



THE PRAYER CLOSET

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRAYER CLOSET MINISTRIES

OCTOBER, 1998

Praying For The Growth of The Church

God has given the church the task of proclaiming the Word of God to the lost. It is the responsibility of believers to declare that Christ has died, been raised from the dead according to the Scriptures and that as the reigning Lord he now grants the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Holy Spirit to those who will surrender to Him. In issuing the gospel invitation, we are not free to conceal the cost of discipleship. **Jesus still calls all who would follow Him to deny himself and to live a transformed life.**

The church is to grow by preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost. There are other kinds of growth. One type of growth is "biological" growth. Biological growth results when church members have children and these grow up and are saved and join the church. This is the purpose and goal of Christian families. This is a wonderful testimony to the power of godly Christian homes.

Another type of growth is transfer growth. This type of growth occurs when a person or family moves from one church to another. This usually takes place when a person or family has to move and relocate into another area. That person or family then seeks to find a new church home.

These types of growth are a blessing and should be an avenue of growth for every church. Yet, there is another type of growth. And, this should be the primary way that the church grows. This type is what I term "conversion growth." It is when a person who is lost hears the gospel and is converted. This lost person turns away from his or her sin and surrenders to Jesus Christ in true faith. Then, he or she becomes an active and responsible member of Christ's church (**Acts 2:47**).

The tragedy of our day is that most churches have become comfortable with the first two types of growth. The only conversions that many churches see are those of the children of church members. If it were not for these, these churches would never see anyone saved. Other churches grow by disgruntled people who leave their church in search of a "better" church. Vance Havner referred to this kind of situation as "swapping seats on the deck of the Titanic."

Yet, it is time that we come to understand that our purpose is to share the gospel and make disciples (**Matthew 28:19-20**). This is the church's great task. We can settle for nothing less than this. To settle for anything less than this is to be disobedient to the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is important to notice that Jesus Christ has called His church to "make disciples." For too long, the church has focused on getting "decisions." Pastors often ask one another how many "decisions" they had in a revival. Church members judge pastors and evangelists on how many "decision" they get. Success is achieved when the person makes a verbal commitment or "decision."

Yet, this is not what Jesus Christ is calling His church to do. It is true that we are to call on sinners to immediately repent and believe in Jesus Christ. Yet, this is not the end. A "decision" centers around a point in time. A "disciple" centers around an on-going lifestyle. It is the responsibility of the church to lead people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and teach them how to live for Jesus Christ. It is not the end when a person turns from his or her sin to Jesus Christ; this is only the

Dr. Kevin Meador, 595 Stratton Road, Decatur, MS 39327 (601) 635-2180
EMAIL - ewillia%newton@k12.ms.us

beginning. **The gospel that calls on people to surrender to Jesus Christ also calls on them to follow Him in the personal lives.**

The church is to grow in this way. This is God's purpose for the church and He will provide the power for this. Yet, how does a church receive the power for this? This power is released in the church by prayer. Prayer is the foundational principle of leading sinners to Jesus Christ and then discipling them. God will bless and honor the body of believers that will seek Him for the conversion of sinners and the leading of these people into discipleship. **God will add to the church which has a broken heart and a bent knee in behalf of those who are lost.**

For years, I have wanted to write a book entitled, "Whatever Happened To Prayer?" It amazes me what churches will do to get the attention of the lost world. There is no end to the number of gimmicks, plans, and programs that have been devised to bring sinners to Christ and enable the church to grow. Do not misunderstand the previous statement. There is nothing wrong with programs that attempt to reach sinners with the gospel and to lead them to discipleship. **The problem is when plans and programs become a substitute for prayer.** Whatever happened to believers meeting in an altar and pleading with God to save sinners and grow the church? Whatever happened to believers fasting and pouring out their hearts to God for those who do not know Jesus Christ? Whatever happened to weeping and intercession for sinners?

