



# THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers in Prayer

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ISSUE 1

## Prayer Busters

What is a “prayer buster?” Prayer busters are attitudes and actions that hinder our prayers. These attitudes and actions keep us from receiving answers in prayer. The Word of God emphasizes that we must have a right relationship with God to receive answers from Him. This issue of *The Prayer Closet* focuses on the basic “prayer busters” that can rob us of power and blessing in prayer. It is my hope and prayer that the Spirit will help you confront and overcome these as you walk pray to our holy and heavenly Father.

### Prayer Buster #1: Prayerlessness

This is the most common reason for unanswered prayer. Failing to persist in prayer frequently stands in the way of our receiving answers from God. James is clear about this, “Ye have not because ye ask not” (**James 4:2**). He declares that you must ask God if you are going to receive from God. Good intentions are not enough. Desiring an answer from God is only the beginning. We must pray with persistence.

Too many times, we do not receive answers from God because we fail to persist in prayer. God can immediately answer prayers. Prayers in the midst of danger and great need

often receive immediate answers from God. Yet, this is not His primary way of working. Many of our prayer requests will call for earnest and persistent prayer. By persisting in prayer, we are not overcoming God’s reluctance but preparing our hearts to receive His answer.

When prayer is not answered, we must ask ourselves: Have I prayed with persistence? Have I continually brought this before the Father over time? We often blame God for failing to answer when the problem is that we have failed to seek Him with all our heart. Could it be that you are not hearing from God because He has not heard from you?

How can you overcome prayerlessness? The following are some suggestions you might consider in dealing with this prayer buster:

- (1) *You must remember that God does hear and answer prayer* (**2 Kings 19:14-35; 2 Chronicles 20; Daniel 6:10-22; Matthew 7:7-11**). God calls on us to pray without ceasing (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**). He commands you to be devoted to prayer and thanksgiving (**Colossians 4:2**). Yet, we must understand that these are not empty

commands. God calls us and commands us to pray because He will hear and answer. God's command to pray is an invitation to receive from Him. Seize these calls and commands and pray with persistence!

- (2) *You must realize prayerlessness is a sin (1 Samuel 12:23)*. Prayerlessness flows from a spirit of self-sufficiency and pride. When you do not pray, you are saying to God, "I don't need you; I can make it on my own." God hates this attitude and sees it as sin.
- (3) *The Bible teaches that the believer is to be persistent in prayer*. The apostle Paul sets the example for believers. Notice how he described his praying: "unceasingly" (**Romans 1:9**), "always" (**Philippians 1:9**), and "night and day" (**1 Thessalonians 3:10**). He declared to Timothy that he prayed night and day without ceasing (**2 Timothy 1:3**). The Lord Jesus Christ also emphasizes the importance of persistence in **Matthew 7:7-11**.
- (4) *Ask the Holy Spirit to create a spirit of persistence in your prayer life*. Call on the Holy Spirit to give you the endurance to persist in prayer, especially when you are interceding for others. The Holy Spirit is the persistent Intercessor (**Romans 8:26-27**). The Lord Jesus is also a persistent Intercessor (**Romans 8:34**). He lives to make intercession for His people (**Hebrews 7:25**).
- (5) *Keep a record of your prayer requests*. How can you know if God is answering your prayers if you are not keeping up with your prayer requests? You might consider keeping a record of your prayer requests. You can keep a spiritual journal of your requests and how God has answered. By recording your requests, it will keep the need before you and help you persist in prayer. It will also become a record of God's faithfulness to you and your seeking after Him.

## Prayer Buster #2: Unconfessed Sin

The Word of God declares in **Psalm 66:18** that if we regard iniquity in our hearts, he will not hear us. God has established some

conditions to hearing and answering our prayers. Unconfessed sin deals a major blow in getting your prayers heard and answered. If we delight in what is sinful, while at the same time praying to God, God will not listen or answer our prayers. God refuses to bless when we harbor sin in our lives.

**Psalm 66:18** teaches that if we cherish sin – approve of it, enjoy it, show respect to it – God does not hear or respond to us. God is a holy God. God will not grant His blessing when we cherish anything that is sinful in His sight. God is not under any obligation to hear and answer our prayers when we manifest such disrespect and irreverence for Him. What an insult to the holy God – to hold out your hand to Him while clinging to what is evil in His sight with the other hand!

God is not hard of hearing. There are times when He refuses to hear. The Word of God states in **Isaiah 59:1-2**, "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ears heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He will not hear."

Secret sins, cherished sins, have a devastating effect on your prayer life. When you cherish sin, you can remove the pronoun "I" from **Psalm 66:18** and write down your name in its place. When you pray and delight in some sin, God is not inclined to hear or answer you. When you refuse to repent, He chooses not to hear. The prayers of one who would seek Him without surrendering sin in order to be heard and answered do not move the hand or the heart of God.

The following are some practical suggestions in dealing with the prayer buster of unconfessed sin:

- (1) *Do not assume that sin is always the problem when you have difficulty in your prayer life*. Unconfessed sin is one of the prayer busters. There are other barriers to God hearing and answering your prayers. Yet, you should never underestimate the power of sin to hinder your prayers. Be open and sensitive to this possibility when you are not receiving answers from God.

