



THE PRAYER CLOSET

Transforming Lives Through Intercessory

Prayer And Fasting

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ISSUE 8

PRAYING FOR OUR SCHOOLS

The loss of prayer in our schools grieves Christians. A righteous anger burns in the hearts of Christians concerning the loss of this freedom. The righteous grief and anger of Christians has motivated them to labor for a return to school prayer. Christians know the power of prayer and its effectiveness in bringing change and transformation in the lives of people. Because of this, there has been an increased emphasis on a return to prayer in school in recent years.

It is right and good to have an emphasis on prayer in schools. Yet, what about prayer for schools? As prayer in school has been emphasized, we have forgotten about praying for schools. It is not enough to grieve over the loss of this freedom.

It is not enough to have a righteous anger concerning this evil. Working for a return to prayer in school is only half of the battle. There has to be intercession for the students, the parents, the teachers, and the administrators. The church has the responsibility to offer powerful and strategic intercession for all involved in the school systems of our land.

It is unsure what will happen in the school prayer issue. All Christians need to labor to maintain and preserve our religious freedoms. Yet, at the same time, we should not and cannot fail to intercede for those involved with the school system. To do so would be a sin (1 Timothy 2:1-2). At the same time, the minds and lives of millions of children and young adults are being shaped and molded. The church cannot fail in interceding for the students and those involved in the molding and shaping of their lives.

This issue of *The Prayer Closet* will focus on praying for our schools. Suggestions will be offered on how to intercede for students, teachers, parents, and administrators. It is my hope and prayer that you will be convicted and motivated to pray for the schools in your area and across the country. This is a crucial matter and deserves the attention and intercession of every Christian. God has often been pleased to begin spiritual awakenings among students. By praying for our schools, it could be a catalyst for another awakening

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Prayer Coordinators And Prayer Ministries

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among the students of this nation. Prayer is an essential element in the transformation of our schools and genuine change among the children and youth of this nation.

When God's people do not pray fervently and faithfully, Satan gains ground, the flesh conquers, and the world prevails.

"Watch and pray lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak"

(Matthew 26:41)

Why Should You Pray For The Schools?

Before we look at how to pray for the schools, we need to see why we should do this. We need to lay a foundation for our praying. This foundation must be based on the teachings of the Word of God. There are some powerful reasons from the Bible why believers should intercede for schools.

Believers should pray for the schools because it is the responsibility of the church. In **1 Timothy 2:1-2**, the apostle Paul declares that the church's responsibility is to intercede. He writes, "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence." The church's intercession can have a powerful and righteous affect on society. By praying, the church can transform the society. The church is an agent of righteousness in the world. The church makes a difference through its intercession.

Through prayer, the church has an incredible potential to impact the schools. The schools are shaping and molding the minds and lives of millions of young people. The church can have a powerful influence in how these lives are shaped and molded through prayer. Through prayer, the power of God

is released into their lives and situations. When the church prays for the schools, the power of God is released into the schools. The power of God can vitally and eternally affect the lives of the students and the course of their lives.

Believers must pray for schools because the destiny of the nation is determined in the classroom. The future of a nation is being determined right now. The people who will guide this nation, its institutions, businesses, schools, families, and churches are being shaped and molded in our schools today. If the church desires to have an influence on the future and destiny of this nation, the church must intercede for the students, teachers, parents, and administrators that are involved in the school system. The church can and will make a difference through prayer. The Word of God says, "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven" (**Ecclesiastes 3:1**). For these children and young adults, this is a time of preparation. It is a time for their beliefs and values to be shaped and fixed. The church can have a distinct influence in this matter by interceding for the students and those who teach them. The Word of God says, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (**James 5:16**). When righteous people plead with God, they can influence a generation of young people. When this happens, they have a formidable influence on the destiny of that nation.

Believers must intercede for the schools because Satan has made them into a primary target. Satan is a wise and deceptive enemy. He is filled with hate and desires to damn and destroy. The Word of God declares, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (**1 Peter 5:8**). He is the roaring lion who seeks to damn the lives and souls of young people. He is the roaring lion who wants to poison and destroy Christian kids. He would love nothing more than to damn young people to hell. He would love to wound and destroy Christian youth.

Satan has made the school systems a primary target. He has determined that he can do great damage through the schools. Think about it. Where do most young people spend the majority of their time? It is at school. They are in school around their peers more than they are at home or in church. Many children spend more time with their

teachers than they do with their parents. This places the children and young people in a vulnerable position. This gives Satan a perfect opportunity to work in their lives to accomplish his evil and devious plans. This allows him the opportunity to attack with his lies, his schemes, and his temptations.

The church has to go on the offensive in this matter. We must provide a covering for the students. We must offer prayer through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We must stand against the attacks of Satan through the school systems. We take this stance through intercession.

Praying for the schools can be a powerful tool for evangelism. The Christian young people in the school systems of our nation have an immense opportunity. Jesus Christ calls His people to have a positive and powerful impact on the lost world, "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned. It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden" (**Matthew 5:13-14**). He also calls on Christians to share with lost people about their need of a personal relationship with Him, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (**Acts 1:8**). In the schools, Christian youth have an opportunity to exercise a righteous influence. They have an opportunity to share the gospel with their lost friends and classmates. By praying for Christian students and teachers, we are actually praying for a righteous influence in the schools. We are also interceding for the salvation of lost children and youth. We must pray that God would help and empower the Christians in the school system to exercise a righteous influence and to share the gospel of Jesus. We must pray that they would take advantage of this opportunity.

