

Jericho Walls Prayer Guide Articles: March – May 2009

BUT GOD

Dear Intercessors

We are living in challenging times. Yet, circumstances must not be allowed to change or influence a Christian's conduct. George Mueller once said: "No anxiety ought to be found in a Christian" (**Phil.4:6**). We have to, within our circumstances, live our lives in the peace of God, live holy lives, be peacemakers, live righteous lives, be light and salt and not become bitter. We find ourselves in times like these in the history of our country.

Prayer focuses: March – June 2009

For the next few months we will specifically focus in prayer on areas of risk in society. I want to encourage you to plan for prayer focused on these specific aspects in your prayer times and in the prayer room. In March we will focus on the poor and needy of our country and the world, on famine and women at risk. In April we will focus in prayer on the upcoming elections. Will you not ask God how you can arrange for special times of prayer for our nation in your congregation or community during this month? In May we will focus mainly on the *10 Days* of night and day prayer, and the *Global Day of Prayer*. Please read more about these subjects in our special article on 24-7 Prayer focuses, specifically for usage in prayer watches.

Important dates from March – May 2009

The *World Day of Prayer 2009* takes place on 6 March for women and for men on 7 March. Consider getting more information about this day of prayer and invite men and women to take part. On 20 March, we are calling on the whole country, for people to set themselves apart for a *National Day of Prayer* focusing on the upcoming elections. For more information about how and what you can do to organise such an event in your church or community, turn to 20 March in this Prayer Guide or contact us at the office tel.: 012 365 3213 or website: www.jwipn.com or e-mail: info@jwipn.com. From 21-30 May 2009, thousands of people across the world will partake in the *10 Days* of night and day prayer, culminating in the *Global Day of Prayer* on 31 May 2009. Ask the Lord to show you how you can become involved in these different initiatives at your work and in your congregation or community.

God asks that we will pray

Prayer comes from the heart of God. Prayer is not something that we brought forth. It does not begin with us. It begins with God. God created us as His representatives on the earth and He wants us to come to Him and ask Him to work in our world. Moreover, He is the one working in us to will and to work (**Phil.2:12-13**). In other words, He stirs up the desire to pray in our hearts and He is the one who makes us willing and able to pray. It is due to His power only that we can pray.

It is God who asks us to pray. It is not as if we developed the concept of prayer. God asks us to pray. But prayer and faith go together. God does not have a problem answering our prayers; He will, if we believe and if we ask. Do we believe that He can and will do what we ask of Him?

One of the main reasons why people doubt if their prayers are heard, is that they do not know if they are praying the will of God. One of the most important ways to pray the will of God is to pray the promises and commands of God in Scripture. Sometimes there are no direct Scripture verses or promises on specific issues, but when we read Scripture, we can clearly discern the heart of God. Scripture is very clear about the importance of love and forgiveness in our conduct; to be filled with grace, to be fair and do what is right, and that we will be willing to give. Just these few guidelines can help us know what to do in many situations. Pray until you know what His will is. Then ask in faith for that which you know is within His will. Even though it might take a while to find out His will, it is still the best way to follow. I can say that the majority of time spent in prayer consists of finding out and praying the will of God.

Commitment and surrender

A lot of emphasis is nowadays put on 'commitment'. Everywhere we are asked to make a commitment. The Bible though, uses the word 'surrender'. There is a huge difference between the two. When speaking about commitment, I am in control, I can decide how much and how I want to commit. When I surrender, I give everything and then I no longer have control over it. Read more about this in our article on 'commitment and surrender'.

May God help you to surrender and not only commit!

Bennie Mostert

Managing Director: *Jericho Walls International Prayer Network*

Eph.3:20

What, where and when: National

6 March 2009: *Women's World Day of Prayer*

The *Women's World Day of Prayer* is a worldwide movement of Christian women to observe a common day of prayer each year. This year women, men and children of more than 170 countries will gather to pray, the theme being "*In Christ we are many Members, Yet One Body.*" For more information, contact: *Women's World Day of Prayer* (Sandra Pillay), P.O. Box 2002, Kempton Park, 2002. Tel.: 011 975 4598, fax: 011 975 2537. Websites: <http://www.worlddayofprayer.net/> or www.wwdp.co.za or e-mail: wwdp@telkomsa.net

7 March 2009: *Men's World Day of Prayer*

Men are also gathering in South Africa to pray for the world to come to the light of Jesus and will gather this day in different venues and at different times, the theme being: *God's emigration plan*. For more information please contact: Ben Ferreira: cell: 082 901 4219, tel.: 011 919 9038 (o), 012 348 4966 (a/h), e-mail: werelbiddag@absamail.co.za

18-26 April 2009: *He's Alive* performance

Passion Play Ministries of Cape Town will be putting on their annual performance of *He's Alive* at the Bellville Civic Centre. They are part of the *International Ministry* which reaches 140,000 people each year on three different continents (Africa, Asia and USA). They are an interdenominational ministry that focuses on inreach, as well as outreach. This year will be their 12th performance. For further information please contact Bronwyne Scott, cell: 084 769 7350 or David de Villiers, cell: 072 585 2913. Website: www.passionplay.org.za

24-26 April 2009: *The Mighty Men Conference*

The Mighty Men Conference will again take place from 24-26 April, 2009 at Shalom. The theme for 2009 is from **Galatians 4:28**, we are the '*children of promise*'. Please pray for the conference. *Shalom Ministries*, P.O. Box 373, Greytown, 3250. Tel.: 033 417 1695, fax: 033 417 1425. Websites: www.shalomtrust.co.za or www.mmc09.co.za or e-mail: shalom@futuregtn.co.za

What, where and when: International

18-19 April 2009: "*Just Pray NO!*" Ltd. *Worldwide Weekend of Prayer and Fasting*