### Prayer Buster #3: Selfishness

- (2) *Don't stop praying.* Prayer is the vehicle to convey your deepest feelings and desires to God. There is nothing wrong with the vehicle of prayer. When you don't think you are being heard or you're not receiving answers from God, don't throw your hands up and say, "Prayer doesn't work. God isn't listening to me." God delights in hearing and answering His people. He wants to hear from His people. Yet, you may have something in your life that needs to be dealt with.
- (3) *Don't blame God for unanswered prayer.* This is easy to do; I've been guilty of this before myself. God has more than enough power to answer every prayer that pleases Him from those who please Him. His power is not the issue, but pleasing Him is.
- (4) *Do examine yourself.* Look inside yourself. See if you are cherishing sin. Ask yourself, "Is there something that I'm trying to hide from God that is hindering my prayers? Could it be that I'm the problem?" Plead with the Spirit to show you if cherished sin is the problem in having your prayers answered and heard.
- (5) *Be diligent to confess your sins.* When you identify what it is that is displeasing to God in your life, don't try to cover it up or excuse it (**Proverbs 28:13**). You must remember that you cannot hide your sin from God (**Daniel 2:23; Deuteronomy 29:29; Luke 8:17; Hebrews 4:13**). Confess your sin to God; repent of it (**1 John 1:9**). Be honest and open with God about your sin.
- (6) *Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a spirit of sensitivity to sin (John 16:7).* This is for dealing with sin immediately and harshly. You need to deal with your sin as quickly as possible. Do not be complacent when it comes to your sin. We need this because our hearts can become hard and insensitive to sin. As we live in the world, if we are not careful, sin will become less sinful to us. We must ask the Spirit to give us a tender, sensitive heart to what is displeasing to God. Powerful praying requires a lifestyle of continual confession and forsaking of sin.

Sometimes God does not answer our prayers because of the reason why we pray. If our reason for praying is selfish, God does not view Himself under any obligation to consider the prayer. No prayer powered by selfish motivation will move the heart of God. Praying with selfish motives is as fruitless as praying with unconfessed sin.

If we are honest, we have to admit that sometimes we pray for selfish reasons (**James 4:2-3**). Selfish praying is praying that puts your interests ahead of God's interests or the interests of others. It is praying that God will meet a need that benefits no one but yourself and may even harm others. It has a one-directional focus--for your own benefit without any regard to God or others. Selfishly motivated praying never takes God's glory or the good of others into consideration. This is what makes it so selfish.

The word "lust" in **James 4:2-3** is a translation of the Greek word "hedone." The English derivative of the Greek word "hedone" is "hedonism." Hedonism is the belief that pleasure or happiness is the sole goal of life. Your prayer request is unacceptable when it is solely for your own pleasure or happiness without regard to God's glory or the good of others.

When your prayer request is motivated solely for your own pleasure or happiness without regard for God's glory or the good of others, it has a fatal flaw. Praying for God to give you something for no greater purpose than your own pleasure is a sure way to have your prayers fall on deaf ears. Your motive must be higher than this if God is to answer your prayers. God is never pleased with selfish prayers.

How can you deal with the prayer buster of selfishness? The following are some suggestions on how to deal with selfishness in your prayer life:

- (1) *Begin with a serious motivation check.* Do an honest appraisal of your motives. Ask

yourself, “Is this a selfish prayer? Why am I praying for this?” If your prayers don’t seem to be getting through to God, maybe the problem is the reason you offer them. Check your motives behind the request. Deal with any selfish motives that you discover.

(2) *Ask God to reveal to you if your motives are right.* Sometimes we think our prayers are properly motivated and God still does not answer. The reason may be that our mind is deceiving us concerning the motives (**Jeremiah 17:9**). We simply do not understand what is in our heart the way that God does. Our motivation may be buried deep within us, but that does not keep God from knowing it or revealing it to us (**Psalms 90:8; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Daniel 2:22; Matthew 6:4, 6, 18; Luke 8:17; Hebrews 4:13**). Ask God to reveal your motives concerning your prayer request. Call on Him to show you what is truly motivating your prayer request.

(3) *Do pray for yourself.* It is not wrong to pray for yourself. There are numerous examples of biblical characters who prayed for themselves: Moses (**Exodus 33:18**), Hannah (**1 Samuel 1:11**), David (**2 Samuel 24:10-25**), Solomon (**1 Kings 3:7-9**), Jabez (**1 Chronicles 4:10**), Jonah (**Jonah 2:1-10**), Paul (**Romans 1:10**), and Jesus (**Matthew 26:39-42**). Jesus teaches you to ask for what you need (**Matthew 7:7**). He also teaches you to pray, “Give us today our daily bread” (**Matthew 6:11**). Praying for your desires and needs is not selfish as long as you are not motivated solely by selfish desires.

(4) *Ask God to conform your prayer request to His will (1 John 5:14).* When you feel that your prayer may be motivated by selfishness, ask God to conform your request to His will. Call on Him to teach you how to pray concerning the need or the situation. Be submissive to God when you pray. You should enter His presence with boldness and determination. Yet, these things must be balanced with submission and a willingness to change the way you pray when the Holy Spirit leads you to do this.

(5) *When you pray, keep the “glory factor” in mind.* Ask yourself, “Will what I ask of God bring glory to Him or to me?” Pray for those things that are going to glorify God. This is a prayer that God considers worthy. When Jesus Christ taught His people to pray, He taught us to pray first that God will be glorified and His kingdom advanced (**Matthew 6:9-10**). Our prayers should be motivated for God’s glory and for the advancement of His kingdom.

(6) *Pray that God will meet your needs so that you can minister to others and meet their needs.* God honors and blesses this type of praying.

### Prayer Buster #4: Lack Of Faith

Lack of faith is a powerful prayer buster. The Bible is clear that the one who expects to receive answers to prayer from God must have faith in Him. The Word of God says in **James 1:6-7**, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally, and without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.”

Prayer is an act of faith in God. It is the confidence that He will hear and answer you when you pray to Him. When you do not have this confidence in Him, He is not pleased to answer you. God has determined that to receive answers to your prayers, you must believe Him for those answers. He will not bless unbelief (**Matthew 15:58**). One cannot receive from God if he or she does not believe that God can grant what is requested.

