



WE'VE GOT TO PRAY JUST TO MAKE IT TODAY

Singer MC Hammer may have been the first to sing the words, “We’ve got to pray just to make it today,” but the reality is, without prayer, nothing of importance is accomplished. Back in the eighteenth century, theologian John Wesley famously said, “God does nothing except in response to believing prayer.”

Dr. Vinson Synan of Regent University found these words to be more true than he could ever have imagined. In the late 1980s, Dr. Synan was attending a Charismatic leadership conference when a Mennonite bishop stood and declared, “We need to pray about the nuclear arms race.” In those days, it seemed as if Communism, through its various tentacles, would engulf the world. Across the globe, from Vietnam to Angola, countries were falling to Communist tyranny. At the time, Synan didn’t think much about those kinds of things but was more concerned with the moving of the Holy Spirit. But this bishop’s comment touched his heart, leading him to believe that this was something he ought to pray about more seriously. Over time, this prayer need began to dominate his thinking.

In early 1989, Synan was attending a meeting of the board for the California Theological Seminary, so he was staying in a hotel near Pebble Beach Golf Course. Having a day off, he decided to play a round of golf at this famous landmark. Driving along the Pacific Coast Highway, he took in the beautiful scenery. But as he made his way along the coastline, the only thing that kept running through his mind was the nuclear arms race. “How do I pray?” he finally cried out to God.



Suddenly a question came into his mind: *What would be the best possible thing that could happen, short of war and bloodshed, to stop this arms race?*

"It came to me suddenly," Synan remembers. "The best thing would be if Communism collapsed from the inside without a war. And the Lord said, 'Why don't you pray for that?'"

Immediately, he pulled over to the side of the road, stopped the car and shut the motor off. He lifted his hands and for 20 minutes fervently prayed that Communism would collapse, shifting from prayer in English to prayer in his heavenly tongue.

"My mind kept objecting, because Communism seemed so permanent. They were supposed to take over the world. My whole adult life had been under the shadow of the Cold War, the atomic bomb and the threat of inevitable Communist expansion. In Europe it seemed utterly permanent. But the Lord said, 'Pray that it will collapse.' I thought that this was impossible, but I did what God asked me to do."

"I prayed fervently in the Spirit. I had never prayed quite like that before. Then, after 20 minutes, the burden lifted and I went on to the golf course."

Later that year, Dr. Synan spoke to a group of Pentecostal ministers at the Lake Yale campground in Florida and prophesied that the Berlin Wall would fall. "I didn't make a big deal about it, but I remembered that John Wesley said, 'God does nothing, but by prayer.'"

On November 10, 1989, Dr. Synan was presiding over another Charismatic conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. He was staying in the home of a local minister named Larry Miles. That morning, before he could even get out of bed, he was awakened by Larry calling out, "Vinson, get up. You won't believe what's on television." He rushed to the set and watched as the German people stood triumphantly on top of the Berlin wall, chipping at it with pick axes and hammers, tearing it down before his eyes.

"I watched thousands of people chipping away and finally bringing down the first piece of the wall, and I remembered that time of intercessory prayer on the way to the golf course."

During that same season, Dr. Ted Baehr of *Movieguide* was also praying for the fall of godless Communism. When the head of the KGB secret police, Yuri Andropov, became Secretary General of the

Communist Party in the Soviet Union, he made some strong, disparaging anti-Christian remarks. This attack elicited intense prayer from Christians around the world, including Ted.

Baehr felt led by the Holy Spirit to send the Soviet leader a letter calling him to account for his sins. "The letter told him to repent and be saved, and explained to him the eternal consequences of his actions," Baehr said.

One week after Andropov's staff acknowledged that the premier had received and read the letter, on February 9, 1984, the Soviet leader died suddenly and passed on to judgment.

"It is clear that many people around the world would have been concerned enough about his comments to pray," Baehr reflects, "and it is also clear that God reigns in the lives of men. Sooner or later, everyone is called to account."¹

"I think the Lord was looking for intercessors to pray the impossible," said Synan. "It just so happened that burden fell on me. I'm not claiming any credit whatsoever. It was just a burden about world events; that things would change. I pray now about the Islamic jihadist terrorists. We need more Christians now to intercede for that murderous group of extremists to collapse, without war. But God can do things that man cannot even comprehend."