It is time that the church return to the power of humble pleading for the salvation of sinners and the growth of the church. God and God alone can and does save sinners. However, it is our responsibility to plead with God for their salvation and the growth of Christ's church in making disciples (**Romans 10:1-3**).

The following list is a series of prayer requests that you can pray in order to see your church experience true growth. These prayer requests focusing on seeing God work in and through your church in this matter. These prayer requests are offered as a guide to help you in praying for the growth of the church:

(1) **Plead that God would give the believers of your church a broken and burdened heart for the lost (Isaiah 57:15; Romans 9:1-3).** If the church is going to reach lost people and disciple them, the believers must have broken, burdened hearts for them. Too many believers lack this burden for those who are lost. You may have to start with yourself. As you have been reading this, you may not have been interested in this article. The salvation of sinners and growth of the church may not mean anything to you. Yet, you are the one who needs the broken, burdened heart. You need to plead that God will break you and burden you for these issues. Then, you need to plead that other believers will have the same broken and burdened heart as you;

(2) **Ask God to convince the believers of your church that Jesus Christ is the only hope for any sinner (Acts 4:12; John 14:6).** This is something that every believer will admit is true. Yet, we need this burned on our consciences. It must be the abiding conviction and absolute certainty of our hearts that Jesus Christ is the only hope for any sinner. You must know fully that there is no hope for anyone outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. This will lay the foundation for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others. If you are certain and convinced that Jesus Christ is the only hope of sinners, it will be a motivation to reach out to others with the gospel;

(3) **Call on God to give the believers of your church certainty and conviction of the doctrine of hell (Matthew 10:28; Hebrews 10:31).** Again, this is something that believers need certainty and

conviction about in their minds. It needs to be burned into our hearts and consciences that those who do not have a personal relationship to Jesus Christ are lost and will spend an eternity in hell unless they turn to Christ in faith and repentance. If you are certain and convinced of this truth, it will be a motivation to share the gospel with those who are lost. Hell is a reality and will be the eternal of those who have not turned to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith and repentance. Believers need the Spirit of God to make this truth living reality in their hearts;

(4) Plead with God that He will burden and motivate the believers of your church to be personal witnesses to Jesus Christ (Matthew 9:37-38; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). God works through the witnessing and preaching of believers to transform their lives. People must hear the Word of God if their lives are going to be transformed (**Romans 10:12-14**). This means that believers must be diligent to share the Word of God with others;

(5) Plead that God would convince the believers of your church that they are responsible to God for their witness to unbelievers (Ezekiel 3:17-20). We must come to understand that we are responsible before God in the matter of sharing the Word of God with unbelievers. If we warn them and exhort them to come to Christ and they do not, we are cleared of our responsibility. We can save no one; we are not responsible for their reaction. However, we are responsible for our witness of lack of witness to them. If we do not warn and share the gospel with unbelievers, their blood is upon our hands. We need this burned upon our hearts and consciences. Ask the Holy Spirit to do this in your life and the believers who make up the church that you are a member of;

(6) Ask God to give the believers of your church a burden to pray for the lost (Romans 10:1). Too many times our prayer times in churches are nothing more than "organ" recitals. We spend all our time praying for "organs": someone's heart, lung, or liver. I believe in praying for healing; I believe in praying for the sick. However, I also believe that we must pray for those who are lost. We need a spirit of prayer for those who are outside of Jesus Christ. Plead that God would make Paul's cry in Romans 10:1 yours and also the cry of the believers in your church. Ask the Holy Spirit to create a longing to pray for the lost in your community or city;

(7) Call on God to create an atmosphere in your church so that it will be a place where people are saved and discipled (Acts 2:42-47). By this, I mean that you need to pray that your church will have the spiritual qualities that are modeled in the church of the Acts. These qualities provide an atmosphere in which people are saved and are discipled in the truth. These qualities are:

- A deep commitment to and the diligent study of God's Word (**Acts 2:42**);
- Genuine and mutual love for one another (**Acts 2:42**);
- True fellowship and unity (**Acts 2:42**);
- A deep commitment to and diligent practice of prayer (**Acts 2:42**);
- The manifest presence and power of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2:43**);
- Mutual sharing and ministry among believers (**Acts 2:44-45**);
- Sincerity and openness among believers (**Acts 2:46**);
- Genuine praise to God (**Acts 2:47**)

Plead that God would create this kind of atmosphere among the believers who make up the church.