In order to receive answers to your prayers, you must “have faith in God” (**Mark 11:22**). What kind of faith receives answers from God? First, you must believe that God is willing to answer you. He is your loving Father; He wants you to bring your requests to Him (**Matthew 7:7-11**). Your God is a loving Father who wants to bestow good and perfect gifts on you (**James 1:17**). No one’s voice sounds sweeter to God than yours. There is nothing more important in the world to God than hearing from you. He wants to hear from you. He is willing to hear you. He is willing to

answer you. You must trust that He is willing to hear and answer you.

Second, you must believe that God is able to answer you. It's important to believe that God is willing to help you and to answer your prayers. Yet, if you are not convinced that God is able to answer you, your praying is in vain. Do you believe from your heart that God has the power to answer you? It is easy to fall into the trap of saying that you believe that God is able without believing this from the heart. You must be convicted that God has the ability to answer you.

God is capable of handling any prayer requests that you have. He can handle any problem that you have. Creating the world isn't much of a problem to Him. He has never had any trouble raising anyone from the dead. Nothing is too difficult to God (**Jeremiah 32:17**). Yet, He wants you and is waiting for you to recognize His power and ability. He wants you to pray with the confidence that he can answer your prayer requests.

The principle that I have learned through the years is this: the more you are convinced of God's ability, the more He demonstrates that ability to you. When you pray, plan to see a mighty demonstration of God's power! Trust God for answers to your prayers! If your prayers have the clouds of doubt hanging over them, they won't get anywhere. God will not be pleased to answer them. Someone has wrote, "Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed!"

How can you deal with this prayer buster? The following are some practical suggestions that you might consider. You can use these to build your faith and overcome this pernicious prayer buster:

(1) *Be diligent to deal with you sin (Psalm 139:23-24)*. It is impossible to grow a crop in a field where weeds are allowed to grow. If a farmer is going to grow a crop, he must root out the weeds and then plant his seed. You cannot expect faith to grow in your life if you allow the weeds of sin to stay in your life.

(2) *Ask God to create a deeper and stronger faith (Luke 17:5)*. Call on God to create you in the faith to receive answers to prayer. It is His

will that you believe Him for answers (Hebrews 11:6). Plead with Him to create this kind of faith in your life.

(3) *Saturate your life with the Word of God (Romans 10:17)*. God creates faith in a person by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. As you hear, read, study, memorize, and meditate on God's Word, God will deepen your faith in Him.

(4) *Confess your lack of faith in God (1 John 1:9)*. Tell God about your struggle to trust Him. Confess that you are having difficulty believing that He is willing and able to answer your prayers. Plead with Him to help you deal with your unbelief.

(5) *Labor to gain a more intimate relationship with God (John 15:7)*. One reason that many Christians lack faith is because they do not have a growing, intimate knowledge of God. They lack faith because they do not know God very well. It is like talking to a stranger. It is very difficult to talk to a stranger – to open up to a stranger. When you do not have a growing relationship to God, it is very difficult to pour your heart out to Him and expect answers from Him.

(6) *Concentrate on how God has blessed you and answered your prayers in the past*. Past mercies and blessings are anchors for believing God in the future.

(7) *Read the biographies of others whose prayers have been answered*. Many biographies of great Christians are real faith builders. Read what God has done for others in answer to prayer and build your confidence in God. You can start by reading **Hebrews 11**. Then read the stories of Abraham, Moses, Caleb, David, Jabez, Daniel, Peter, and Paul. Then you might consider reading the biographies of George Mueller, Praying John Hyde, C.T. Studd, David Livingstone and others.

(8) *End your prayers with anticipation*. When you pray, is your final "amen" really a "hello" to doubt? End your prayers with the certain

anticipation of God's response. Anticipate the release of God's blessing to your seeking Him.

- (9) *Pray the promises of God.* Demonstrate to God that you take His Word seriously by praying His promises. Plead and claim God's promise in prayer.
- (10) *Don't require faithless confirmation from the Lord.* So often when people pray they ask God to give them some kind of sign that He will answer the prayer. Requiring a sign from the Lord when you pray is not praying in faith. There are times when God will graciously grant confirmation. Gideon wanted God to give him a sign to confirm His will (**Judges 6:36-40**). God was gracious and patient with Gideon's feeble faith and granted him a sign. Yet, this is not the norm for prayer. Sometimes God will be pleased to grant this. However, we must always walk by faith and not by sight.

## Prayer Buster #5: Quitting Too Soon

The Word of God teaches that the believer is to persevere in prayer. God never tires of hearing from you. When you come to God, you are not forcing yourself on Him. He has invited you to come (**Luke 11:9**). You are not imposing on God when you seek Him in prayer.

Jesus Christ taught two parables about perseverance prayer – not giving up in prayer. Both parables are recorded in Luke. The first parable is in **Luke 11:5-8**. The neighbor was not about to wake his family, open the door, and give this man any food. Yet, because the friend was persistent, the neighbor got up and gave him food. This man received an answer because he persevered – he didn't give up.

In this parable, Jesus is contrasting the neighbor's reluctance and selfishness with the openness and generosity of the heavenly Father. If a self-centered neighbor reluctantly rose at midnight to supply a need, how much more will God's heart be moved by your persevering in prayer? If not giving up was the key to an unwilling heart, how much more

effective is it with the willing heart of your heavenly Father?

The other parable of Jesus concerning perseverance in prayer is found in **Luke 18:1-5**. A widow appeared before an unjust judge in order to plead for justice. Day after day, he turned her away. The woman knew that her cause was right; she didn't give up. She returned day after day, pleading for his justice. Finally, the judge, ready to pull his hair out, granted her justice (**Luke 18:5**). Her perseverance paid off.

