



THE PRAYER CLOSET

ENCOURAGING & EQUIPPING BELIEVERS IN PRAYER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRAYER CLOSET MINISTRIES, INC.

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VOLUME XXII

MARCH/APRIL, 2019

ISSUE 2

THE LAW, CRIME, AND PRAYER

This may sound like an unusual title for a newsletter on prayer. I'll grant you that it is. But, I struggled with what title to give this newsletter and the material in it. In twenty-one years of producing this newsletter, I wrestled harder with this newsletter than any other one. At the same time, in these twenty-one years, I've never done a newsletter like this.

What you read in these pages flows out of a broken heart. As I look around at society, my heart breaks. It breaks because of the crime. It breaks because of its devastation in the lives of people. It breaks because of the impact that it is having on our communities, towns, cities, and society as a whole.

I have felt burdened to do something. I just can't sit around and simply lament what is going on. I can't be content with isolating myself from culture and accepting the way things are around me. That's just not acceptable.

My first reaction was to pray. Now, before you scold me and say that prayer alone is not enough, let me say that I agree with you. Christians can't retreat from society and think that prayer is going to somehow substitute for being salt and light, proclaiming the gospel, and offering ministries of mercy and help.

However, I will contend that apart from prayer, we can't make any difference. You can do a lot after you prayer, but you can't do anything until you do pray. In this issue of *The Prayer Closet*, I want to offer some ways to pray about these issues. These are Scripture prayers and Scripture points that I have used in my personal praying. They are borne out of my own struggle to intercede about these things. I offer them as tools to assist you in your personal prayer life and your church's prayer life. You can use them, adapt them, or improve them. My primary goal is to encourage you to pray – to get involved. And, at the same time, to be open to the Holy Spirit's leading – to be the hands and feet to your prayers in your city or community.

Covering First Responders

Law officers and firemen have a difficult and demanding task. They have the responsibility of enforcing the law, protecting the public, and apprehending those who break the law. For this reason, they need our intercession. We need to cover them in prayer.

The following prayer guide is designed to help you pray for them:

1. Pray for the salvation and spiritual growth of your law officers and firemen (**John 3:16, 6:44; 1 Peter 2:1-3**).
2. Plead that God would grant His protection to these officers (**2 Samuel 22:4**).
3. Ask that they will be provided with all that they need to carry out their job (**Philippians 4:19; 2 Corinthians 9:8**).
4. Plead that God will give them the wisdom and insight that they need to carry out their tasks (**Proverbs 2:6**).
5. Ask God to deliver these officers from corruption in any form (**1 Corinthians 10:13**).
6. Call on God to enable them to maintain order and to capture and imprison those who commit crimes (**1 Peter 2:14; Romans 13:1-5**).
7. Plead for the destruction of the manufacture and distribution of illegal drugs (**Psalms 139:13-14; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20**).
8. Pray that God will bring to light whatever is needed to bring criminals to justice (**Numbers 32:23**).

9. Ask God to restore true justice in our court systems (**Psalm 7:9, 58:11, 92:15**).
10. Call on God to fill their lives with His peace and strength (**Psalm 29:11**).
11. Pray that God will protect, strengthen, and provide for their families (Psalm 145:17).

The 79 Prayer

As I was preparing to preach on **Psalm 7**, I couldn't get **7:9** off my mind. As I meditated on it and prayed over it, I came up with this prayer guide that I use at times in my prayer life.

End – *“Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end”*

- Praise God for His righteousness and justice.
- Praise God for His ability to bring an end to wickedness.
- Pray for an end to crime and injustice in the area.

Establish – *“But establish the just”*

- Praise God for His love for the righteous and His desire to bless them.
- Ask God to enable righteous men and women to gain and hold office in the government of the area.
- Pray that many will be converted in the area and that their holiness of life would change the whole community or city.
- Plead that the churches will be active in the community sharing the gospel and showing mercy.