The weekend of April 18 – 19, 2009 has been designated as the 19th Annual "*Just Pray NO!*" to drugs *Worldwide Weekend of Prayer and Fasting*. Since April 7, 1991 "*Just Pray NO!*" Ltd. has sought to unite Christians from around the world in intercessory prayer on behalf of the addicted and their families. Churches, ministries and community organisations can actively participate by following one or more of their suggested activities or by creating some of your own. For more information, visit the website: <http://www.justprayno.org/>

6-7 June 2009: World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk

Last year God enabled over 4 million people in 100 countries to pray for the needs of the *Children at Risk* in the world. Join us during this time to pray for our *Children at Risk*, that God through His Spirit will move along the streets and amongst communities, surrounding the children with His love. Ask that His servants will be strengthened and grow in number to care for each child. For more information visit www.viva.org or e-mail pray@viva.org

What's online

Website: <http://www.freeenglishnow.com>

The *FreeEnglishNow (FEN)* website distributes CD's of the entire 16-lesson English course, as well as monthly lessons for downloading in TXT and MP3 for Handheld use. Spoken English lessons incorporate eight chapters from the book of Acts in modern English and include enough audio recordings of spoken English study for nine months. *FEN* reaches young professionals and university students largely untouched by the organised church in 188 countries.

Website: <http://www.unreached.org/index.php>

Read about a different unreached group every day. Learn about ways you can use the material from the site, free of charge. It is another excellent tool from the *Joshua Project* and highly recommended.

Website: www.faithcomesbyhearing.com

The audio Bible ministry *Faith Comes By Hearing (FCBH)*, recently announced the availability of 7 audio New Testament recordings in Afrikaans, Chuj San Mateo Ixtatan, Javanese Caribbean, Kirghiz, Kuranko, Otomi Mezquital, and Thai. Individuals can download these new recordings, as well as other MP3 Bibles, at this website free of charge. These new recordings, which represent a potential audience of more than 105 million people on 4 continents, bring the total number of audio Scriptures available to 341 recordings in 287 languages. *FCBH's* goal is to record audio Bibles in 2,000 languages by the year 2016, thus creating the ability to reach 97% of the world's population.

Website: <http://estudysource.com>

eStudySource is the exclusive supplier of bestselling digital content in *e-Sword* format for over 5 million *e-Sword* users, and is a premier provider of the best digital resources in other formats. *eStudySource* provides Christians with the best digital Bibles, study helps, and inspirational resources, so that they might be inspired and equipped to understand and share God's Word.

Website: <http://www.atfp.org/pray/ways-to-pray/> and <http://www.atfp.org/pray/find-a-terrorist-or-terrorism-sponsor-to-adopt/>

Find online guidelines on why and how to pray for terrorists. They also offer a profile of someone involved in terrorism whom you can pray for.

Did you know?

Rotterdam, the Netherlands: Count your blessings!

A recent study commissioned by the city council in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on the social benefit of Christian churches, suggests that if the churches were to stop their volunteer activities today, the city would go bankrupt. They save the city up to 130 million euro each year and contribute significantly towards creating social cohesion and integration. Half of regular church-goers – some 25,000 – are active volunteers, mostly spending more than eight hours each week on volunteer work. These activities include informational and educational courses, and social aid programmes. Volunteers offer emergency financial aid, run food banks and meals-on-wheels

programmes, assist those who are grieving, help with homework, teach language and computer lessons etc. (Source: Jeff Fountain, Hope for Europe).

22 March 2009: World water Day

Facts about water, drinking water, and water-related disease

An estimated 1.1 billion people lack access to an improved water supply – approximately one in six people on earth. About 2.6 billion people in the world lack access to improved sanitation. Less than 1% of the world's fresh water (or about 0.007% of all the water on earth) is readily accessible for direct human use. A person can live weeks without food, but only days without water. The average American individual uses 100 to 176 gallons of water at home each day whereas the average African family uses about 5 gallons of water each day. Millions of women and children spend several hours a day fetching water from distant, often polluted sources. (Website: <http://www.water.org/waterpartners.aspx?pgID=916>).

Mobile phones contained Kenyan polio outbreak

A potential polio epidemic in Kenya has been monitored and contained using a mobile phone application called *EpiSurveyor*. There had been no cases of polio in Kenya for 21 years until a new case was detected among Somalian refugees in north-eastern Kenya two years ago. The success of the application in Kenya, as well as the prevalence of mobile phones even in the poorest nations, led the *World Health Organisation (WHO)* to expand the project to another 20 African countries. (Website: <http://www.scidev.net/en/features/how-mobile-phones-contained-kenyan-polio-outbreak.html>).

QUOTES

The power of prayer has never been tried to its full capacity in any church. If we want to see mighty wonders of divine grace and power wrought in the place of weakness, failure and disappointment, let the whole Church answer God's standing challenge; "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knows not." James Hudson Taylor

Wherever the Church is aroused and the world's wickedness arrested, somebody has been praying. A. T. Pierson

Are you living for the things you are praying for? Austin Phelps

If anyone will rise up and devote himself to the work of prayer exclusively, how excellent that will be. God is waiting for such ones to work together with Him so as to enable Him to finish His work. Some Christians may ask why the Lord does not save more sinners, why He does not cause every Believer to overcome. I sincerely believe that He would undoubtedly do such works if people would only pray. Watchman Nee

All things being equal, our prayers are only as powerful as our lives. In the long pull we pray only as well as we live. A.W. Tozer

Prayer will become effective when we stop using it as a substitute for obedience. A.W. Tozer

Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance. It is laying hold of God's willingness. George Mueller

Faith in a prayer-hearing God will make a prayer-loving Christian. John Owen

Intensity is a law of prayer. God is found by those who seek Him with all their heart. Wrestling prayer prevails. The fervent effectual prayer of the righteous is of great force. Samuel Chadwick