Changing History Through Praying the News

We live at a time in history when it is critical for the Church to learn to be led by the Spirit like this in prayer. God wants to raise up a company of intercessors to pray the news—which is to watch, read or listen to the news, then intercede for God's will to be done in the issues we face today.

God desires that His people become so in tune with His Spirit—as Vinson Synan and Ted Baehr were regarding the Communist threat—that we are actually praying His will in advance of world events. By cooperating with God in prayer, we are actually helping to shape those events in the spirit realm.

God is seeking prayer warriors who will agree with Him in faith to actually make an impact on the course of history through

their intercession, by walking in the Spirit. The apostle Paul wrote of the privilege and importance of the believer to live in the Spirit: “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Rom. 8:14).

Far too often, we, the Church, have been reactionary in our prayers—a tragedy or a disaster happens, and believers react with “catch-up prayers.” But we serve the God who sees the end from the beginning. He desires that we be so in-tune with His Spirit that we are praying His perfect will in a circumstance before it ever occurs in the natural.

This sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit only comes by maintaining a daily intimate relationship with our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus revealed this concept when He told His disciples:

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing (John 15:4-5).

As we put the first commandment first—to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength—He then empowers us by His Spirit to fulfill the second commandment—to love our neighbor (and our city, our nation and this world) by being led by the Spirit in intercession.

Judson Cornwall writes of the importance of Spirit-led intercession that flows from us as a result of abiding in God:

There are times when we desperately need to know more than what God is doing and saying. We need to know God, for He works according to His nature and will, and only an understanding of that nature and will enables us to be involved with Him before His actions are demonstrated. We do not need to have great knowledge of God to know what God is saying if He is saying it publicly; but if God chooses to withhold communicated knowledge and yet we know the



heart of God, there will be an intuitive or spiritual understanding that gives us knowledge out of relationship with God, not too unlike the understanding that develops between a husband and wife who have lived in a loving relationship for many years.

God does not always forewarn His people of specific actions, but He always invites us into His presence during times of judgment, and in that presence there often comes a spiritual knowing of the ways of the Lord. Too often the modern Church seems to be playing “catch-up” in Her ministry of intercession because Her relationship with God is out of date. This forces the Church to deal with God about what He has done, not what He is doing, much less be able to intercede with Him about what He is going to do.

David wrote, “He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel” (Ps. 103:7). A distinguishing difference between Moses and the children of Israel is that Moses knew God’s ways, which enabled him to know what God was going to do before He did it; but the congregation knew only God’s acts. Obviously, if we know only God’s acts, we will know only where God has been and what He has done. If we know only the acts of God, we will forever live in the past. It’s time for the Church to know more than what God did. We need to know Who God is! We need to emulate Paul, who cried, “That I may know Him . . .” (Phil. 3:10).²

God is seeking this kind of heart in His people today—a heart that cries, “I want to know You, God. And I want to serve You, my Lord.” By walking in this type of love relationship with God, we position ourselves to be used by God on the earth. This is especially true in the realm of intercessory prayer.

Shaping History Through Prayer

A key leader in the Church today who has caught this vision to intercede in advance of crisis is Lou Engle. Through TheCall and

other intercessory prayer outreaches, Engle has made a tremendous impact in the spirit realm in recent years. After reading the groundbreaking book *Shaping History Through Prayer and Fasting*, by Derek Prince, Engle's view of prayer changed dramatically:

I began to fast (with others in our church) and saw an immediate impact in terms of people being saved and set free. Then God opened the door to the city of Pasadena. We ended up having a three-year outpouring of the Holy Spirit several years later here—that I believe was directly related to fasting—where tens of thousands of people came through our doors and were touched mightily by the power of God. In 1994, through an encounter with a group of Taiwanese kids, again the Spirit fell and a sovereign youth movement of prayer started around the nation. We began to hold small, intense prayer gatherings across the nation.³

Then in 1996, Lou had a dream in which the Lord directed him to deliver the message of the book of Joel to the nation:

Call the youth of America to fasting and prayer. We continued to hold gatherings in 1997, 1998, and 1999 that grew to as many as 4,500 kids gathering for three to five days of fasting and prayer. Ultimately, TheCall sprang out of a prophetic vision we received from Promise Keepers: the hearts of the fathers turning to the children. We began to proclaim that the kids were going to go to Washington, D.C., to fast and pray as a counterpart to the Promise Keepers rally, and that it would be a sign that the nation was turning to God. We live in a culture that is so resistant to God and His Spirit that I believe today's generation needs the weapons of fasting and prayer simply to survive.⁴

Praying the News takes up this banner of prayer and fasting and waves it for all generations of Christians. It is time to yield to the

Spirit, as Lou did with TheCall, and declare, "Here we are, God. Use us to pray. Here we are, God. Use us to act."