Jesus' point in the parable is: if an unholy and selfish man can be moved by perseverance, how much more will a holy and loving Father be moved by the perseverance of His children? If an unworthy, sinful, self-seeking judge will finally act because a woman would not give up, how much more will your loving, compassionate Father respond when you don't give up?

Both parables teach that God wants you to develop a shameless perseverance when it comes to prayer. Lukewarmness in prayer is nauseating to God. A lack of perseverance will cause you to come away empty-handed. You must keep on praying; you must not give up. Your potential for success is enormous; don't quit too soon.

In dealing with this prayer buster, you might consider the following suggestions:

- (1) *Determine in your heart to persevere in prayer.* The parables we looked at emphasize the necessity of perseverance. This should stir us to pray for the long haul. We have to determine in our hearts that we are going to seek God with our whole heart until we receive an answer.
- (2) *This truth reminds us that God works in our lives as we pray.* Perseverance in prayer is not attempting to overcome the reluctance of God. Yet, it is preparation for receiving an answer from God. God's delays in answering are often times of a deeper work of His Spirit in our lives. Prayer is a relationship; as we persevere, God teaches us, changes us, and molds our hearts and desires to His will.
- (3) *Don't give up until God answers.* We must seek Him until we receive an answer. Don't

let discouragement drive you to quit seeking after Him. Seek Him with your whole heart until you have an answer. God will honor your heartfelt praying. He will bless your perseverance in prayer.

(4) *Pray until the impossible becomes the improbable.* We can and should pray for the impossible. God is the God of the impossible (**Matthew 19:26**). I have been asked, "How long should I pray about a particular concern or need?" The basic answer is until God answers or gives you the assurance that He is going to answer. I believe you can also gauge this by the principle of praying until the impossible becomes improbable. An example of this is praying that a particular pastor will accept the call to your church. Yet, this man accepts a call to another church. Should you continue to pray that he would come to your church? At this point, the impossible has become improbable. When this happens, it's time to refocus your praying.

### **Prayer Buster #6: Broken Relationships**

Our heavenly Father is concerned about the relationships that we have with those around us. Jesus reveals the heart of our Father when He taught that the second great commandment is "to love our neighbor as ourselves" (**Matthew 22:39**). God desires that we have right relationships with those around us. In fact, it is impossible to have a right relationship with God if you are not in a right relationship with those around you.

God's concern for our relationships is shown by the fact that broken relationships can hinder our prayers. The Word of God says in **1 Peter 3:7**, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour as unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." The Bible also says in **Matthew 5:24**, "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

In both verses, the Bible is teaching that broken relationships hinder us from receiving answers. In **1 Peter 3:7**, we are told that a problem between the husband and wife can mean problems in prayer. In **Matthew 5:24**, worship is not acceptable to God if there is a fracture between people. The point is that we cannot expect God to answer if we do not seek to mend rifts between others and ourselves.

The following are some suggestions that you might consider in dealing with this prayer buster:

- (1) *Confront any sinful feelings that you may have about others.* Ask God to help you deal with any sinful feelings like anger, jealousy, pettiness, and the like that you may be harboring toward others. The relationship might not be broken outwardly, but, if you are harboring these feelings, it will hinder your praying.
- (2) *Be quick to reconcile with others.* Do whatever you must to reconcile with others. Humble yourself and confess your fault. Seek forgiveness. Don't allow a broken relationship to continue. The consequences of this are serious – one of which is the hindrance of your prayers.
- (3) *Remember that God knows your heart.* The Bible says in **Romans 12:18**, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceable with all men." There are times when others will not want to reconcile. Even when you do all you can, others may not want to deal with the problem in the relationship. The key question is, "Have I done everything I can to make things right in this relationship?" If you have, God knows this and your prayers will not be hindered.
- (4) *Pray that God will empower you to love your neighbor as yourself.* Walking in love toward others will help you to pray in power.

### **Praying For A Worthy Walk**

The following is a prayer guide based on Ephesians 5. This prayer guide is focused on praying for a lifestyle worthy of the Lord and that will manifest a marked difference between

you and the lost. You can pray this for yourself and/or your church.

Father, I am Your child. Empower me to walk in love toward others because Christ gave Himself for me in His sacrificial death **(5:1-2)**.

Father, deliver me from being involved in sexual sins, dirty actions, or greediness because these things are contrary to Your character and will **(5:3-7)**.

Father, I used to walk in the darkness. I ask that I will now walk in the light of Your Word. Grant me grace to be obedient to You and fill me with the fruit of the Spirit **(5:8-9)**.

Father, teach me Your will. I will not have anything to do with the works of darkness, but I will expose them and will refuse to let them have any place in my life **(5:10-13)**.

Father, empower me to live my life wisely and not foolishly. Help me to use my time wisely because the days are evil **(5:14-17)**.

Father, I ask that the Spirit will continually fill me and control me. I will worship You with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with other believers. I will worship You every day **(5:18-19)**.

Father, I plead that I will give thanks for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ **(5:20)**.



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# Prayerwalking



## Taking Your Faith Into The Real World



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VOLUME 2

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ISSUE 1

### PRAYING FOR D.O.O.R.S.

It is the responsibility of all believers to share the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. All Christians are not expected to use the same methods of sharing the gospel, but all Christians are expected to share the same gospel. Our methods may be different, but we are to share the message of Jesus' transforming power. Why is this expected of the believer? The Lord Jesus Christ Himself has commanded us to witness. Consider the words of the Lord Jesus Christ:

**Matthew 28:19-20:** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen."

**Mark 16:15:** "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.'"

**Luke 24:47:** "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

**John 20:21:** "So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

**Acts 1:8:** "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."

These commands were not given to the apostles only. For example, the apostles never came to this nation. For the command of Jesus Christ to be fulfilled and for America to hear about Jesus Christ, the gospel had to come here by other Christians. In addition, the apostles will never come to your home, your neighborhood, or the place where you work. For the Great Commission to be fulfilled there, believers must share the gospel in those

areas. This responsibility rests on the shoulders of believers.