Examine – *“For the righteous God trieth the hearts and minds”*

- Praise God for His ability to see all and know all.
- Praise God for the fact that nothing is hidden before Him.
- Praise God for His ability to bring wickedness to light and to bring all evildoers to justice.
- Pray that God would reveal and clean up the corruption of the area.
- Plead that God would cause the schemes and plans of the criminals to fail; pray for their capture and imprisonment.
- Ask God to intervene in the drug trafficking of the area; pray that all illegal substances will be cut off.

Attacking Crime With Prayer

This prayer guide flows out of my own frustration and desperation for God to act. I live in a rural area of Mississippi. You would think that it would be a quiet, peaceful area. However, crime is more rampant here than I've seen in my lifetime, particular drug manufacturing and selling.

The following are some prayer pointers that I have used to seek God about this matter:

- **Pray that the darkness will be exposed to the light (John 3:19-20)**. Those who do evil love the darkness; they love to have their deeds covered. Plead that their deed will be exposed to the light, reprov'd, and punished.
- **Ask that God would give wisdom and insight to law officers (Romans 13:2-3)**. God has given the government the power to deal with evil. Call on Him to give law officers at all levels the wisdom and the insight to face and deal with evil.
- **Plead that God will bring about justice in His daily providence (Psalm 9:15-16)**. The Word of God teaches that God will judge the world in righteousness. God will settle the score with all evildoers. He will make sure that justice is carried out in complete perfection. But, at the same time, there are times when God brings about justice in this life. The Word of God says, “The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaiion. Selah” (Psalm 9:16). The Bible declares that sometimes the wicked are snared by their own wicked works. This is God's judgment now; it is a preview of what will happen. God does carry out His justice at times by His providential work in daily life. Ask God by His providence to do this – that criminals would “sink down in the pit they dug or let their foot be taken in the net they hid (**Psalm 9:15**). God is sometimes pleased to do this in this life.
- **Ask God to thwart the plans, the schemes of evildoers (Job 5:12)**. God is able to frustrate the plans of those who want to do evil. He has the power and ability to disappoint their efforts to do wrong. Call on Him to thwart their plans, to put obstacles in their way, and to hinder them in every possible way.
- **Ask God to help and comfort the victims of crime (Psalm 82:3, 103:6; 146:7)**. God is the God of the oppressed. He has deep concern for those who have been the victims of oppressors. Plead with him to uphold the cause of the oppressed

(82:3). Ask God to be true to His word, working righteousness and justice for the oppressed (103:6). Pray that He will uphold the cause of the oppressed (146:7). Call on God to meet all their needs and to provide healing – physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

- **Pray that God would expose and bring to an end any corruption among political leaders/law enforcement that aids and encourages crime (Isaiah 5:20).** It's unfortunate to have to say this. Nevertheless, it is true. There is corruption at various levels that assist and enable people to do carry out crimes. We are to plead with God that this corruption will be exposed and that it will be cleaned up. Because God is just, believers are to be committed to justice, even when it involves political and law enforcement leaders.
- **Plead with God to deal with whatever is fueling crime in your area (Ephesians 4:27).** In **Ephesians 4:27**, the Bible tells us to not give place to the devil. This is referring to a place of operation. The phrase has the idea of an army attacking and taking a piece of land. From that piece of land, the army then uses that land to attack deeper into enemy territory. It is a base of operation for further attack. This applies in spiritual warfare. Satan uses a variety of people and factors to inspire sin and evildoing in an area. What is fueling the crime in your area? Ask God to cut off all avenues that the enemy has in your area. Plead that whatever is fueling, enabling, crime in your area will be stopped and rendered ineffective.
- **Plead that the gospel will go forth in power transforming lives (2 Thessalonians 3:1-3).** The ultimate answer to evildoing is the transformation of peoples' lives by the gospel of Jesus Christ. When Paul wrote **2 Thessalonians**, he was ministering in Corinth. Corinth was a corrupt, wicked city. He knew that if the gospel was going to conquer in Corinth, he would have to have the prayers of God's people. We must pray for the gospel to go forth in power in our cities and communities. We are to pray that all the obstacles to the gospel will be removed (**3:1a**). We should ask that the power of God would be exhibited and transform people (**3:1b**). We are to call on God to protect us and help us spread the gospel (**3:2-3**). The gospel is the ultimate answer to evil and the sinful hearts of people.
- **Ask that righteousness would supplant wickedness in your area (Matthew 5:13-14).** God has called His people to be salt and light. By