At the same time, believers need to pray for schools to protect Christian students from worldly and evil influences. Just as Christian youth have an opportunity to have a righteous influence, they can also be influenced by the wrong people and values. Other young people who do not know Jesus Christ will surround Christian students. The Word of God says, "Do not be deceived: evil company corrupts good habits" (**1 Corinthians 15:33**). They will be

exposed to ideas, values, language, and behaviors that do not please God and are in opposition to His Word. This places the Christian youth in a vulnerable position. And no Christian youth is immune. They will face these temptations and there is the possibility of corruption by and compromise with these things. Believers must pray that the faith of Christian students would be blessed and fortified to stand strong in this environment. We must continually plead for these students and teachers. We must cry out to God for their protection.

Praying for the schools fits with the character of God. God is a God of knowledge. The Word of God says, "For the LORD is the God of knowledge" (**1 Samuel 2:3**). The Word of God also says, "With Him are wisdom and strength, He has counsel and understanding" (**Job 12:13**). God is the source of knowledge. He has created it. All truth has come from God. He is the standard of truth. Pursuing knowledge is an honor to God. It is glorifying to God. God has created people with minds. His purpose in doing this is so that people will pursue the truth that He has created. We are to pray that the students will pursue knowledge. We are to pray that the teachers will impart truth to the students. By praying for students and teachers, we are actually glorifying the knowledge of God.

Praying for the schools is in line with God's command for man. When God created all things, He gave a command to man. That command is, "Then God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (**Genesis 1:28**). God commanded man to have dominion over the earth. God desires that man use the world that He has created. He wants man to grow in knowledge and be a good steward of what He has created. The key to this is that man study, research, and grow in understanding of this world. This will happen only if people labor to study and grow in their understanding. By praying for the schools, you are praying that people will grow in their knowledge of this world and how to use it. This is in line with God's command of dominion.

Children are a precious gift from the Lord. This should motivate believers to pray for the schools. The children and the young people in the schools are made in the image of God. The Word

of God says, "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; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth" (**Psalm 139:13-15**). These things are true of the young people in the schools across our land. God has created these young people. They are the work of His hands. God skillfully created them. They are the wonderful work of God. In no way do I want to minimize the personal sinfulness of these young people. All of them have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:23**). All of them have a sinful nature that must be dealt with through the power of God and the work of Jesus Christ (**Ephesians 2:1-10**). Yet, it must be emphasized that they are the handiwork of God and are accountable to God.

Because of this, we should be motivated to pray for them. They are accountable to God and will one day stand in judgment. They are made for eternity. These young people will one-day experience the joy and the blessedness of heaven or the misery and damnation of hell. They are God's handiworks. He has entrusted us with this precious gift. We should labor with all our strength to intercede for them and minister to them. Because they are God's gift, the work of His hands, we should be motivated to pray for them.

Praying For The Students

The following are suggestions on how you can intercede for the students of a school system. You can pray these things for individuals, classes, or entire schools. These prayer requests can apply to different school settings, from grade school to college. These prayer requests can also be adapted to those who practice homeschooling.

You can use this as a prayer guide or develop your own from it. The key issue is to offer powerful and strategic intercession for the students.

- ◆ *Pray that the lost students of the school will surrender to Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of their lives (**John 3:1-16; John 6:44; Matthew 11:28**). Plead that the Holy Spirit will work powerfully in the lives of the students who*
- do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Ask Him to convict the lost students and draw them to Jesus Christ. Call on Him to stir the hearts of the lost students, showing them their lostness and their need of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ◆ *Pray that the believing students will exercise a powerful and righteous influence in the school (**Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Peter 2:11-12, 3:15-16**). Pray that God would enable the believing students to live holy and obedient lives. Ask that their lives will be a shining testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray that God would remove anything from their lives that would hinder their testimony.*
- ◆ *Plead that the believing students will be powerful witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ (**Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8**). The believing students need to live holy lives. Yet, they also need to be personal witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray that they would be filled with the Holy Spirit so that they can speak boldly about who Jesus is and what Jesus can do (**Acts 4:31**). Ask God to give them wisdom about sharing their personal faith in Jesus Christ. Pray that they will grow spiritually so that they can share and defend their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in a loving and powerful way.*
- ◆ *Plead with God to give believing students' strength and courage when they are persecuted for their faith (**2 Timothy 3:10-12**). Christian students will face persecution. This persecution may come in a variety of forms. It can range from being ignored to ridicule to violence. Pray that God would protect these students and would give them strength and courage in these situations. Ask God to enable them to stand strong in the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- ◆ *Pray that the believing students would be protected from evil, worldly influences (**Proverbs 1:10-19; 1 Corinthians 15:32; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17**). Students who do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will surround believing students. They will be exposed to ideas, values, and behaviors that are not pleasing or acceptable to God. There is a danger that these ideas, values,*