Since every believer has the responsibility of witnessing to the lost, the believer needs to combine prayer with his or her witness. Not only should you pray for lost people, you should also pray about your witness to lost people. Through my own personal witnessing and training other believers to witness, I have developed a plan for praying for one's personal witnessing. This plan is not perfect and it is not the only one. Yet, it is a simple plan that covers the basics of personal witnessing. This plan can help you saturate your witnessing with prayer and power. This plan can be used in a variety of ways: a believer praying for his or her own witnessing, praying for those you are training to share the gospel, a pastor and other believers praying for the outreach and witness of a church.

This plan is based on the acrostic **D.O.O.R.S.** Each letter stands for an area of your personal witnessing that you can cover in prayer. The reason that it is based on **D.O.O.R.S.** is because a "door" in the Bible sometimes referred to an opportunity to proclaim the gospel to unbelievers (**1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:3; Revelation 3:8**). An open door is an opportunity to share the gospel with a lost person. This is exactly what believers should want and should be seeking. We do this primarily through prayer.

One of the ways to pray for your personal witnessing is by praying through the acrostic **D.O.O.R.S.**:

**D**iscipline-Sharing the gospel with others should be the natural overflow of the Christian life. Because of who Jesus Christ is and what Jesus has done for us, it should be natural to the believer to share about Him and how to be saved. All believers should be able to talk about what Jesus has done for them and what He means to them. Yet, at the same time, sharing the gospel with others is something that we need to discipline ourselves to do. You must be looking for opportunities to share the gospel with others. You should plan on witnessing to the people that you encounter throughout your daily life. You need to develop at least one way of intentionally witnessing to an unbeliever. One of the ways that I do this is by asking others what I can pray about for them. This will usually lead to an opportunity to talk with them about their relationship to God. This is just one way of intentionally sharing the gospel with others. We do need to look for opportune times and moments to witness to others. However, too many believers fail to witness because they do not plan on sharing the gospel. You are a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ; discipline yourself to talk with others about Him (**2 Corinthians 5:20**).

*Pray that God will give you the discipline to witness intentionally with those people that you encounter throughout your life.*

**O**pportunities-You should ask God to give you opportunities to share the gospel with others (**Matthew 7:7-8**). We

need to combine praying for opportunities and looking for them. It is not enough to pray for an opportunity to witness. You are to pray for an opportunity and then look for that opportunity. Pray that God will prepare the hearts of people so that you can witness to them. When you pray for the right circumstances to witness, you pray in one of two ways. You can pray that God will grant you the opportunity to witness to those that you encounter on a daily basis. Pray that God will create the right circumstances and that He will prepare the heart of the person. Another way that you can pray for opportunities to witness is to make a list of the people that you want to see God save. I call this an "Impact List". These are people that you have a burden for and that need to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Your list can be as large as you want it to be. I usually suggest that you have at least three to five persons on this list. Once you establish this list, begin praying fervently for opportunities to witness to these people. Plead with God to prepare them to receive the gospel. As you pray for these opportunities, start looking for them with eyes of faith.

*Pray that God will give you numerous opportunities to witness to those that you encounter or to those who are on your "Impact List".*

**O**bstacles-Each believer has reasons why he or she does not witness. There are hindrances that make witnessing

difficult for each believer. For some believers, the obstacle to their witnessing is fear. They are afraid of rejection and ridicule from the persons to whom they witness. For others, the obstacle is a lack of knowledge. They do not feel that they know enough to share the gospel with others. These are only some of the obstacles that hinder believers from witnessing. You may have these or others that hinder you from sharing your faith in Jesus Christ. In order to pray about these obstacles, make a list of the hindrances or reasons that keep you from sharing the gospel. If you are praying for others, you can make a list of the obstacles that are hindering them. Once you identify these obstacles, begin praying that God would help you overcome these obstacles. Plead with Him to give you ideas of how to share your faith with others in a fresh and creative way. Ask Him to remove any hindrances to your personal witnessing.

*Pray that God will enable you to deal with every obstacle that is hindering you from sharing the gospel with others.*

**R**equirements-When I use the term "requirements", I am referring to certain qualities. There are some qualities that you need in your life in order to be a powerful and effective witness. One quality that is essential is wisdom. The Bible says in **Colossians 4:5**, "Walk in wisdom toward those who are without, redeeming the time." Paul teaches that believers need to "walk in wisdom toward those who are without." The

phrase “those who are without” is referring to lost people. Believers are to be wise in their relationship with lost people. This refers not only to how we live around them, but also how we approach them with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we attempt to reach people with the gospel, we need wisdom to know how to do this. Another quality that is needed is understanding. The witness does need to understand the gospel and how to answer the questions of lost people. This does not mean that you have to be an expert in theology in order to be a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, the believers should be growing in their understanding of the Bible and how to answer questions about the faith. Peter declares that this is necessary for every believer by writing, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear (**1 Peter 3:15**). We should be diligent to pray and study the Word in order to clearly present the Word of God. Pray for a greater understanding of the gospel so that you can clearly present the truth to others. A final quality that is required for being a powerful witness is a godly life. We need to share the gospel. But, we must live out the gospel on a daily basis. Our lifestyles must reveal the transforming power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has taught that our lives need to reveal a difference, “You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under