The White House Intercession Assignment

In the fall of 1997, as I (Craig) was working on my Master's Degree at Regent University, I had a friend who was an assistant to the Dean of the Government School. One night he called to tell me that his car battery had died as he was on the way to a very important Government School advisory board gathering in Washington, DC. The problem was that he had all of the documents and decorations for the meeting in his car. It was imperative that he got to this meeting. My friend asked me to purchase a new battery and meet him on the highway.

In my heart, I felt like I heard the Spirit of God telling me to pack an overnight bag just in case. Sure enough, the new battery didn't work, so we loaded everything into my car and drove to our nation's capital. Arriving at 3 A.M., we checked into the Hay-Adams Hotel, directly across Lafayette Park from the White House.

The next morning my friend woke early to go to his meeting and I was left alone in the hotel room. As I read my Bible and prayed, I inquired of the Lord, "What would You have me do today?" Immediately He spoke to my heart, "Go and walk around the entire circumference of the White House, praying in the Spirit and declaring, 'Let those things that are being done in secret be shouted from the housetops' (Luke 12:3)."

I put on my coat and walked across Lafayette Park to the White House. I slowly approached the perimeter, placing my hand on the iron gate and praying under my breath, "God, You said to intercede for our leaders, so I pray that You would bless President Clinton with wisdom and protection. But, Lord, You have also asked me to make this declaration, so I pray that those things that are being done in secret would be shouted from the housetops."

I turned to my right and began to slowly walk around the large White House complex, stopping from time to time to make the declaration the Lord commanded me—all the while wondering

what the Secret Service guards on the roof of the White House were thinking about my prayer journey.

I finally made my way around the entire grounds, finishing my assignment and returning to my hotel. Later that day my friend and I drove back to Virginia Beach.

Several months later, the nation was rocked into a constitutional crisis by the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Like most people, I was shocked at the revelations that were being released in the news media in embarrassing detail. I know that I was only one of tens of thousands of believers who were praying for righteousness in America. But it was with a sad heart that I remembered my intercessory assignment at the White House that cold day only months before.

A Dark Hour: The Impeachment Trial Assignment

Not long after Craig felt called to prayer-walk around the White House, I (Wendy) was given a front row seat to one of the biggest stories of the last century—the impeachment trial of former President William Jefferson Clinton. It was my first assignment with CBN and I could hardly believe my fortune, or perhaps, misfortune. There was a gloom hanging over Washington, DC, that had nothing to do with the cold and dreary winter weather. Our nation was in mourning.

Clinton, who had been impeached by the House of Representatives on December 19, 1998, was facing charges of perjury and obstruction of justice stemming from his effort to cover up a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky, a former White House intern. As I sat in the U.S. Senate balcony with other national journalists, I couldn't help but wonder, *What am I doing here? How did a small town girl from West Virginia end up among some of the most famous faces on television, covering one of the most important stories of our time?* I knew it wasn't my journalistic credentials alone that had landed me on Capitol Hill. In my heart I understood that God had put me here, during one of American's darkest hours for a divine purpose.

And that purpose was simply to pray.

My heart ached for our leaders who faced a seemingly impossible decision: to impeach a sitting president and further divide the

country, or ignore the fact that he had lied under oath and disgraced our nation with his infidelity.

Star-struck

I had an office the size of a very small closet in the media section of the Senate Chambers. CNN Correspondent Candy Crowley was right across the aisle from me, but I was so star-struck, I never even introduced myself—something I still regret to this day. I was still astounded that I was in the same “league” with these national media stars. I would retreat in there daily to write my stories and often found myself in tears—not only because I felt completely overwhelmed, but because the spiritual warfare for the soul of our nation was so intense.

