

But God

Dear praying Christian

I want to share a few thoughts with you. May some of them encourage and edify you as they did me.

Too often we find the spirit of David in us when we do what David did when he started to "count his men". Joab warned him, but he didn't listen. There was pride in David's heart, but we are also inclined to 'count our men' to see if we are strong enough to gain the victory. Somehow God was trying to say to David: You are counting your men, because you think your power lies with your men. But all you need to count is Me. You have not counted Me! Even in the darkest nights, we need to count God first. God and His many and good promises will unlock all the doors and give us all the men we need to do the work. Our strength must never be in "princes, men and the power of horses".

Too often we are 'counting evil'. We see all the dark things in the world and the country. But we do not count all the goodness of God and the power of love through the life of His Son and His Body on earth. God can work through big or small things. Let us not despise small things, or as Scripture says: *For who has despised the day of small beginnings?* (**Zech.4:10**). God uses 'little people', faceless people. It is the millions of 'little people' that are changing the world.

We are counting our weaknesses, and forget to count the power of God that manifests even more powerfully when we are weak. Acknowledge your weakness, but look to the power of God. That will set you free. We need to be merely channels that the power of God flows through – to reach the lost and a world in need and darkness. We count our lack of resources and we don't seem to see with our eyes of faith the storehouses of God. We count our enemies, but not God's protection and His mighty angels that are serving us (**Heb.1:14**).

A second thing that struck me is that we do not have the right to give up unless God says we must give up. What a sobering thought that was. So often we just lay down our work and responsibilities and move on. We move on to a better job, better salaries, another church, even another city or country. Yes, God can tell us to move. But do not move unless God says so. He will not provide for us in the place where we are going unless He has told us to move. His power and promises are valid only where He establishes us.

In this issue

In this issue of *Jericho Walls* we focus on things like how a father can pray for his son, how to pray when I have an incurable illness and for young people, how to pray about dating. We focus on discipleship, diseases that are threatening the world like swine flu/bird flu/cholera in Zimbabwe, HIV/AIDS etc., and to pray for the millions of Muslims all over the world. We want to encourage you to pray for the *Persecuted Church* during November and for revival in the Church over December. What a responsibility and privilege to pray for a world in need, knowing that our God listens to our prayers and that our prayers will touch people in any nation, city or home. Let us draw close to God's compassionate heart. Stay with God till your heart understands God's heart and then you start to pray. Only then the Cross and the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ will make sense to you and only then you will be at liberty to ask boldly.

The famous theologian Karl Barth said: To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world.

Bennie Mostert

Managing Director: *Jericho Walls International Prayer Network*

Eph.3:20

What, where and when

International

18 September - 2 October 2009: All Nations Convocation in Jerusalem

Tom Hess, President *All Nations Convocation Jerusalem*, says delegates from at least 120 nations are expected to join in this year's convocation. For more information, visit (Website: <http://www.jhopfan.org/convocations.html>).

1-4 October 2009: International 24-7 Prayer Movement gathering 2009

From 1-4 October *24-7 Prayer* organisers will have a *24-7 Prayer* gathering in central Amsterdam, Holland. The primary focus will specifically be to look at *24-7 Prayer's* vision for Boiler-rooms and Boiler-room centres as a strategy for mission in the coming years. (Website: <http://www.24-7prayer.com/content/970>).

10-13 November 2009: South-East Asia Prayer Consultation (SEAPC) Bangkok, Thailand

The Consultation's programme ends on 15 November 2009, which is Thailand's National Prayer Day to mark the end of their annual 40-day fast and prayer for their nation. For more information, visit <http://transform-world.net/newsletters/2008/08/SEAPC08.pdf> or e-mail: lena@silkiss.biz

December 2009: Swazi 1000

As most people would still remember, the year 2008 ended with a huge bang. More than 350 volunteers attended *Swazi 1000* in 2008 with an additional 45+ that went to Botswana & Zambia, and 20+ that pioneered the first ever *MOTE level 2* in Kenya. In Swaziland 15 community buildings and 183 houses were completed, 345 houses sprayed, 461 houses prepped, 2 murals & 1 signboard painted. It has been an unforgettable time and the organizers are now looking forward to the next *Swazi 1000* experience due in December 2009. For more information, *MOTE*, tel.: +27 12 343 5206, fax: +27 12 343 1167. Website: www.mote.co.za or e-mail: info@mote.co.za

