destiny Secrets-Wealth Transfers”. Listen to pirates who bring thirty eight treasure ships of gold and jewels to the first World Bank in opulent Amsterdam. Hike in the snowy backwoods where fur becomes “soft gold”, and logging forests builds massive ships. Cross the ocean with refugees and slaves from many countries, all races, all ages. Sit with the Governor of Martha’s Vineyard. Visit Rhode Island where a wedding takes place and watch a schoolteacher thrive in the gentle Quaker colony that builds Philadelphia.

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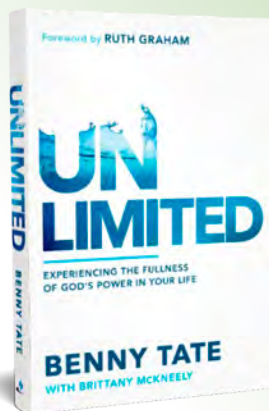
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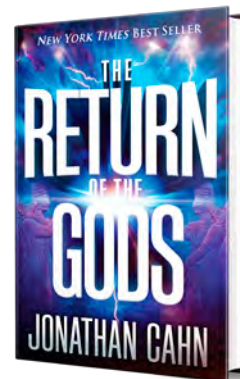
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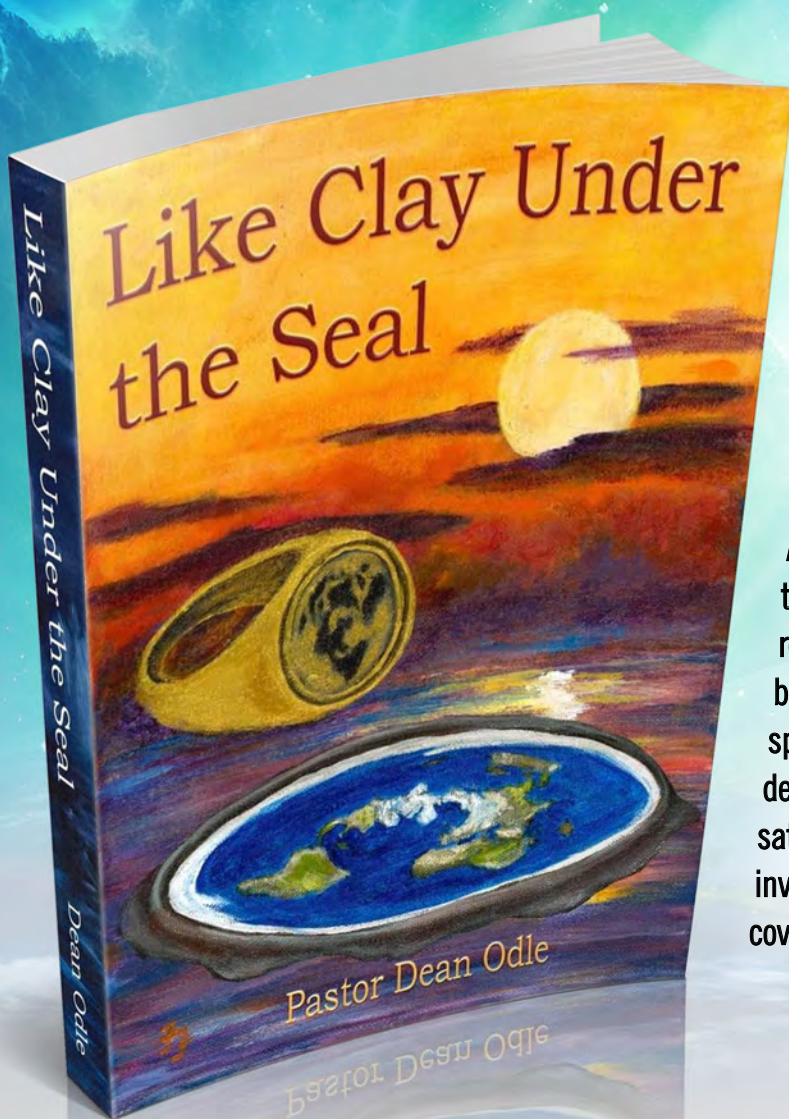
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