Looking back, I know I was interceding for our nation, and for some reason my presence was needed. God has His people everywhere. But, believe me, I was out-numbered. There seemed to be few Christians on Capitol Hill at that time. Some other reporters would mock me and say, “What’s God saying about this?” As the nation waited for a verdict, I sat with a bird’s-eye view of the Senate Chambers, praying that God would give our leaders the wisdom of Solomon. In Proverbs 29:2, Solomon said, “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan” (NKJV).

The Verdict

On February 12, 1999, the Senate had its say. In a mostly partisan vote, with no Democrats voting to impeach, President Clinton was acquitted of all charges. It was only the second impeachment trial of a president in American history. It turns out that this was just the beginning of the many times I would find myself on the front lines of a national or international crisis where the real assignment—or the most important assignment—was prayer.

Hope for Modern Man?

Prior to World War I there was a group of intellectuals in England called the Fabian Socialists. Their leader was a self-appointed prophet

of a new world order, the author H. G. Wells. Members of this group were rationalists and humanists. In 1914, two years before the outbreak of World War I, Wells declared triumphantly, “It is possible for us to have a new race of people by intellectual and biological processes. We don’t need the Bible, we don’t need the church, we can pull down the hills of wealth, we can fill up the valleys of poverty.”

But then the earth was plunged into two horrific World Wars and H. G. Wells lost his rosy optimism. His final book, *Mind at the End of Its Tether*, reflected this new outlook. “There is no hope for humanity. . . . There is a little cavity somewhere in the human breast which can be filled by God and only God.”⁵

Apart from God, mankind is lost with no hope. Life for the ungodly quickly descends to merely the pursuit of pleasure. “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die,” declares cynical modern man. Without God in our lives, this cynicism would be understandable. In this second decade of the new Millennium, we face daunting challenges:

- Terrorism and violence continue to spread.
- After the fall of Communism, radical Islam has risen as the next philosophy bent on world domination.
- We face the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.
- Not only is there a threat of nuclear war, but now there is a growing threat of an atomic bomb in the hands of a rogue nation.
- Terrorist groups like al-Qaeda are trying to obtain a nuclear device, or “dirty bomb,” to spread radiation poisoning in our mega cities.
- There is an epidemic of divorce and broken families.
- More than ever, children are being raised in homes where only one parent is present.
- More than 54 million babies have been aborted in the U.S. alone since the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision in 1973.⁶
- Drug and alcohol abuse is rampant around the world.
- Violent crime associated with the illegal drug trade has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands.



- Sexually explicit media, pornography, violent movies and video games are among America's most lucrative exports. The United States has earned the moniker "The Great Satan" among Islamists, in part because of the hedonistic media we send around the world.
- Western society has sanctioned open sexual immorality. Traditional biblical values are looked on as naïve, silly, or even oppressive.
- In the media, academia, and even in some churches, the Word of God is mocked, ridiculed, twisted, or ignored completely.

Mankind has, in many ways, turned its back on God. As a society, we have reaped what we have sown through increased violence and crime; an AIDS epidemic and rampant sexually transmitted diseases; public schools that far too often erupt in violence; countless broken homes and unwed pregnancies; and corruption in business and government that has led us to the brink of worldwide financial collapse.

By turning our backs on God, we have made a terrible mess of things. Apart from His intervention, there is little hope. But God has not turned His back on us. He wants to reign in the earth as the Prince of Peace. In Him there is hope for tomorrow. He declares:

For I know the plans that I have for you . . . plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope (Jer. 29:11).

And He desires to use faithful believers like you to partner with Him in prayer to see His purposes established in the earth. God declares:

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land (2 Chron. 7:14, NIV).

In His love and compassion, God wants to bring solutions to the problems that plague us. He promises, "When the enemy comes

in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him” (Isa. 59:19, NKJV).

Faith-filled believers in the Church today are a significant part of the standard that the Spirit of the Lord is lifting up in the earth. He is calling on Bible-believing Christians to partner with Him in humility and prayer to see “His kingdom come and His will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Touching Heaven, Changing Earth

When we see these potentially frightening and devastating things in the news, it can be easy to give in to fear, anger or despair. There is a lot of bad news that is reported on an ongoing basis through 24-hour news channels, and now through our smart phones or iPads. It is easy to become overwhelmed by it all—especially because it is hard to know whom to trust anymore. Mark Twain once said, “A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is just putting on its shoes.” There have been so many news organizations caught in lies that the public has grown cynical, especially of the mainstream media.