What, where and when

National

Angus Buchan will have the following stadium outreaches: 12 September – Uppington, 10 October – Vredendal, and 14 November – Worcester. For more information, contact *Shalom Ministries*, P.O. Box 373, Greytown, KwaZulu-Natal. Tel.: 033 413 2287 (Intl.) or 033 417 1695. Website: www.shalomtrust.co.za or e-mail: shalom@futuregtn.co.za

28 September – 2 October 2009: The 8th Watchman's School of Prayer

The 8th annual *Watchman's School of Prayer* is an opportunity for every Believer who has a burden to see their church and community covered with night-and-day prayer & worship. This is a full-time school of five days focusing on:

- Entering into a deeper prayer life.
- Experiencing different forms of individual and corporate prayer.
- Receiving practical tools on how to establish a 24-7 prayer watch in your local church or community.

We are inviting you to be one of the 140 delegates expected to attend this school, which takes place in the unique setting of the Rocklands Conference Centre in Simon's Town, south of Cape Town. Together we will seek the Lord in prayer and worship, learn from one another's experience, and trust Him to establish and strengthen the foundation of night-and-day prayer in every church and community. Accommodation is available for 120 people only, at **R950 per person**. Last year we were fully booked, so please register as soon as possible with Lizette at tel.: +27 21 919 7988 or e-mail: cape@jwipn.com

Did you know?

Feedback on National Day of Prayer on 20 March 2009

March 20th 2009 will be remembered as the day of prayer for government and the elections. Christians across the nation and also abroad humbled themselves before God. *Rippel 90.5 FM*, a community radio station in Pretoria called listeners to pray too. Different congregations and organisations prayed over the air. One man testified how he turned on his radio just when these prayers were being broadcast. God touched his heart there and then, so much so, that he cancelled the

rest of his appointments for the day, to spend time alone with God! (Radio *Rippel 90.5 FM*, P.O. Box 912 1905, Silverton, 0127. Tel.: +27 12 349 2574, fax: +27 12 349 2578. Website: www.rippel.co.za).

Evangelism series for the Deaf

DOOR International (Deaf Opportunity OutReach) is working to complete the *Evangelism Series*, which is 32 Bible passages, in Kenyan Sign Language and Kerala (Indian) Sign Language during 2009. The passages have to be approved by a translation consultant. This involves crafting the story into sign language, translating it back so that a translation consultant can check it, and then testing it in deaf communities. These steps have to be completed as often as three times before being approved, which in the case of sign language translations, means re-videtaping and editing each time. (Full report, website: <http://www.doorinternational.com/news/anticipation>).

Sudan: Bibles to RSA Military

In March, a group of South Africans together with *Gideon's International SA*, took 1,700 Bibles to both Christian and Muslim soldiers who have been deployed in Sudan. The senior staff of the military camp has requested complete Bibles. (Lars Widerberg, *Intercessors Network*, Storskiftesgatan 87, S-58334 Linköping, Sweden. E-mail: Intercessors.Network@Comhem.se or Intercessors.Network@Telia.com).

Shocking hunger statistics

Today 850 million people worldwide will go to bed hungry - that's one out of every six people on earth. About 26,000 children die each day from preventable causes like hunger, disease and malnutrition. Chronic poverty, affecting half the people on earth, is the cause. Nearly 3 billion people live on less than \$2 (±R17) a day. (Website: www.worldvision.org).

What's online

Here are a few ways to keep the nations in your prayers. Each works a bit differently, but all are free of charge. See if you can find creative ways to use them in your church, class, family, or small group.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/> and <http://www.prayerguard.net/>

Joshua Project - View and pray for the Unreached People of the Day. *Prayer Guard* has something very similar.

<http://www.theseedcompany.org/>

Affiliated with *Wycliffe Bible Translators*, this ministry supports the work of national workers to accelerate Bible translation.