Oh, the sacredness and power of prayer, if it takes possession of the heart and life! It keeps one constantly in fellowship with God. We can then literally say, "On thee do I wait all the day" (Ps.25.5). Let us be careful to consider not only the length of the time we spend with God in prayer, but the power with which our prayer takes possession of our whole life. Andrew Murray

24-7 Prayer watch focus: March-June 2009

The prayer focuses on this page are to encourage those involved in a 24-7 house of prayer to focus on the same things at the same time in prayer. These are only guidelines and watch coordinators may add their own focuses as the Holy Spirit leads them. Will you not consider putting up these prayer pointers in your prayer room in creative ways, or use them in your quiet time? Also inform others and encourage them to pray for these issues during each of the monthly focuses. More information is available on these issues free of charge from our website: www.jwipn.com. Also remember to subscribe to our weekly *Prayer Alert* at cape@jwipn.com which covers more current issues in prayer on a weekly basis.

March: The poor and needy; famine; women and children

Who would not be overwhelmed by the crying need of people who are helplessly caught up in poverty, famine and the violence to which women and children are exposed? We cannot just look on, showing no mercy and saying they are responsible for the situation they are in. It is simply not the truth. Few of those who fall victim to these circumstances, do so because they are bad or irresponsible. Let us pray for these people during March.

April: National elections

God appoints governments. God gives a land to those who govern it. God removes bad governments (Jer.18:7-10). In April, let us call upon God to give us people who will govern in righteousness. Ministers, advisors, director-generals, and senior and other government officials need to be appointed. Pray that people will be appointed who love righteousness, truth and honour; wise men and women. Pray in faith. Do not look with the eyes of man. Look upon our country from a position of God's might and pray from His love and promises for our country. God is a God of hope and life. Pray for new hope and life.

May: Global Day of Prayer

On 21 March 2001, more than 40,000 people gathered at the Newlands Rugby stadium for a day of prayer and supplication. Since 2005 this day of prayer has grown into a *Global Day of Prayer* that repeats every year on Pentecost Sunday with 10 Days of night and day prayer preceding it. Last year, 215 of the 220 countries in the world partook in this day of prayer. This year we trust God for the remaining 5 countries to also take part. It is still a day of prayer and supplication. Let us, together with Christians across the world, seek the face of the Lord for revival, the salvation of the unsaved, the power of the Holy Spirit in the Church, for the transformation of communities and that God's hope will make a breakthrough in the dark places on earth.

June: Focus on Children at Risk

There is so much violence against children. Neglected children are seen even at rubbish dumps. We see the 7 million street children in Brazil, child soldiers whose eyes are lifeless, and children living with their parents through the traumas of war. Then think about child prostitution, child slavery and child labour. May we find time this month to sit down and just think about the needs of children. And may it be that God will give us tears to cry about the children. May our hearts be broken by the brokenness of the children. And may God be gracious to us so that we will pray with faith and tears and also do what our hands find to do.

June-August: 90 Days of Blessing

Every year after the *Global Day of Prayer* on Pentecost, the Church is encouraged to reach out to communities in practical ways, showing the love of the Lord Jesus in practical ways for 90 days. This year the focus is to reach out

to those living in 'noteworthy and neglected places'. Please pray with millions all over the world and find a way how you can become practically involved. There are practical tips at the prayer pointers of every day during this period to help you reach out to those who are forgotten.

Men-2-Pray: Restoring the family altar

Statistics show that 81% of married couples who read the Bible together daily, stay together. These families also live together in greater peace. This percentage changes drastically where Christian couples do not do it.

In the business world and society today, it is quite challenging to get a family together for prayer and to discuss and meditate on the application of the Word. The most difficult place to be a Christian (with a few exceptions), is within your own family. Yet, our home is a place where we should feel safe and be ourselves. If it can work here, it can work more easily 'out there'. The following are a few guidelines to help you restore your family altar.

- Try to find at least two opportunities per week to gather for a time of prayer. It will not happen by itself. It is a choice. Some families find it easy to meet almost on a daily basis. Others prefer gathering in the morning and yet others in the evening. In the same way you plan your holiday in such a way that everything works out for everyone, you have to make decisions for your family altar to work!
- Make sure each family member bring his/her Bible when you come together.
- Usually the head of the home will read a part from Scripture and then present an opportunity for the others to share their thoughts. Family members can take turns to read from Scripture and facilitate a time of discussion. It helps if the responsible person for that day does a little preparation beforehand.
- When discussing a Scripture verse, try to ask practical questions on how it is applicable to real life. Often something will become clear that has been an issue that you as family or members in your family have struggled with in their own lives. This can become a point of prayer when concluding your time together.
- It is not wrong to have a special reading from another Christian book or a Daily Devotional, but reading from Scripture must remain central. We can easily shirk our responsibility of reading the Bible ourselves by relying on what others think and write about it.
- Give opportunity for prayer. First discuss some issues you want to pray about. It can be personal, about school, concerning a parent's work, an issue taken from the newspaper or praying for the country. Do not forget to pray for other countries, for the unreached and their needs. Each one can choose something to pray for to make sure all have a chance to pray.
- Pray for your local congregation, the spiritual leaders, for revival in the church, government, missionaries and the increase of God's Kingdom.
- It is a good idea to keep a prayer journal where you as a family can write down your prayer requests during the course of one year. Write down the request and the date on which you prayed. You will be surprised when going through these notes at the end of the year, how many of your prayers God has answered.
- Sometimes relationships in the family can be strained because of something that may have happened. First sit down and try to talk about those things causing stress and distance. Pray about it. Try not to accuse or preach to each other in prayer. No family can function properly without the words "I am sorry" and "Forgive me". Forgiveness is part of the essence of the gospel. Even when you differ and do not find a solution, pray and ask the Lord to show you a solution through the Holy Spirit.
- In many families there are one or two members who may not be fully committed to the Lord. Some may even be unsaved or very rebellious. Do not force them to pray or even read from the Bible, but do ask them to join the meeting. Do not judge them. They must never feel they are inferior or unworthy sinners that will end up in hell. Show them that you love them. If they ask questions just to be difficult, listen to them and if you do not have a good answer, admit it. Do not try to have all the answers. Do not become

involved in an argument. Say that you will think and pray about it. Show compassion for them in the same way God shows mercy to you, and be patient.