(8) Pray that God would remove anything that would hinder the outreach and growth of the church (Acts 5; Romans 16:17-18; Psalm 83). There are various factors that hinder the outreach and growth of the church. These factors are numerous and varied. Some of these are attitudes, traditions, apathy, and past sins that have never been dealt with by the membership. Unfortunately, it can sometimes be a person or persons. You need to pray that God would remove what is hindering. If it is a person, you need to plead that God would deal with this person. Plead for the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. Ask that grace and mercy would be shown to this person. Call on God to do whatever it takes to deal with this person;

(9) Plead with God that He would open doors for the Word of God in your community or city (2 Thessalonians 3:1; Colossians 4:3). The apostle Paul pleads with these believers to pray for an open door for the gospel. You need to pray in the same way. You need to ask God to open doors in your city or community. Plead with God for opportunities to share the gospel with those around you. Ask God to break through the hardness of heart and indifference in your area to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Call on God make people receptive to the gospel. Plead with God with all your might for this;

(10) Plead with God that His power would be exhibited in your outreach and discipling (2 Thessalonians 3:1). In this verse, the apostle asks these believers to pray for the word to run or spread rapidly. Paul must have been a sports fan because many of his illustrations of the truth came from athletics. The picture that he uses here comes from the races at the Olympic games. Paul wanted the Word of God to run or to move powerfully among the Corinthians. Paul desired that the Word of God would powerfully work and change the lives of the Corinthians. This prayer was powerfully answered (**1 Corinthians 6:9-11**). The power of God was exhibited in Paul's preaching and ministry because these people turned from their sin to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. You need to plead that the power of God would be exhibited through the preaching and ministry of your church. It is the power of God and the Word of God that is going to transform the lives of people. Call on God to reveal His power through the preaching, witnessing, and ministering of your church;

(11) Plead that God's protection would be experienced by the believers of your church (2 Thessalonians 3:2). In this verse, the apostle Paul asks the people to pray for God's protection on him as he preached the gospel in Corinth. He understood that there were many dangers involved in sharing the gospel with a lost world. He needed God's protection in his attempt to spread the gospel. The same is still true today. Believers need to experience God's protection in spreading the gospel and discipling people. Sometimes believers will need physical protection. Sometimes believers will need emotional protection. The task that God has given to the church is difficult and can be frustrating. Believers need God to protect them from discouragement and frustration in this matter. Believers will always need protection from Satan's snares and attacks. Satan will attack and seek to destroy any believers who struggle to share the gospel and make disciples of their city or community.

Developing A Praying Church

The great need of this day in which we live is a praying church. God grants power and blessing to the church that humbles itself before Him and pours its heart out to Him. Yet, how can you develop a praying church? No matter where a church is in its "prayer maturity," there is always room for growth.

There are some basic keys to developing a praying church. These keys are needed if you would develop a church that can seek God and see answers to prayer.

The first key to developing a praying church is a praying leadership. Praying leaders are essential in developing a praying church. Recent surveys have revealed some staggering facts. At a recent pastors' conference in Texas, pastors were surveyed concerning their prayer lives. 95% admitted that they prayed five minutes or less a day. A professor did a survey of 572 pastors and found that these pastors spent an average of eighteen minutes a day in prayer. Another poll revealed that the average Christian spends three to five minutes a day in intentional prayer. This same survey revealed no noticeable difference between leaders' and church members' prayer habits.