a basket, but on a lampstand, and it give light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (**Matthew 5:13-16**).” Your lifestyle can attract people to you and cause them to know why you are different from others. Pray that your lifestyle will reveal the transforming power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Pray that God will produce in you the wisdom, understanding, and godly lifestyle that you can become a powerful and effective witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**S**pirit-The Holy Spirit is absolutely essential to leading people to the Lord Jesus Christ. Only the Holy Spirit can convict the lost person (**John 16:7**). Only the Holy Spirit can draw a lost person to Jesus Christ and enable him or her to trust Jesus Christ (**John 6:44; Ephesians 2:8-9**). The Holy Spirit has to do a work of grace in the lost person so that he or she can repent of sin and believe in Christ. This is His work and He alone can do it. No amount of persuasion can ever substitute for the Holy Spirit’s work. Pray that the Holy Spirit to bring the person under conviction and to draw him or her to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit also empowers you to witness (**Acts 4:31; Ephesians 5:18**). Ask the Holy Spirit to control you so that you can powerfully witness to others.

*Pray that the Holy Spirit will powerfully work in those to whom you will witness*

*and that He will empower you to faithfully share the gospel.*

How should this verse affect your personal prayer life?

## ***Prayerwalking Bible***

### ***Study:***

#### **Developing A Lifestyle Of Prayer 1 Thessalonians 5:17**

##### **Prayerwalking**

Prayerwalking flows out of a lifestyle of prayer.

##### **Principle:**

How much contact do you have with God on a daily basis?

What do the following verses tell you about God?

#### **Psalm 139:7-10**

#### **Jeremiah 23:24**

**1 Thessalonians 5:17** has puzzled many Christians. How can you pray without ceasing? Some have believed that this meant that you had to pray for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Yet, who can do this? Who can spend all their time praying? This verse of Scripture is calling for a lifestyle of prayer. It is revealing the believer's need to stay in constant touch with God. God wants you to talk with Him continually. This verse is declaring His desire that you talk with Him about anything and everything. God is everywhere. There is no place that you can go that God is not.

#### **1 Kings 8:27**

These verses reveal that God is present everywhere. You can never escape His presence. His presence cannot be contained and it fills heaven and earth. Wherever you are, God is there.

What does **Ephesians 2:18** declare?

How do you feel about **1 Thessalonians 5:17**?

You have access into God's presence. This means that God hears you when you cry out to Him. He knows your voice and hears you when you pray to Him.

Since God is everywhere and always hears you, why don't you talk to Him everywhere you go? Developing a lifestyle of prayer means talking with God wherever you go about the people and the situations that you encounter. Moreover, this is exactly what prayerwalking is all about.

Developing a lifestyle of prayer and prayerwalking go hand-in-hand. Talking with God about the people and situations you encounter daily gets you ready to do this on the street. As you prayerwalk, it conditions you to pray about everything and everybody you face. **1 Thessalonians 5:17** means moving your prayer closet everywhere you go. It is using every opportunity that you can to talk to God.

*Ask God to help you develop a lifestyle of prayer. Pray that He will enable you to pray without ceasing. Plead that this will help you grow in your ability to prayerwalk.*

## Announcing The Truth

When you prayerwalk, one of the things that you might consider is announcing the truth of God's Word. This is a mighty weapon in spiritual warfare. Satan masquerades and hides behind lies. He uses deception to blind and bind people. By announcing the

truth, you are dismantling the lies and exposing the enemy. You are binding the enemy from using the lies and deception to enslave and condemn people to hell.

The following is a basic list of biblical truths you can announce on the streets as you prayerwalk. Openly declare the truth and read the Scripture that corresponds to the truth. Announce and read the Word in faith, believing that the lies are being dismantled and that the forces of evil are being bound.

*God, You are the only true God. There is no God but You and You alone. You are the living God of time and eternity (Exodus 15:11, Deuteronomy 4:35, 6:4, 32:39; 2 Samuel 7:22, 22:32; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 86:8, 135:5-7; Isaiah 37:16, 40:25-26, 43:3, 10-11, 46:9).*

*All other gods are false and foolish idols that lead to meaninglessness and eternal damnation (Deuteronomy 4:9; Psalm 96:5, 115:4-8, 135:15-18; Isaiah 19:1, all of chapter 40, 42:22-24, 42:17, 44:9-20, 45:5-18, 46:1-7; Jeremiah 10:11; Acts 14:16, 1 Thessalonians 1:9).*

*The Bible is the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; Psalm 18:30, 33:4, 119:89; Proverbs 30:5). Jesus Christ is God in human flesh (John 1:1, 14; Matthew 1:22-23, Colossians 2:19).*

*Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation (John 3:16; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5).*

*Jesus Christ is the only Savior (Matthew 9:12-13; Luke 19:10; 1 John 4:14; 1 Timothy 1:15).*

*Jesus has power and authority over Satan and all his demons (Mark 1:27; Luke 11:14-20; 1 John 3:8).*

*Jesus Christ will judge every person (Acts 10:42, 17:31; Romans 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1).*

*The Holy Spirit deals with lost people (John 15:26, 16:7-11).*

*All people have sinned against God and are guilty (Psalm 51:5-7; Romans 3:19-23, Ephesians 2:3, Isaiah 64:6).*

*People must repent of sin and trust in Christ in order to be saved (Isaiah 55:17; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Luke 13:1-3, 24:47; Acts 3:19-20, 16:30-31; John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 3:23).*

## Sharing The Gospel With A Stranger

How can you witness to strangers even when you may only have one conversation with them? The following

are some practical suggestions to consider:

- *Be yourself.*  
Relax. Smile. Be genuine. Let the love and joy of Christ shine through your life. Asking someone how they are and then genuinely listening is important. If people can't see within the first five minutes of meeting us that we are genuine and joy-filled people, something is wrong.
- *Pray for the stranger.*  
Take a moment to bring the person next to you or in front of you to God by praying for him or her. This can be incredibly effective in opening up an opportunity to talk with someone about the good news of Jesus. You may not always have the opportunity to talk with someone about Christ. Yet, you can have significant impact in his or her life by quietly praying.
- *Strike up a conversation.*  
Pray and look for opportunities to talk with others. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you insight in how to engage others in conversation about Christ.
- *Find a connecting point.*  
Seek common ground with the strangers you encounter. I often look at what's they're reading. In a store, I look at what they're buying. Standing in line at a store, I noticed that a young woman had a number of diapers in her buggy. I asked her how many children she had. She smiled and said that she had recently had twins. That opened the door for

me to talk about Christ. Look for a connecting point that will open the door for a conversation.