- Remember, the family altar and times of prayer never replace your personal quiet time.

Testimony

Myanmar orphans reaching out

A number of Christian orphanages have been started in Myanmar in recent years. In 2004, one orphanage accommodating 30 children was able to build a strong, two-story building to replace their dilapidated shack. Before the cyclone hit in May, the villagers discriminated against the children because they were Christians in a Buddhist society. When the cyclone struck, the village and neighbouring areas were badly ravaged, but the orphanage building stood firm among other houses that had collapsed. When the orphans saw what was happening, they opened their doors and welcomed the neighbours inside. They even shared their rice with them and the rest of the village that didn't have access to food. They were even able to pump and purify drinking water for 1,000 people in the village because of their generator. They were a testimony to their Buddhist neighbours (*Global Prayer Update* - September 2008. *Operation Mobilization*. Website: <http://www.omusa.org>).

ARTICLE: *National Day of Prayer for the Elections: 20 March 2009*

There is no doubt that the 2009 national election is extremely important. As the Church we have the responsibility to pray. The power to control the course of world events is in God's hand. He removes kings and sets up other kings (**Dan.2:22**). The NKJV version of the Bible says: "He changes times and seasons." He bestows insight upon the wise. God's plan for the future lies hidden from man's scrutiny, but is fully known to Him. Authorities come from God and have been placed there by God (**Rom.13:1**). Our responsibility is to ask the Lord for a government appointed by Him to rule in a just and responsible way. We have to pray for kings and all in authority so that we can live a peaceful life (**1 Tim.2:1-3**). As the Church we are not to complain but to ask the Lord to intervene also in the political affairs of our nation.

We want to encourage Christians nationwide to cry out to God, lay hold of Him (**Isa.64:7**). *National Initiative for Reformation in South Africa (NIRSA)* asked for a day of prayer on 20 March. Consider a 3-day fast (18-20 March) and encourage churches in your community to join in fasting and prayer for our nation. Ours is not the task to criticise, condemn or judge. Our task is to pray and make sure we vote in a responsible way.

For more prayer pointers to use in your prayer groups or prayer room, visit our website at: www.jwipn.com or e-mail: info@jwipn.com

ARTICLE: POVERTY

Poverty is a growing problem and has been part of mankind for thousands of years and will be with us till the end of time. God gave us in the Church the task to take care of the poor and the destitute. It is so that God expects governments to rule justly and to care for the poor. However it is not, in the first place, the State's responsibility to care for the poor. When for example, we read the book of Proverbs, it is quite clear how God thinks about the poor and what His instructions are to Believers and non-Believers. However, taking care of the poor is primarily the responsibility of the Church.

Poverty has an incredibly degrading effect on people's lives. It often leads to total inferiority, a beggar's mentality, and people give up hope completely of working or looking for work because of repeated failure to stand up, look for work and earn an honest living. For most of the poor it's a matter of survival. Few other things matter. Yes, sin is rife among the poor, but there is not less sin among people who are not poor.

It serves no purpose quoting statistics on the number of poor people and their living conditions. We see it every day. The point is quite simply that we must do something about it. The most effective thing to do is firstly, to pray, but praying alone is not good enough. A number of guidelines follow that will help you pray for the poor:

- When we pray for the poor, we must understand first of all, that they did not necessarily contribute to be poor because they sinned or because they are too lazy to work or that they are simple-minded. The fact that someone was born in a squatter camp is for example not due to the fact that this person is bad or wicked or that he/she deserves it, or is stupid and lazy. Do not judge or make assumptions, God is the only one knowing everything.
- Read **Isaiah 58** and pray through the book. Focus on everything concerning poverty and use this as the basis for your prayer. Don't be judgmental when you pray, don't accuse people. Pray that God will be gracious and give deliverance.
- When you pray for the poor, pray with a broken heart and with compassion. Make sure there is no haughtiness in you, no feelings of superiority or condemnation. Share with the poor and don't begrudge them the same grace that God shows you. When we want to pray for the poor, the most important aspect of our prayer is the attitude of our hearts.
- Pray for systems and legislation that will prevent the poor from being exploited and misused. Pray for governments to make laws so that the poor can be helped.
- Millions of rands are made available in countries (by governments and foreign grants) towards caring for the poor. Worldwide statistics show that approximately 2% of the money made available in this way towards the upliftment of the poor actually reaches them. In some cases it is a little more, but normally an insignificant amount of the money reach the people who are in need. Pray that such fraud will come to light and that the poor will reap the benefits of the money.
- Pray for the Church that it will do more than what is done now. Most congregations have projects to care for the poor. The problem is however, that in most cases this is done by a few individuals in the congregation. Also, that church councils/governing boards don't make available considerable amounts of money for this and that the vast majority of church members are uninvolved. Pray that God the Father, through the working of the Holy Spirit will touch the hearts of more people in church councils/governing boards and more church members so that they will become actively involved in the needs of people.
- When we really pray from the heart for the needs of the poor, it is impossible not to become practically involved in the plight of these people. Each one of us can give a few rand extra a month, each one of us has an hour or two more a week that we can use to help the poor and the needy. If you don't know of an existing project, start one. Pray and ask the Lord's guidance. This is how all the other projects started. The Bible is very clear about it that God the Father has a heart for the poor and the destitute and therefore He will help us when we step out in faith and start doing something. Even if we start by helping one or two people and then expand with time, it is good enough.