We need to understand that it takes praying leaders to make a praying church. A stream will not rise higher than its source. The only leader who can expect his people to be strong in prayer is the one who sets the example in prayer. Being a praying leader does not mean that you talk much about prayer or that you preach numerous sermons on prayer. Promoting and teaching about prayer is no substitute for praying. The leaders must be absolutely committed to prayer.

The Bible reveals that leaders must be men and women of prayer. The Lord Jesus Christ, the leader of leaders, gave a high priority to prayer. And He expects His followers to do the same. He teaches His people that they should always pray and not give up (**Luke 18:1**). He teaches His people to watch and pray and not to fall into temptation (**Matthew 26:41**). The apostles appointed deacons so that they could devote themselves to the Word of God and prayer. Paul bathed his life and ministry in prayer. He proved for all time that powerful ministry flows out of powerful and effective praying.

If you are a leader, you must cultivate your own prayer life. You must be a man or woman who is fully committed to praying. If you are not a leader, then you need to pray for the leaders. Ask God to make them men or women of prayer. Call on God to give them a spirit of prayer.

The second key to developing a praying church is that prayer must be given a high priority in the life and ministry of the church. It is clear from the gospels that Jesus Christ made prayer a priority in his ministry (**Luke 5:16; Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12**). The church in the book of Acts gave prayer that same high priority. When their leaders were threatened by the Sanhedrin, they cried out to God in prayer (**Acts 4:24, 31**). When Peter was scheduled to die, the church earnestly prayed through the night to God for him (**Acts 12:5**). The power and the effectiveness of the early church cannot be understood or explained without prayer.

In his book *Prayer*, Oren Hallesby contends that "prayer is the most important work in the kingdom of God. It is a labor for which there is no substitute in the kingdom of God." The church is powerless and ineffective without prayer. As A.J. Gordon said, "**We can do more than pray after we have prayed, but we cannot do more than pray until we have prayed.**"

Prayer will be a part of every Christian's and every church's life. It is not a question of the place of prayer in the life of a Christian or church. Yet, the question is how important a place prayer has in the life of the Christian and the church. It is time that churches honestly look at how important a place prayer has in the church. Is prayer a priority in the congregation? Is prayer the first step or the last resort when it comes to church decisions and problems? Is prayer the first step in reaching the community? Is the church struggling to grow in prayer or is it content to use the same old trite sayings and clichés and call this prayer? In order to develop a praying church, prayer has to have a high priority.

The third key in developing a praying church is that you have to have correct thinking about prayer. To what extent does God need our prayers to work out His plan for the world? If God is sovereign, all-loving, and wise, why does He need us to pray? If he “needs” our prayers, doesn’t that mean His plans are insufficient? These questions reveal the necessity of having correct thinking about prayer. How we answer these questions will greatly influence how we pray.

The Word of God teaches that God has sovereignly determined to use the prayers of His people. God waits to be asked not because He is powerless but because that is the way that He has chosen to exercise His will. We are not pawns on a giant chessboard. We are involved. As John Wesley wrote, “God does nothing but in answer to prayer.” In **James 5:16**, the Bible declares that the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. Intercessory prayer has a powerful effect in our world. It makes a difference in the lives of those we pray for. Lack of prayer, conversely, leaves things unchanged.

An extraordinary example of this is in **Ezekiel 22:30-21**. Israel had sinned greatly against the Lord and deserved to be punished (**Ezekiel 22:1-19**). God desired to show mercy on the rebellious nation. God looked for an intercessor for the nation, someone who would stand in the gap and pray for the nation. Yet, God could not find an intercessor. Therefore He poured out His wrath on the nation. This passage leaves no doubt that if God had found a faithful and powerful intercessor—one like Moses, Samuel, or Elijah—the land would not have experienced the wrath of God. Because He found no intercessor, God poured out His wrath on the nation.

You must come to understand that God rules the world through your prayers. The outcomes of history do depend on your prayers. God has so chosen to work in this way. Your prayers can have a powerful impact on the entire world.