righteous speech, lives, and actions, we are to impact our cities and communities. Call on God to renew the faith of believers in your area. Pray that the churches will be busy as the salt and light that God calls us to be. Ask that the believers will be light shining in the darkness, salt that preserves and flavors in the midst of corruption.

- **Plead with God to arise and not let man prevail (Psalm 9:19-20).** **Psalm 9** is one of my favorite psalms and I pray through it often. David cries out for God to arise like a warrior and act. In my desperation and brokenness, I plead for God to intervene in the midst of the wickedness and corruption. We are to call for God to act – for Him to arise and help the oppressed. We are to pray that He would put men in their place – so that they will be stopped and converted or removed so that they can oppress and hurt no more.

The War On Drugs With Prayer

In the past couple of years, I've seen the growth of the drug culture even in my area. It has become a part of my prayer life. The following are some prayer pointers that I offer to help you in praying about this situation:

- Ask that drug dealers will be brought to justice (**1 Peter 2:14**). Ask that the dealers will be exposed and brought to justice.
- Pray that the drug kingpins will be exposed and brought to justice (**Proverbs 15:27; 28:25**). It's not enough just to arrest and stop drug dealers. You have to go to the powers behind them. Plead that God will bring down these greedy and wicked people.
- Ask for God's help and blessing on law enforcement officials (**Romans 13:2-3**). We have many committed men and women who labor tirelessly to deal with this evil. Ask God to bless them, give them protection, strength, endurance, and wisdom to do their jobs in dealing with the evil of drug manufacturing and selling.
- Pray for wise and just judges who will carry out justice (**Psalm 92:15**).
- Plead with God to set addicts free and heal them by the power of Jesus Christ (**Psalm 147:3**). I see many around this area that are bound by drugs. We should plead with God to deliver them by the gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Ask that the flow of drugs in your area will be hindered and cut off (**Proverbs 13:15**). Call on

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God to work against those who would bring and sale drugs in your area.

- Plead that people will come to Jesus Christ in faith and will be controlled by the Holy Spirit and not by drugs (**Galatians 5:16-17**).

In this edition of *The Prayer Closet*, I've labored to encourage you to pray over these things where you are. I've offered you a variety of ways that you can pray concerning these issues. I'm not an expert; I'm just a struggler trying to bless and encourage other strugglers. I just offer this material to help you and encourage you. I challenge you to pray concerning these issues. I challenge your church to take serious its role in praying for these things.

As I close this edition, I do feel burdened to share one more thing. It's important to pray about the evil around us. However, before we can do that, we have to pray about the evil inside of us. It's easy to see the sins of the society around us. Yet, we're often blinded to our own sin. It's crucial that we pray for God to search us first, accept His conviction, and confess and repent of our own personal sin. Our prayer must always be, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (**Psalms 139:23-24**).

Thank You!

I just want to take this opportunity to thank you for reading and using *The Prayer Closet*. Many people and churches use this material in their prayer lives, prayer rooms, and prayer meetings. We are deeply grateful for this. That's our main goal – to encourage and assist believers and churches in prayer. Please continue to pray for us. At the same time, we need your financial help to continue. Your donations go straight to ministry – producing this newsletter and other prayer materials. We exist and minister solely through the giving of God's people. Thank you for your support and use of this ministry. I pray God richly blesses you according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus!

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