Women-2-Pray: Teaching your children to pray

You do not teach a child to pray in one day. It will take times of discussion with them, demonstrations, and practice – letting them do it themselves. Most of all, they learn to pray by hearing you pray. Children do what they see others do. The following are some ideas on how to encourage a lifestyle of prayer in the lives of your children. Teach them to speak to God as if He is real (which He in fact is), and they will be speaking to Him a lot!

1. **Be honest in prayer:** We can teach children to say 'thank you', 'sorry' and 'please' to God in the same way that we teach them to say these things to us. We can help them to learn how to forgive others and very importantly, themselves. It is not always that easy, but it is important for children to know they can be honest with God and tell Him what they find difficult. In this way they learn to ask God to help them *want* to forgive.

2. **Praying in the family:** Family prayer times can be times of stress or joy. Know you will pass through these phases, and do not become discouraged. Pray before meals. Make sure you pray together as a family – all members included – at least once a week. Give everyone a turn to pray, no matter how simple their prayers.
3. **Praying all the time:** When they come to you with a problem, listen carefully. Ask them questions on how they think the situation can be changed for the better. Guide them if they struggle with this. Give them a moment and then tell them to ask God right there and then. It is important that you say a prayer as an example, but it is equally important to let them pray themselves. This way they learn how to pray themselves when facing trouble or difficult situations.
4. **Praying in sickness:** Children believe anything is possible until doubting adults explain to them that it is not! There are no better prayer warriors for the sick than children. Jesus said that we have to come to Him like children. Whenever a member of the household is not feeling well, make a special effort to pray also for one another, so that prayer for the sick will become part of their lifestyle.
5. **Praying can be singing:** Children love to sing. Singing to God is a very important part of prayer. It teaches them to worship God for who He is, and not only for what He can do for them. Make sure you sing a lot to God in the house, whether you sing known worship songs or just spontaneous singing about who God is. It will teach them to sing to God themselves.
6. **Praying while reading:** All small children love books. Ask God how you can capture their attention with the Bible. Make sure you read from the Bible to them on a regular basis. Also take care not to read to them only from children's Bibles, but sometimes from your own Bible. Try to make it applicable to practical situations and then ask them to pray about it.
7. **Do your homework:** See if you can join up with other mothers and form a group of children getting together once a week or from time to time. Take turns to work out a prayer theme for each week, something the children can do together. There are a lot of resources with ideas to teach children on prayer. Make sure you make a special effort to invest in your children's lives.
8. **Pray the Word:** Help them proclaim and pray Scripture over everyday issues. It will work for you too! Here are a few suggestions:
When God feels far away: *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you (Jas.4:8).*
When they struggle to believe God: *Lord, I believe; help me overcome my unbelief! (Mk.9:24).*
When they are afraid: *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim.1:7).*
When they feel discouraged: *Why are you downcast, O my soul? ...Put your hope in God (Ps.42:5).*

ARTICLE: How to pray for a childless couple

There are many more childless couples than we think. Such couples find this situation emotionally complex and extremely traumatic, irrespective of whether the problem lies with the man or the woman. Some feel God is punishing them, others that they are not worthy of raising children, that they are failures or that there is sin somewhere in their lives that is preventing God from blessing them. While it is impossible to give answers to all the questions, there are directives that can encourage us to pray for such couples in faith, believing that God answers prayer. The following are guidelines when praying for childless couples:

- Make sure of your relationship with the Lord. Are you in a living relationship with Jesus Christ? First of all, God is interested in your relationship with Him. Everything else flows from that. Don't rush this matter. Make sure.
- Deal with every kind of sin in your life. Don't go looking for sin, but ask the Lord if there is anything that He is not happy with. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you if anything has come between the Lord and you. God does not condemn, He is a God of grace and wants to forgive us and cleanse us from our sins.
- Many childless couples think they have committed some sin or other and for this reason God is punishing them and/or He doesn't want to tell them what they did wrong. Go and think how you see God. Do you see Him as a Father just waiting for you to do something wrong so that He can punish you, or a Father who is

unwilling to help you and now you must plead and beg Him to change His mind – that you must overcome His unwillingness through prayer? I would like to advise you both to take time and go and write down what your emotions are around God, how you think about Him or feel about Him. Be honest – God knows what you are thinking and experiencing in any case. Then tell Him and ask Him to bring your thoughts and emotions in line with the way He really is. Do you see Him as a Father of love (real love), who loves unconditionally, a Father who is good, a Father who is gracious and a Father who forgives? This determines how you will pray.

- Pray boldly and ask Him for a child. Believe in God and believe God, which means: "Lord, we ask You for a child. With You nothing is impossible."
- It also means: "Lord, Your will be done. Your ways are not our ways. Whatever You decide is right. We subject ourselves to Your will, but we are also confident when we ask because You are our Father." There could be reasons why God won't allow you to have children, but then you must understand that it is not because God does not like or love you.
- Don't blame each other if nothing happens. Don't allow it to drive a wedge between the two of you. Don't blame yourself if the problem lies with you. Mostly it is more difficult for men to know they are the ones with the "problem". It affects their manliness and often gives rise to a poor self-image and all kinds of conclusions and emotions. Women experience it differently. That is why both of you must try to put these emotions into words and then pray about the matter.
- Live joyfully and hopefully. God is good and God is faithful and God is still almighty even if there is not going to be a baby. Do not allow the devil to rob you of your joy and don't let his condemnation and accusations rule your life.
- Ask the Lord what He wants to tell you about the situation. Listen well. It happens that one is sometimes so set on just asking and wrestling with God that He must give you a baby, that you don't listen carefully what God wants to say about the situation. There may be reasons why things work out like this in your case and it may have nothing to do with sin or unbelief.
- If you or your parents were perhaps involved in occult activities, it would be wise to pray with someone who has enough knowledge of these matters.
- There are ethical limits to our efforts of acquiring a baby. There is for example nothing wrong with adoption. But when it comes to surrogate mothers, the use of the sperm of another man, etc. we are at a point where we are crossing the boundaries of the Scriptures. We must live before God with integrity, morally pure and holy. This is God's intention with the Bible. This comment is not meant to be judgmental, but to caution and give guidance.
- Guidelines for people praying for childless couples: It is important that people praying for such couples will not be judgmental in their prayers, for example imply that the couple does not pray in faith or that there is sin in their lives. Don't act as if you have the answer. Rather listen and show unconditional love and be compassionate. Pray that if the couple goes for medical help that the doctors will make the correct diagnoses and treat such couples with integrity, and that the Lord will use the doctors to be of help.