- *Make the most of opportunities.*  
God is in control of your life. He is directing your path daily into the lives of those who need your prayers and your witness. Be open to and make the most of unexpected opportunities. When Jesus walked this earth, He was constantly meeting strangers. He always had time for them, even when He was weary. Jesus always had time for two things that really matter, two things that will last forever – God’s Word and people.

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# Global Point Men

Remembering Our Legacy, Fulfilling Our Destiny

January/February, 2010

## Praying for Your Wife's Spiritual Growth

Your wife's greatest need is her relationship to God. Your wife can experience deep and abiding fulfillment through her relationship to you. Yet it is only God who can meet the deepest needs of her heart and life. For this reason, you must pray for her spiritual growth. The following Scripture prayers can enable you to pray for this. In order to use these prayers, place her name in the blank and plead the truth of Scripture.

### (1) Assurance of salvation

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will gain a firm understanding of her secure position in Jesus Christ. Grant her the assurance of salvation. I pray that she would know that she has believed in Christ and received his salvation (**1 John 5:13**).

### (2) Purity

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will resist and flee temptation and develop a desire for

purity. Enable her to confess and repent of her sins (**1 John 1:9; Hebrews 12:14**).

### (3) Love for God

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will have a sincere, growing love for God. I pray that she would love You with all her being (**Matthew 22:37**).

### (4) Love for others

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will be filled with a godly love for others that reaches out with compassion. Grant her a servant's heart for others and their needs (**Matthew 20:28**).

### (5) Heart for Scripture

I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ will have a hunger for the Word of God. I pray that the Word will be a light to \_\_\_\_\_'s path and a lamp to \_\_\_\_\_'s feet. I plead that she will love Your Word and will meditate on it daily (**Psalms 119:97, 105**).

*(6) Spiritual gifts and abilities*

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will recognize her spiritual gifts and abilities and will long to use them for God's glory. Reveal to her the spiritual gifts that You have given her and empower her to use them (**1 Corinthians 12**).

*(7) Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit*

I pray that You will grant \_\_\_\_\_ a special sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. Fill her with Your Holy Spirit. I ask that she would walk in the power of the Spirit daily (**Ephesians 5:18**).

*(8) Growing faith*

I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ will grow in her trust in You and will walk by faith and not by sight. Teach her to trust in You and to acknowledge You in all her ways (**2 Corinthians 5:7**).

*(10) A Witness For Jesus Christ*

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ would receive power from the Holy Spirit and that \_\_\_\_\_ would be a witness for You wherever she goes (**Acts 1:8**).

*(11) Spiritual Warfare*

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ would be sober and vigilant because her enemy, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion,

seeking whom he may devour. I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ will resist him steadfast in the faith, knowing that other brothers and sisters across the world are facing the same battles (**1 Peter 5:8-9**).

*(12) Worship*

Father, I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ will develop a lifestyle of praise. It is good to sing praises to You, our mighty God. It is pleasant and it is beautiful. Create in her a desire to praise You daily (**Psalm 147:1-2**).

*(13) Prayer*

I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ would be earnestly devoted to prayer along with thanksgiving. I plead, O God, that \_\_\_\_\_ would develop a daily, on-going conversation with You (**Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17**).

*(14) Priorities*

Father, I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ would seek first the kingdom of God and Your righteousness and then all these things that she needs will be added to her (**Matthew 6:33**).

## The Praying Husband Bible Study

### Lesson 2: The Blessing Of Brokenness

**Central Truth:** *Brokenness is crucial ministering to and praying for your wife.*

In a Sunday School class, a wife shared about getting lost on their vacation. She said that she kept telling her husband that they were not going the right direction. The husband refused to look at the map or to stop for directions. Finally, they found their way. The other wives chimed in and announced their own versions of the same scenario. The husbands made light of these stories by cracking jokes. Laughter filled the class.

Even though everyone laughed about these things, you could sense frustration in the women. The frustration did not result from refusing to look at a map or stop for directions. No, it went deeper than that. The frustration flowed out of a lack of brokenness or humility. Brokenness is the ability to put self aside in order to listen and be transformed. It is turning from pride and self-righteousness in order to sacrifice and yield to what is best for others.

### *Read And Meditate On The Word*

The following verses deal with brokenness. Read and meditate on these verses. Think about how they apply to your relationship to God and to your wife.

**Proverbs 29:23**

**James 4:6**

**Proverbs 11:2**

**Proverbs 16:18**

**1 Peter 5:6-7**

**Proverbs 13:10**

**Proverbs 18:12**

Call on God to deal with your pride and to cultivate brokenness in your life. Write a prayer expressing your hatred of your pride and your desire to be broken before Him and your wife.

**Philippians 2:1-5**

These verses teach that you must cultivate brokenness in your life. A lack of brokenness or pride will hinder your relationship to God and to your wife. It is only as you deal with pride and grow in humility that you can pray for and minister to your wife.