The next key to developing a praying church is to clearly communicate needs and answers to prayer. In order to increase the amount of effective prayer within a congregation is to effectively communicate prayer needs and answers. Almost all congregations communicate prayer requests. Through bulletins or during a time set aside in the worship service, a congregation is informed about prayer requests and answers. Yet, there are many needs that are too personal to put in a bulletin or to announce from the pulpit. To do this might cause embarrassment or might contribute to gossip. This situation calls for the development of prayer teams. A prayer team can be made up of 3 to 5 people. These teams can handle prayer requests of a more personal nature in a delicate and confidential way. The point is that an effort should be made to communicate all kinds of needs, even things like unemployment, mental illness, marital problems concern over wayward children, and problems like alcoholism, drug addiction, moral lapses, or sexually-related diseases. These needs can be shared with smaller groups in such a way that the person sharing them gains prayer support and is protected from embarrassment and gossip.

Along with communicating a broad array of needs, church leaders should be careful to communicate prayer answers as well. It is not surprising to see people grow weary of prayer if all they ever see are lists of prayer needs and announcements that call them to prayer. Communicating requests without offering answers dampens the faith of those who are praying. Those who are praying need to hear about God’s answers to the prayers that they are praying.

A fifth key in developing a praying church is that prayer should be linked to ministry. Through prayer, we obtain God’s blessing. The Scripture encourage us to ask that we may

receive. We should seek God's blessing on ourselves for every area of life. But if our primary focus is on getting more for ourselves, we are misusing prayer.

It is possible for a congregation's prayer to be self-centered. God has called us to pray not only that we may obtain a blessing but also that we may be a blessing. A church needs to link prayer and ministry. A church needs to pray not only for its own needs, but also for the needs of its community and for its efforts to reach the unsaved. There has to be a balance between praying for the church's needs and those of the lost and its community.

A sixth key in developing a praying church is to make times, ways, and places for people to pray together. People often feel intimidated by praying in a large group. The church must devise times, ways, and places for people to pray together. Those with weak and sporadic prayer discipline might be encouraged, strengthened, and challenged by praying with a small group.

Praying with a small group can be valuable to believers. There are several reasons for this. First, it encourages consistency in prayer. We are more consistent about those things in our lives that are built into a regular schedule. Second, praying with others expands our prayer life. As we listen to others pray, we learn things from them that will strengthen our prayer lives. Next, praying together strengthens our faith. If we are not praying together, how can we agree in prayer? Jesus' power is evident in unified prayer (**Matthew 18:19-20**). Finally, praying together makes the large task of prayer even more manageable. No one person can carry the whole prayer burden of a congregation. However, when this broader task is broken down into smaller responsibilities, the impossible challenge is met by the smaller groups.

Another way to develop a praying church is to encourage personal devotions. Private prayers are an indispensable part of every Christian's life. The highest and greatest activity any person can ever engage in is prayer. The Bible emphasizes the need for private prayer. Private prayer was important to Abraham (**Genesis 19:27**), Moses (**Exodus 17:8-13**), David (**Psalms 5:3; 27:4, 7-9**), and Solomon (**Proverbs 8:17, 34-35**). Jesus advised his disciples not to pray in the synagogue or at the street corners in order to be seen by people but instead to go into their own homes and shut the door and pray to the Father in secret. Jesus Himself withdrew into private places to pray. Paul was praying alone when he had his "third heaven" experience. Peter was praying alone on the housetop in Joppa when the servants of Cornelius came.

The church needs to encourage people in personal prayer. Emphasizing the need for private devotions in sermons, Sunday school classes, small groups, retreats, new members' classes, and every avenue available. By doing this, you will make prayer a living standard for the congregation. Leaders, first and foremost, must be the first to make a wholehearted commitment to this standard.

A final key in developing a praying church is to encourage family devotions. Family devotions should be a part of every Christian family's experience. As the basic unit of society, the family provides the most natural group of persons to pray with and for each other. Family devotions provide an excellent time and place for parents to teach their children about prayer and its importance. Families need to have a "prayer notebook" in which they record their requests and answers. In doing this, you will be emphasizing the necessity of prayer, faith in God, and the need to look for how God works in response to prayer.