Youth-2-Pray: When my friends face Anorexia

Anorexia is a serious and potentially life threatening disorder. The exact cause is unknown, but it is believed that a number of factors including emotional, physical and behavioural issues contribute to this disorder.

When we think about how to pray for them, we do not want to preach or pretend that we are experts. This is a sensitive issue that causes much pain and distress, both for parents, friends and those suffering from anorexia. What is important is that you should love them and pray for them. The following are some thoughts you can share with your friends on how to pray and care for people suffering from anorexia. Your prayers will make a difference, because God answers prayer.

- **Dysfunctional families:** People who suffer from anorexia often live in dysfunctional families. Sometimes the relationships in a family may lead to young people falling into the anorexia trap, especially if the father and/or mother are very domineering and/or over-protective. The child may see it as a form of control and feel there is no freedom to make his/her own decisions. Another problem is also that there is sometimes a lack of open and honest communication in the family circle. Pray and ask the Lord to show the family if there is anything in the family set-up that can cause anorexia. Pray that there will not be denial and that the parents will not take offence, but that they will be willing to work on it and if necessary, go for counselling.
- **False sense of control:** Sometimes young people may feel that they are not acknowledged for who they are and what they are capable of, and their talents are not recognised either. There is often a strong urge to control. They want to gain a measure of 'control' of their lives, even if it is just showing that they are capable of doing something on their own, like deciding on their own eating patterns. Pray that young people will see the folly of thinking like this and that they will be willing to surrender their lives to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to set them free so that they can experience total liberty and acceptance.
- **Surrender:** Pray that they will understand that God is in control of everything and that they can relax. When God is in control, there is no rejection, there is no need to perform or earn acceptance. We are free to be ourselves.
- **Identity crisis:** Anorexia sufferers often struggle with an identity crisis and have a totally wrong perception of their worth and especially their own bodies. Some of them hate their bodies for different reasons and feel they can rectify it by radically changing their eating habits. Pray that they will find their identity in Christ and be able to see themselves as God sees them. Ask that they will understand that God loves them unconditionally, that He made them and is proud of them.
- **Rejection issues:** Some of them fear rejection and feel that if they can lose weight, they will be more acceptable to other people. Pray that they will experience the love and acceptance of friends and family and also the acceptance of God. Ask that they will understand that God values them and believes in them because He made them and has good plans for them (**Jeremiah 29:11-14**).
- **Respected as a person:** All people have at least two basic needs: to feel loved (versus rejection) and that they are valued, can contribute something, which means they need to feel needed. Ask the Lord to show young people through the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, that they are loved, that they are important and that they are needed. Ask that others will help those suffering from anorexia by treating them with respect, and in a way that will make them feel needed and loved.
- **Distorted view of self:** Anorexia sufferers are often afraid of social interaction, have low self-esteem, and therefore feel uncomfortable to eat in front of other people. They are also often perfectionists and hyper-tidy. Eventually they withdraw, and the true picture of who they really are becomes distorted. They begin to feel that people reject them and that this is the reason why they feel so uncomfortable. A combination of all these things leads to a distorted view of themselves. Pray for all lies and deception about whom they are in Christ to be exposed and that they will be set free. Lies and ignorance bind us, but the truth sets us free.
- **Courage to face the truth:** Ask the Lord to work willingness in the hearts of anorexia sufferers to admit to their problem and to go for help.
- **Distorted view of happiness:** They are mostly in denial about the fact that they are underweight. They feel that happiness is undeserved and there is a striving for perfection. Pray that they will see that God created them to have life and to have it abundantly (**John 10:10**).
- **Cover with prayer:** When you pray for them, remember to resist in Jesus' Name the spirit of death, deception and destruction (**James 4:7**).
- **Embraced by friends and family:** Most importantly, accept them as human beings. Do not be angry with them and do not judge them. Pray that their family and friends will also treat them like this.
- **Remain standing:** Pray with hope, with faith. Read the Word and pray God's promises of hope and life over them as often as the Holy Spirit reminds you.

ARTICLE: Commitment vs. Surrender

The word commitment is in essence not a biblical concept. It is more or less since the 1960's that Christian writers and preachers began to use the word. Today people are asked to make a *commitment* to follow Christ, to commit to go to the mission field, to give financially, to pray for a certain issue.

The word commit means: promised devotion, to pledge devotion or dedication to somebody or something; to be committed to, to entrust something or somebody to somebody else for protection.

The loophole with commitment though, is that we can still decide **what and how much** we want to commit. The decision still lies with us. We are still in control. It is more of a humanistic concept than a Christian concept.

Scripture speaks of **surrender**, not commitment. The definition of surrender is: to give up possession of something: to relinquish possession or control of something, unconditional submission, abandonment of legal rights, an act of willing submission to authority, capitulation, renunciation, to hand over, to give up a fight, an act of declaring defeat at the hands of an opponent.