*Listening And Speaking To Your Father*

Ask your Father to reveal any ways that you have been walking in pride before Him. Plead with Him to show you any ways that you have exhibited pride before your wife. As He gives you insight, record these things. Confess them as sin before God and repent of them. Pray for the grace to overcome these things.

*Praying For Your Relationship*

Ask God to enable both of you to hate pride in any and every form. Plead with Him to create brokenness in both of you. Pray that you will develop the brokenness that will empower you to listen and communicate with each other in all the circumstances of life. Claim **Proverbs 13:10** for your relationship, "Pride leads to arguments; those who take advice are wise" (NLT).

# Your World Prayer Plan

## April

### March

- 1-Colombia-The Lost
- 2-Comoros Islands
- 3-Congo
- 4-Cook Islands
- 5-Costa Rica
- 6-Cote d'Ivoire
- 7-Cuba-The Church
- 8-Cuba-The Lost
- 9-Cuba-Collapse of Communism
- 10-Cyprus
- 11-Czech Republic
- 12-Slovakia
- 13-Denmark
- 14-Djibouti
- 15-Dominica
- 16-Dominican Republic
- 17-Ecuador
- 18-Egypt-The Church
- 19-Egypt-The Lost
- 20-Egypt-Persecuted Believers
- 21-El Salvador
- 22-Equatorial Guinea
- 23-Eritrea
- 24-Estonia
- 25-Ethiopia-The Church
- 26-Ethiopia-The Lost
- 27-Ethiopia-Persecuted Believers
- 28-Faeroe Islands
- 29-Falkland Islands
- 30-Croatia-The Church
- 31-Croatia-The Lost

- 1-Fiji
- 2-France-The Church
- 3-France-The Lost
- 4-France-Hardness To The Gospel
- 5-France-Missionaries
- 6-French Guiana
- 7-French Polynesia
- 8-Gabon
- 9-Gambia
- 10-Gaza Strip
- 11-Georgia
- 12-Germany-The Church
- 13-Germany-The Lost
- 14-Germany-Spiritual Warfare
- 15-Ghana
- 16-Gibraltar
- 17-Greece
- 18-Greenland
- 19-Grenada
- 20-Guadeloupe
- 21-Guam
- 22-Guatemala
- 23-Guinea
- 24-Guinea-Bissau
- 25-Guyana
- 26-Haiti
- 27-Holy See (Vatican)
- 28-Honduras
- 29-Hong Kong
- 30-Hungary

## Praying About Your Relationship To Your Child

The following are Scripture prayers that you can pray concerning your relationship to your child. These prayers will help you seek God about how to raise your child. In order to use these prayers, place your child's name in the blank and plead these Scriptures to your Father.

Heavenly Father, You are the perfect Parent. You are gracious, loving, wise, and fair. You are good and right in all Your dealings with Your children. I plead in the name of Jesus that You will enable me to raise \_\_\_\_\_. I ask that You will give me the strength and the wisdom to mold and develop \_\_\_\_\_'s life. I cannot do this without Your power or Your help. I look to You and trust that You will enable me to do this for Your glory and for \_\_\_\_\_'s good (**Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:5**).

Lord God, Your Word declares that unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. I confess that I cannot raise \_\_\_\_\_ in my own wisdom and power. I plead that You will enable me to build a godly home

and to create a godly atmosphere so that \_\_\_\_\_ will come to know You and will have a righteous impact in this world (**Psalms 127:1**).

Father, empower me to train \_\_\_\_\_ in godliness. \_\_\_\_\_ is a heritage from You, a reward from You. Grant that I can shape and mold \_\_\_\_\_ for great usefulness and power in Your kingdom's work (**Psalms 127:3-5**).

God, You have given me the privilege and responsibility to raise \_\_\_\_\_. I plead that I will not provoke \_\_\_\_\_ to anger. But, I ask that I will raise \_\_\_\_\_ in the training and the admonition of the Lord. Enable me to build a home where \_\_\_\_\_ will come to know You and will live a godly life (**Ephesians 6:4**).

Father, I pray that You will enable me to discipline \_\_\_\_\_ in a loving and wise way. Empower me to discipline \_\_\_\_\_ in a way that pleases You and that will not nag, deride, or destroy his/her self-respect (**Colossians 3:21**).

Lord God, I plead that You would empower me to pay careful attention to my relationship to You. Help me to diligently keep myself on the path of

righteousness. Deliver me from forgetting Your mercy and Your Word so that I will not depart from You. I ask for this so that I can teach \_\_\_\_\_ Your Word. Grant me the wisdom and power to obey You and to teach \_\_\_\_\_ the same things (**Deuteronomy 4:9**).

Father, I pray that I would diligently teach Your Word to \_\_\_\_\_. Enable me to use every opportunity that I can to point \_\_\_\_\_ to You and Your Word (**Deuteronomy 6:7**).

Father, Your Word declares that the one who spares the rod spoils the child. But, the parent who loves the child will discipline him/her promptly. Grant me the wisdom and power to discipline \_\_\_\_\_ promptly with love. Deliver me from compromise in the training of \_\_\_\_\_ (**Proverbs 13:24**).

Father, I pray that You would help me to chasten \_\_\_\_\_ while there is hope. Grant me fairness and compassion in order to effectively discipline him/her. Cause me to model and extend the love of Jesus Christ toward \_\_\_\_\_.

## Confessing God's Word

“And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him” (**Genesis 2:18**).

Father, You declare in Your Word that it is not good for a man to be alone. You have made me with a need for a helper, a complement. Father, thank You for giving me \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ is Your gift of a helper, a complement, for me. I pray that we would grow in our ability to help and complement each other. Help me to depend on her and value her as my helper, my complement. Amen.

**My Confession:** *I will acknowledge my wife as my helper and complement. I will appreciate what she is to me and what she does for me.*

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