There has also been a perception of an anti-Christian, anti-biblical bias in the field of journalism in the last century. Sadly, there are many examples of media hostility toward Christianity and the Bible in America and Western Europe.

But despite those who would fight against biblical truth, Jesus still loves the people of this world. He wants His people to love and pray for the lost. He doesn’t want us to fall into anger, cynicism or hopelessness when watching or reading the news. Instead, He calls His disciples to engage the culture through prayer and action: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:21).

God desires for Christians in the world to take up the ministry of Jeremiah, of whom God said:

Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the king-



doms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant (Jer. 1:9-10).

Derek Prince explains that like Jeremiah, Christians stand in a twofold relationship to the secular government: “On the natural plane, as a citizen of Judah, he was in subjection to the government of his nation, represented by the king and the princes. In no sense did he preach or practice political subversion or anarchy. Nor did he ever seek to evade or to resist decrees made by the government concerning him, even though these were at times arbitrary and unjust. Yet on the spiritual plane to which God elevated him through his prophetic ministry, Jeremiah exercised authority over the very rulers to whom he was in subjection on the natural plane.”⁷

Like Jeremiah, every Christian today has dual citizenship. By natural birth, we are citizens of an earthly nation, subject to its laws. But through spiritual rebirth, we are also citizens of heaven. As such, we are called to declare and decree God’s purposes on the earth.

Ministers of Reconciliation

Light overcomes darkness. There is still much darkness in this fallen world. But Jesus has sent you and me to shine His light of love and reconciliation. The apostle Peter tells us of the Father’s love for those who are lost in this darkness:

The Lord is . . . longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9, NKJV).

God desires that all people caught in sin be reconciled to Him. And He has chosen to use the Church as His tool to communicate that love to the world. The apostle Paul speaks of our role as ministers of reconciliation and God’s ambassadors:

Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was

in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

That is why we pray, “Thy kingdom come.” By doing so, we are placing ourselves in agreement with God’s plan for the earth (we’ll talk more about this in the next chapter). By praying the news, we stand up in the Spirit and declare, “thy will be done” in every issue that we face.

C. S. Lewis referred to this kind of intercessory prayer as being “God’s fellow-worker” in the world. “How or why does such faith occur sometimes, but not always, even in the perfect petitioner? . . . My own idea is that it occurs only when the one who prays does so as God’s fellow-worker, demanding what is needed for the joint work.”

“The difference, we are told, between a servant and a friend is that a servant is not in his master’s secrets,” Lewis explains. “For him, ‘orders are orders.’ He has only his own surmises as to the plans he helps to execute. But the fellow-worker, the companion or (dare we say?) the colleague of God is so united with Him at certain moments that something of the divine foreknowledge enters his mind. Hence his faith is the ‘evidence’—that it, the evidentness, the obviousness—of things not seen.”⁸

When we enter into the ministry of praying the news, we become “God’s fellow-worker” in this ministry of reconciliation. Lewis explains that to enter into intercession is to go from being a suitor—one who prays on his own behalf—to being a true servant of the Lord. Lewis goes on to say that it is no sin to be a suitor. “Our Lord descends into the humiliation of being a suitor, of praying on His own behalf, in Gethsemane,” he says. “But the vast majority of the time, Jesus, who is our example, plays the part of the servant, interceding for others.”⁹

This intercession is part of the priesthood ministry of Jesus that continues to this day:



But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Heb. 7:24-25, NKJV).

God invites us to join with Him in this ministry of reconciliation. And we too have a role to play as priests before God—standing as representatives of fallen man, crying out to heaven for mercy:

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9, NKJV).

But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years (Rev. 20:6, NKJV).

As we pray God's will on the earth, we are standing as a priest—or an intermediary—between God and man. This is why we pray the news. God's intention from the beginning of time is that we would carry His delegated authority (more on that in the next chapter). So when we are praying "Thy will be done," we are standing in the gap between a holy God and sinful mankind. That is what intercession is all about. C. S. Lewis stated:

"Thy will be done." But a great deal of it is to be done by God's creatures; including me. The petition, then, is not merely that I may patiently suffer God's will but also that I may vigorously do it. I must be an agent as well as a patient. I am asking that I may be enabled to do it.¹⁰

An Example of Praying the Good News

So how do we "do" the will of God by praying the news? Many Christians become frustrated, angry, and even overwhelmed when watching or reading the news. But there is a way to pray for

the issues and people we see in the news without losing our joy. It comes first by surrendering to God's will as He leads us into this ministry of reconciliation, and then by following the leading of the Holy Spirit when we pray.