Let us surrender to God. Let us give up our rights. When we surrender to God, it is not for us to decide what we want to do with our lives, possessions and future. It is only in surrender that God can do with us what He wants to do. Surrender is unconditional commitment. It goes against the grain of the era of humanism. It is in total surrender that we can really pray: "Your will be done." It is through total surrender that we get out of the way so that God can work in and through us or even set us aside to work through someone else to do what needs to be done.

Surrender is an absolute **act of faith**, saying: "Lord I trust you." Praying from a position of surrender, not commitment, allows God to work far above and beyond what we can think or imagine. One of the biggest differences between commitment and surrender is the fact that in commitment things depend on me. In surrender I give all to God. I will fail, but He will never fail. Commitment without surrender is often trying to do what only God can do through me when I surrender to Him.

Commitment comes after surrender. After our unconditional commitment (surrender), we follow through on our commitment, whatever the cost. Sooner or later the Christian life comes to a place where there is a price to be paid. It is here where commitment carries us through, irrespective of our circumstances, lack of faith and strength or unwillingness. We can commit ourselves for instance to do a certain piece of work. As soon as other pressures come, we might feel that we simply cannot do it. This is where unconditional commitment comes in: I keep my commitment, irrespective of the circumstances.

We will often sense that God is asking us to do something. After prayer and consultation, we feel that we need to do it. We put our hand to the plough and start. But then all sorts of difficulties arise and we feel that we cannot go on. Suddenly we start finding excuses: perhaps God didn't speak to me about this issue or maybe it is time to hand this over to someone else. Too many times I hear people say, "You know, God is using me to start things and then move on." I am not convinced that this is true in every situation. The easiest thing to do is to start something. If nothing comes of what I started, I can blame other people for not being faithful or not listening when God speaks to them. Too often the problem is in fact a lack of commitment to finish the work. So many times there is pride in the fact that we have been involved in starting something because then we can say, "You know, I was actually the one who started it." Do not start something if you aren't committed to finish it. We have too many sprinters in the Kingdom of God, but there are not enough long distance runners willing to complete the marathon. The Christian race is a marathon. God's marathon requires training, unconditional commitment and for you to surrender to Him.



Children-2-Pray: Praying with your body

Did you know that you can worship Jesus with your body as well as with your heart and spirit? Jesus gave you your body and He loves it when you worship Him also with your body. There are many different postures you can take in prayer and the Bible is full of them! Each one is a way of showing Jesus what is in your heart by expressing it in a physical way.

Monday: Kneeling is a way to show Jesus you are entering into His presence and accept that He will answer your prayer in the way that is best for you. It is a physical way to humble yourself before Jesus. *You can kneel down when you have an important prayer request you want to bring before God. You may always kneel when you pray to show honour to Him.*

Tuesday: Standing shows that you are waiting for Him to tell you what to do. You take your position before Him in prayer and wait on Him. *You can ask Him about a problem you are facing, and then wait to listen what He says to you.*

Wednesday: Raising hands shows Jesus that you are reaching towards Him in praise to glorify Him, or asking something with arms open in order to receive it. *You can sing Him a song, telling Him how much you love Him.*

Thursday: Walking shows Jesus that you are ready for His direction or plans. *You can e.g. pray for the school every time you walk into the school building.*

Friday: Bowing shows Jesus that you honour Him and feel humble because He is so wonderful and powerful and supplies in your needs. *You can do this when you want to say thank you to Jesus because of who He is when He has answered one of your prayer requests.*

Weekend: On your face. Whenever someone was overcome by Jesus' presence in Bible times, they would fall down on their faces. It shows Jesus that He is so awesome and that you are overcome by His love for you. *You can do this after you have had your quiet time or prayer time. When lying down, you do not need to do anything but think upon Jesus' greatness in your life.*

ARTICLE: *Global Day of Prayer 2009*

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

The *Global Day of Prayer* has seen millions of Christians unite in a day of repentance and united prayer. On 11 May 2008, Believers from 214 nations once again united all over the globe. The echoes of desperate prayers for transformation sounded from stadiums, open fields, community centres and private homes. These prayers call on God who has the power to transform our world and to fill the nations with His glory.

On 31 May 2009, God is again calling the nations from the North, South, East and West to embark on this prayer journey with Him. God is moving in His awesome power and He is challenging us to be part of this journey. It is a journey that is not about us, but about a world desperately in need of His glory and compassionate love. It is a call to respond to His invitation in **2 Chronicles 7:14** to humble ourselves, pray, seek His face and turn from our wicked ways. May He hear our prayers, forgive our sin and heal our land.

TEN leading up to ONE followed by NINETY

The *Global Day of Prayer* follows the three parts of the beginning of the Church: *10 Days* of constant prayer leading up to Pentecost, one day of prayer witnessed by the whole city and *90 Days of Blessing* that followed. For these reasons, the *Global Day of Prayer* has three parts.

- **10 Days** of constant prayer: 21-30 May 2009. Beginning on Ascension Day, 21 May, millions of Christians will find ways to pray night and day throughout the ten days leading to Pentecost.
- The **Global Day of Prayer**: 31 May 2009. On Pentecost Sunday, Christians in almost every country will assemble to pray. Many will gather in small groups in homes. Many will assemble in large stadiums and other public venues.
- **90 Days of Blessing**: 1 June - 29 August 2009. As with the first Pentecost, transformed Christians transform their communities as they offer themselves to God as instruments through which their prayers can be answered. Through *Global Day of Prayer* we anticipate the forming or furthering of greater unity among pastors, churches, missions and business leaders to bring practical transformation to their communities.

I humbly invite you to join hundreds of millions of Christians as we seek God's face, and trust that people from the 220 countries of the globe will see willing Believers standing in the gap for the nations.