<http://www.jwipn.com>

Find information to set your church to prayer. Visit *Jericho Walls International Prayer Network* for downloads on various subjects and also daily prayer pointers for revival and the lost peoples of the world. To register your church as part of a network of churches that commit themselves to night-and-day prayer, visit <http://www.global24-7.org/>.

<http://www.japanmission.org/>

Japan Mission is interdenominational, linking those reached through many avenues of ministry to already existing evangelical churches that believe and teach the fundamental doctrines of the Bible. They also seek to serve the Church in Japan with video material and evangelical programmes and literature.

Quotes

The Christian on his knees sees more than the philosopher on tiptoe. - D.L. Moody

Some people think God does not like to be troubled with our constant coming and asking. The way to trouble God is not to come at all. - D.L. Moody

Prayer is weakness leaning on Omnipotence. - W. S. Bowden

Jesus Christ carries on intercession for us in heaven; the Holy Ghost carries on intercession in us on earth; and we the saints have to carry on intercession for all men. - Oswald Chambers

Work as if everything depended upon your work, and pray as if everything depended upon your prayer. - William Booth

A zealous man feels that like a lamp he is made to burn; and if consumed in burning, he has but done the work for which God appointed him. Such a one will always find a sphere for his zeal. If he cannot preach and work and give money, he will cry and sigh and pray. - J. C. Ryle

The Azusa revival began where every revival should rightly begin – in repentant tears. It began in tears, it lived in tears, and when the tears ended the Azusa revival ended. - A. G. Osterberg

The prayers and supplications that Christ offered up were joined with strong cries and tears, herein setting us the example not only to pray, but to be fervent and importunate in prayer. How many dry prayers, how few wet ones, do we offer up to God! - Matthew Henry

It is in the field of prayer that life's critical battles are lost or won. We must conquer all our circumstances there. In prayer we bring our spiritual enemies into the presence of God and we fight them there. Have you tried that? Or have you been satisfied to meet and fight your foes in the open spaces of the world? - J. H. Jowett

When we finally have our meeting with God, it has to be alone in the depths of our being. We will be alone even if we are surrounded by a crowd. God has to cut every maverick out of the herd and brand him all alone. It isn't something that God can do for us en masse. - A. W. Tozer

24-7 Prayer watch focus: September – December 2009

These prayer focuses 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 on these issues is available free of charge from our website: www.jwipn.com. Also remember to subscribe to our weekly *Prayer Alert* at cape@jwipn.com, which covers current issues in prayer.

September: Ramadan

Ramadan, the holy month of fasting for millions of Muslims runs from 21 August until 20 September 2009. During this time Christians all over the world are praying that God our Father will show Muslims His love and also bring about salvation through Jesus, His Son. You will see that we have put a specific prayer pointer focusing on a specific group of Muslims in different countries on each of the days during *Ramadan*. Many teams will go on prayer journeys to encourage Believers and to pray for the salvation of people in the Middle East, Central Asia and the Pacific: For Jesus Christ to be revealed as *the Way, the Truth and the Life*. Let us not become discouraged to pray for the salvation of people – God saves. He gave His Son so that people can be saved, be reconciled with Him. Salvation is available for all who calls on His name.

Prayer focus for October: China

During October, we will focus on China, by praying through its various provinces and affiliated factions. China has the biggest population in the world, and therefore it is no small matter to set ourselves to prayer for this nation. In recent years China has spread its influence into many nations around the world. They export their goods, but also buy up land and make agreements to obtain resources from other countries, especially Africa, to help meet the basic needs of its population. But there is an unprecedented growth of the Church in China and tens of thousands of missionaries are going and preparing to go from China to the rest of the world. The statistics and facts used to support our prayer

information were mostly taken from *Operation World, 2001*. Please feel free to do some research yourself, and encourage other Believers to also join in prayer for significant breakthroughs for the gospel in this nation.