"I'm inclined to cancel the newspaper," writer Karen O'Connor told her husband one morning as she leafed through the daily pages.

"I know what you mean," her husband responded, shaking his head as he read the headline of one story after another:

"Local Man Killed While Jogging Before Dawn"

"Drug Bust at the Border"

"Child Run Down by Drunken Driver"

In the same paper, however, were inspiring stories of a father who donated his kidney to his child, a woman honored for 50 years of volunteer service to the local school system, a family who had taken in foster children with disabilities. These and other articles focused on selfless men and women who were making a positive difference in the lives of others.

Where do we draw the line, Karen wondered. "I wanted to stay connected to my community, to the national scene, to global issues, as well. But the 'bad' news seemed to outweigh the good news by a wide margin. And I often left the breakfast table feeling burdened by the crime and hatred I read about. I wondered how I might strike a balance. As a Christian I felt an obligation to read and watch the news so that I can arm myself against deception and stay alert to what is going on in the world in which I live. On the other hand I didn't want to submit myself to the lure of evil or the advertising of false values that is so rampant in our culture."

Paul's words to the Romans came to Karen as she wrestled with what to do next.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Rom. 12:2, NIV).

Karen decided to “renew” her mind by eliminating the salacious and sensational news stories and focusing, instead, on those articles that uplifted her spirit and fed her mind. “Certainly this new plan saved me a lot of time. I went through the entire paper in a matter of moments!”

“Then one day several months later, I attended a workshop called ‘Practicing the Presence of God’ at a Christian conference. Author and speaker Jan Johnson, who had written a book on the subject, presented a viewpoint that completely changed the way I now approach the daily news. She shared with the audience a habit she had been developing over time: praying for people in the news—as the Lord leads. I remember how startled I was by this simple spiritual tool that I had completely overlooked. I also saw in that moment of clarity how self-serving I had been up to that point. Instead of engaging in the battle with prayer, I walked away from it. I left the conference with a new commitment to pray daily for the gift of discernment in all my affairs.”

Karen decided to take up Jan’s challenge. That very week she began reading the paper in an entirely new way, praying for individuals by name, as the Holy Spirit led her. She did not take on the burden of every oppressive detail. Instead, she simply held up the name of the person in need, asking God to make Himself known in that person’s life.

“Dear Lord, please touch Mr. Smith with your healing hand.”

“God, I feel overwhelmed by R.J.’s evil actions against those little children. Please rescue this boy and girl, and bring R.J. to repentance.”

Then she moved on.

“The next day I might be drawn to pray for a man convicted of murder. Another day I might pause and pray over the name of a city official. Sometimes I was moved to pray for an entire family or even a city of people who had been ravaged by a flood or earthquake.”

Reading the daily newspaper became an event Karen looked forward to—for an entirely new reason. Instead of spending her energy criticizing other people’s sin and setting herself above the

masses, she realized anew that but for the grace of God, she might be in the pages of that very paper for her own sins!

"I began praying in earnest—thanking God for what He had done in my life and asking for that same gift for others. Today, instead of gossiping about the news, my husband and I pray over it. Instead of condemning the sinners, we come against the sin. Instead of judging the unrighteous, we ask God to release His grace. And what a difference this practice has made in our lives."

Pray in Power and Compassion

So often in the ministry of Jesus, we see where He was moved with compassion for the hurting people He saw all around Him. And when He moved on their behalf, He did so in the power of the Holy Spirit. God wants to give us that same compassion and power. This world is in desperate need of faith-filled Christians to rise up and pray the news.

Are you ready to begin a tremendous adventure in God? The world needs faith-filled believers like you to rise up and intercede that God's will be done and that Satan's plans would be thwarted. It all begins by understanding why we pray, and then recognizing the authority that God has given to us in our prayers. Do you hear God's call to pray the news? Keep reading to learn how!