May we see His glory.

Graham Power,
Chairman, *Global Day of Prayer*

Please visit the *Global Day of Prayer* website: www.globaldayofprayer.com to learn about translations which may be available in other languages or contact *Global Day of Prayer* at e-mail: info@globaldayofprayer.com

ARTICLE: WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?

Peter Tarantal, National Coordinator for World Evangelisation Network of South Africa (WENSA)

The last hundred years have seen dramatic changes in the *Global South* - a missiological term for the less developed continents of Latin America, Africa and Asia. We have seen Christianity grow at an unprecedented rate in these areas. For instance, in 1900 there were reportedly 8 million Christians on the continent of Africa: today there are approximately 450 million. These changes have enormous potential consequences for Kingdom advances in the *Global South*, where the majority of the world's unreached peoples are located. One of the challenges though is to encourage the sending of missionaries to keep pace with the dramatic growth of Christianity in these areas.

New innovative approaches to missions are being born in these areas. An example is the model of *Proximate Missions* where the Church in a region takes the initiative to reach those from a similar ethno-linguistic and economic background.

There are approximately 2 million Filipinos in the Arabian Peninsula, many of them Believers. These brothers and sisters need training but need no financial support as they earn a living in the countries where they are working. New initiatives in missions such as *Business as Mission* and *Arts in Mission* linked with sports, for example, are more innovative ways to see the gospel reach so many more people.

There are a number of challenges still remaining for us though. The challenge of the one-fourth world still confronts all of us, where 27% of the world is still unreached. Unfortunately only 1% of all church income goes towards missions in that part of the world and the same can be said of the workers going to the mission field.

Another challenge for us will be the issue of the uniqueness of Christ. We live in an increasingly relativistic world which demands us to be more tolerant and accepting. A major challenge for the Church of Jesus Christ is the re-evangelisation of the West. Europe already regards itself as post-Christian. We have the situation now where

churches from Latin America, Africa and Asia are beginning to send workers to Europe. The largest church in Europe is being led by an African. We have the challenge of discipleship and the training of leaders, especially in the *Global South* where the Church is growing at phenomenal rate.

I am not sure that we have fully grasped the impact of the global recession on missions yet. I know of a number of missionaries who have been adversely affected in their support as a result of it, so we will have to look for new ways of funding missions. In this regard the new recognition of the great value of marketplace ministry is greatly encouraging.

In the midst of great challenges we can truly see that God is busy with "new and greater things".

Prayer story: Global Prayer Watch in Cape Town

How did your prayer watch start?

We started preparing in May 2000 for the launch of the prayer watch in Cape Town on 1 September 2000. It was a special day when John Mulindi and others came and we dedicated the house of prayer to the Lord. After this we began to invite individuals from the surrounding churches to pray in the prayer room. After one year we realised that 24-7 prayer was going to be more sustainable if we could have full-time people covering the night hours. In 2004 we began a discipleship training school called *Face-2-Face*, with 7 students. Only in February 2006 we had a strong enough group to begin 24-7 prayer. Today we have both full-time and part-time people taking regular slots in our prayer room. There were many ups and downs. We made some mistakes and by the grace of God learned a lot from them. More days were uphill than we wanted, but God helped us through it all.

What tips can you give others on starting a prayer watch?

Start slowly and do not stop. Some times of the year are easier than others. During the holiday seasons of the year, you might struggle to fill up the hours. Do not become discouraged, and remember not to stop if you miss some hours. People are only human. They are also our most treasured resource to stand before the Lord day and night. Ask God to send you a full-time person just for coordinating the prayer schedule. This is one of the most important points for sustaining 24-7 prayer. Other important things are to have a dedicated person to change the prayer theme in the prayer room at least once every 2 months. It is wonderful if day-to-day prayer issues can be added and removed from the walls/prayer room on a regular basis. Make a special effort to get together all the watchmen praying at your house of prayer at least once a month to fellowship, pray for each other and give feedback to encourage each other on what God is saying in the watch. Keep a prayer journal to be completed after every slot in the prayer room to help you know what God is saying to you as a group.

What must you guard against?

Strong intercessors are not necessarily good at administration and organisation. Do not let those gifted in administration and organisation feel guilty if they do not take the same number of hours in prayer. Give the night watchmen a regular break by changing their night hours, at least once a month. If they keep the same slots, especially those between 1-5 am, their night and day orientation becomes confused. In some cases you will find people that can do it for prolonged periods. Encourage them to take regular times to sleep during the day if they do these hours. Also do not be focussed on what happens in other houses of prayer and compare yours with them. God is uniquely at work in every house of prayer and the spiritual resistance is different in different areas. Remember, people come and go all the time, so do not feel discouraged or doomed to failure if some of them leave! It is God building the house, not us.

What training do you provide for those interested in starting a house of prayer or setting up a prayer room?

Once a year we have a week-long training opportunity called the *Watchmen School of Prayer*. During this time we invite all those already running prayer watches/rooms as well as those interested in starting a watch/prayer room in South Africa and other countries in Africa, to join us for a time of motivation, prayer, feedback, teaching and being equipped. We also have a weekend training programme for small groups from a congregation, city or town who want to start a prayer watch/room. They spend time in our prayer watch, see what we are doing and have opportunities to ask questions and learn from our set-up in practical ways.

Do you see any fruit on your prayers?

We often experience God speaking to us in the house of prayer, just to hear the same or similar message being preached the coming Sunday in the different churches in the city which our watchmen attend. We have seen healings and deliverances take place. We have had times of much resistance, but we have also seen God sending people from different nations to end up at our small prayer room in the most unexpected ways. Often people come knocking on the door, wanting to know what is going on there. These have been opportunities to share the gospel, pray for the sick and for some facing serious personal problems.

Contact details

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