In this article, I have tried to give you some ideas of how to develop a praying church. It is my hope and prayer that you understand that God has chosen to work through prayer. Your church can

impact the area in which it is in and even the entire world. Prayer releases the dynamic power of God into your church, community, city, and world. I want to challenge you to pray that God will give your church a burden and a spirit of prayer.

Learning To Praise God-Praising Your Father

In previous issues of *The Prayer Closet*, we have dealt with learning how to praise God for who He is. In this issue, I want to deal with God the Father. The Christian church in general has not always maintained a fresh and living understanding of the Father. It has often failed to appreciate that the Christian life is a life of being a child of God the Father.

Yet, there are over two hundred different references to God as Father scattered throughout the New Testament. The Bible reveals that you are nothing less than a child of the living God! He is your Father and you are His child. God has abundantly poured out His love on you in making you His child (1 John 3:1). He sent His Son to die and be raised again from the dead in order to make you His child. He sent His Holy Spirit to live inside of you so that you could have fellowship with Him and know Him in an intimate way. For this reason, you must seek to know Him and praise Him for who He is and what He has done.

For some, the concept of a "father" may bring to mind painful memories. Some people had fathers who were abusive or neglectful. Yet, you have a heavenly Father that is perfect. He loves you with perfect love. He blesses you constantly and perfectly. He wants you to know Him intimately and to trust Him deeply.

The following is a list of the names, titles, and metaphors for God the Father in the Bible. As you read and study these and the Scripture, record what each of these reveals about God the Father. Think about ways you can praise Him concerning these aspects of His character. How does this title, name, or metaphor affect your relationship to Him? In what areas of your life does the title, name, or metaphor of the Father apply to your life? Seek Him with all your heart! Ask Him to show Himself to you as never before in your life!

Abba, Father-Mark 14:36, Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6
 Ancient of Days-Daniel 7:9, 13, 22
 Creator-Isaiah 27:11, 40:28
 Father-Luke 11:2
 Father-Creator-Malachi 2:10
 Father of Compassion-2 Corinthians 1:3
 Father of Glory-Ephesians 1:17
 Father of Lights-James 1:17
 Father of our spirits-Hebrews 12:9
 God-Genesis 1:1-2:3
 God Almighty-Genesis 17:1-2, 48:3-4, Psalm 91:1
 God Most High-Genesis 14:18-22, Psalm 78:56, Daniel 4:25, Acts 7:48
 God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob-Exodus 3:6, 16
 God of Heaven and Earth-Ezra 1:2, 5:11, Nehemiah 1:4, Revelation 11:13
 God of Hope-Romans 15:13
 God of Israel-Genesis 33:20