November: Prayer focus on the *Persecuted Church*

Every year thousands of Christians are killed because of their faith in Christ Jesus. It is our responsibility as fellow Believers to pray for our brothers and sisters facing persecution. Let us pray for their safety, for perseverance in faith, boldness to witness, for legislation making it possible for Christian families to express their faith in daily practice and to do it unhindered. Also pray for the hundreds of thousands of families who lost a father, a mother or a child this year. There is much disruption, confusion, pain, fear and unanswered questions and prayer amongst Believers who are being persecuted. Let us cry with those who cry, have compassion with those who suffer and at the very least pray that God will give them strength and protect them. Pray that the Church worldwide will work diligently to also support these Christians in their material needs.

December: Spiritual revival in the Church

We belong to a generation that doesn't know much about the great deeds of God over the past 2000 years. Let us pray that God will reveal Himself to us in the same way that He revealed Himself to the past generations. He is the same yesterday, today and forever (**Heb.13:8**) As you read the stories of how God intervened many times during the past centuries, be encouraged to pray that God will also do it in our time. Let us use December as a time to pray for spiritual revival in the Church.

Worldwide persecution of the Church

During the month of November this year we will have a special focus on the *Persecuted Church*. Over 200 million Christians around the world suffer persecution. Depending on the country, persecution takes a different form each time. But it is real, and its threat to the Church is serious. When we ask the *Persecuted Church* what they need most, we always hear first, "please pray for us". *International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP)* is a global day of intercession for persecuted Christians worldwide. They also encourage prayer for the souls of the oppressors, the nations that promote persecution, and those who ignore it.

Compelling Facts List

- Since the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ 2000 years ago, approximately 43,000,000 Christians have become martyrs. Over 50% of these were in the last century alone. More than 200 million Christians face persecution each day and 60% of these are children. Every day over 300 are killed for their faith in Jesus Christ.
- The world's worst persecutor of Christians in the world is North Korea.
- In Saudi Arabia, practising Christianity can result in death by beheading or stoning.
- Over 90% of China's Christians worship in hidden, underground house churches to avoid government regulations and restrictions.
- There is only one Christian church left in the Gaza Strip, and its membership has dwindled to less than 100.
- Only 3% of the population of Algeria is Christian.
- There are 69 languages in Iran, and only three of them have a completed Bible. Iran is also the third worst persecutor of Christians in the world.
- It is believed there are less than 500 Christians living in the Maldives.
- Public preaching in Sudan is punishable by beatings or imprisonment.
- Christians make up less than 1.7% of the population in Pakistan, and over 70% of them are the poorest of the poor.
- It is estimated that there are 1,100 Christian missionaries living in Turkey.

(Resources: <http://opendoorsusa.org/> and <http://www.christiansincrisis.net/>).

The Month of *Ramadan*: The fifth Pillar of Islam

From 22 August to 20 September 2009 we are praying for the estimated 1.7 billion Muslims in the world, for God's grace and that the Holy Spirit will reveal Jesus Christ, God's Son to them. It is significant to see how the Lord is calling Christians worldwide to pray for Muslims. Let us not stop praying. Wonderful things are happening and large numbers of Muslims continue to place their trust in Jesus Christ as Saviour.

You can follow the prayer pointers in this prayer guide over this period of time. Consider inviting others to pray with you and pray for the salvation of Muslims at your weekly prayer meeting or Bible study during September. It is also a wonderful opportunity to teach children to pray for those who do not know God. The Children's Prayer booklet for *Ramadan* is now available from: <http://www.30-days.net>

Ramadan stretches over a period of 30 days during which Muslims do not eat anything during the daylight hours. This is the fifth pillar of Islam and compulsory for Muslims. It is part of what they believe they need to do to gain enough 'good works' to go to heaven. Hundreds of millions of Muslims will fast during *Ramadan*. Each Muslim will try to visit Mecca at least once in their lifetime.

As Christians we believe the way to reconciliation with God, and thus also the way to heaven, is to accept the sacrifice of Jesus our Saviour on the cross. We will not gain eternal life through good works. Yet, we do good works from a heart filled with thanksgiving and to demonstrate God's love for all people.

Did you know?

'Caliph' is the title for the leader of the Islamic Ummah, the worldwide Islamic community or nation, which should ideally be ruled by the religious law, the Shari'ah law. The word is derived from the Arabic word which means 'successor' or 'representative'. The early Caliphs in particular were seen as Mohammed's successors.