God of Justice-Malachi 2:17
God of Peace-Hebrews 13:20
God our Father-Ephesians 1:2
God The Father-2 Timothy 1:2, 2 Peter 1:17
Holy Father-John 17:11
Holy One-Isaiah 43:15, Habakkuk 3:3
Jealous-Exodus 20:5, 34:14, Deuteronomy 4:24
Judge of the Earth-Genesis 18:25, Psalm 94:2
King-Psalm 10:16, 74:12, 84:3, Isaiah 43:15
King of Glory-Psalm 24:7-10
King of Heaven-Daniel 4:37
King of the Ages-Revelation 15:3
King of the Nations-Jeremiah 10:6-7
Living God-Daniel 6:20, 26, Matthew 16:16, Romans 9:26
Lord of All the Earth-Joshua 3:11, 13, Micah 4:13, Zechariah 6:5
Lord of lords-Deuteronomy 10:17
Lord Our Righteousness-Jeremiah 23:5-6
Lord, the God of the Hebrews-Exodus 7:16
Our Father-Matthew 6:9
Redeemer-Job 19:25, Isaiah 47:4
Righteous Father-John 17:25
Rock-Deuteronomy 32:4, 14, Psalm 18:2
Rock of Israel-Genesis 49:24
Savior-Hosea 13:4
The Faithful God-Deuteronomy 7:9, 32:4
The Father-1 John 1:2, 3:1, 4:14
The First and the Last-Isaiah 48:12
The God of All Comfort-2 Corinthians 1:3
The God of Daniel Daniel 6:26
The God of Gods-Deuteronomy 10:17
The God of the Armies of Israel-1 Samuel 17:45
The God Who Sees-Genesis 16:13
The Great and Awesome God-Nehemiah 1:5
The Lord My God-Joshua 14:8, Ezra 7:28, Psalm 7:1, 18:28, 30:2, Zechariah 14:5
The Lord Our God-Deuteronomy 1:6, 19, 20, 2:29, 33, 3:3, 4:7, 6:4
The Mighty One of Jacob-Genesis 49:24,
Yahweh (LORD)-Genesis 4:26, Exodus 6:2-3, Numbers 14:18, Psalm 106:25
Your Father-Matthew 5:16, John 20:17

Praying Through The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments provide the believer with the standard of living and thinking that God requires. The believer is to obey God in these matters out of gratitude. The motivation for obedience is not out of a slavish fear or a desperate attempt to earn God's favor. The motivation is gratitude for the grace of God. Because God has delivered you from sin and damnation, you seek to obey Him out of a heart of thanks for the wonderful work of God's grace. You depend on His grace and power to enable you to strive for obedience. The grace that has saved you will motivate and enable you to strive for obedience.

By God's grace, you must strive to yield obedience to God's Word. The beginning point for this obedience is in prayer. You must seek God for understanding in His commands. You must prayerfully consider how His commands apply to your life. You must seek Him for His power and grace to put His command into action in your life.

The Second Commandment (Exodus 20:3-4)

The second commandment teaches that man is forbidden to have any visible representation of God whether from the hand of an artist or a sculptor. The first commandment teaches that there is only one true object of worship and that this is God alone. The second commandment teaches how God is to be worshipped. He is not to be worshipped through statues, pictures, or images. Men must worship God in spirit and truth. Men must worship God from the heart and mind (the spirit). At the same time, this worship must be built on what God has revealed about Himself (the truth)..

Questions For Reflection:

Am I striving to grow in my knowledge of God as He has revealed Himself in the Word?
 Are my beliefs about God based on the Scripture or on the tradition handed down to me?
 Have I refused to believe something about God because it made me uncomfortable?
 Have I allowed any kinds of pictures or images of you to be allowed in my home or church?

Prayer:

God of heaven and earth, everlasting Father, I praise You because You are the only true and living God. There is none like You in all of heaven and earth. From eternity unto eternity, You and You alone are God. You have created all things by Your own power and for Your own glory. There is nothing in time or eternity that can be compared to You. You cannot be comprehended or limited.

I praise You and thank You for revealing Yourself to me. If You had not revealed Yourself to me, I could have never known You. Father, teach me about Yourself. I want to know You as You are. Do not let my spiritual blindness and prejudice get in the way of my seeing and knowing You as You are. I plead with You to grant me understanding in Your person and purpose. Please do not allow me to

The Beloved Unbeliever Network is a network of intercessors who pray for believers who have spouses that are not Christians. This network of intercessors pray daily for believers who are in this situation. These intercessors have been trained and are committed to praying for believers who find themselves in this type of marriage. If you would like to be added to this prayer list or if you know of someone who is in the situation and would like to place them on this prayer list, please contact Dr. Kevin Meador. Please provide the following information:

Name of the family members
Church affiliation
Any special requests

Any information that is submitted will be kept in strict confidence and the privacy of the individuals will be protected.



THE PRAYER CLOSET
Dr. Kevin Meador
595 Stratton Road
Decatur, MS 39327