Men to pray: How do you pray for your son?

There should be a special bond between father and son. Boys cannot develop into men and fathers, without a father's presence. A father's life, example and prayers determine to a great extent their sons' lives. I recently read this quote somewhere: "My child, you will need to climb over the mountains and valleys of my prayers and swim through the rivers of my tears if you want to end up in hell." I would also like to add: "... and to destroy your life."

- A father needs to spend time with his son to know what to pray for the child. He must learn how his son thinks, what his hopes and dreams are, what his strong and weak points are. He must understand his child's heart. A father must never force his will on his son. A boy should always feel that his father allows him freedom to be himself. It is of the utmost importance that the son will realise that his father thinks he is worthy. He must experience that his father approves of him and accepts him.
- When a father starts praying for his son, he must first of all start by blessing his son. Note how Jacob blessed his sons in Genesis 49. The father must call out the Name of the Lord over his child and ask the Lord to bless his child with the blessings we find in Numbers 6:24-26. Do it regularly. It is not something that is done once only. In Jewish culture a father blesses his children once a week on the Sabbath!
- Pray for your child's salvation. There is nothing more important than your son being reconciled with God. All the other things flow from this.
- A father must pray with grace and mercy. His child is not perfect. His son will be rebellious at times, make mistakes, be ignorant, sometimes shy away from challenges and sometimes behave irresponsibly. At such times a father must be compassionate and pray with grace. Don't be judgmental when you pray. Don't accuse your child before God. Remember that you were also a child.
- A father must live in such a way that he can pray. You cannot pray for your child if you do not live in such a way that you can pray – you must live a holy life, in love and patience, and set an example that is worth following. You cannot live with a sin-filled heart and then try to pray for your son.

- Pray the promises of God. Read the Word of God and ask the Holy Spirit to show you the promises in the Word that are applicable to your child and pray those promises for your child.
- Pray that your son will understand God's purpose for his life, the purpose he was created for, and that he will live toward it. Thus pray that he will understand why he is on earth, what contribution he must make, what influence he must have, what God's purpose is with his life.
- A father never stops praying for his son, regardless of whether the father is 25 years old or 60. Your son is and stays your responsibility up until your death.
- Learn to understand God's heart for the child and ask the Father to work the same attitude in your heart.
- Evil is a reality. Ask God to protect your son from evil and temptations and attacks from the Evil One.
- Pray that your son will not give in to peer pressure, but make his own choices and live his own values, irrespective of the situation. Pray that the Lord will give your son friends who will not keep him away or drive him away from God, but who will support him and be able to strengthen him in tough times.
- If God convicts you of something wrong you said or did to your child, ask forgiveness from God and your son.
- See your child's potential, no matter what it is, and encourage him to give expression to it. Don't force your will on your child, for example by expecting him to become a doctor because you are one.
- Ask the Lord to change your heart in such a way that you will love your son like He loves him.
- Pray for your son's future wife. Praying for your son's salvation is the most important thing, but praying for his future wife is probably the next most important matter in your son's life.

Missions article: More Muslims are turning to Christ

What is happening?

You rarely hear about it on the news. You even rarely hear about it in churches in the West, in the East, or even in the Middle East. But the big, untold story is that more Muslims are coming to faith in Jesus Christ today than at any other time in history. More than 1 million Shia Muslims have turned to Christ since 1979. In Pakistan, there are now more than 2.5 million followers of Jesus Christ. In Sudan, there are now more than 5 million followers of Christ. Not every country has seen millions leave Islam to follow Christ. In Syria, there are between 4,000 and 5,000 Believers, but this is up from almost none in 1967. In Saudi Arabia, there are about 100,000 followers of Jesus now, up from almost none in 1967. But overall, the trend has been dramatic and largely unreported.

What motivates Muslims to seek out other options?

What they see as the failure of Islamic governments and societies to improve their lives and give them peace, security, and a sense of purpose and meaning in life, is causing them to leave Islam in search of truth. Some have lost their way entirely and become agnostics and atheists. Others, as we have seen, have sadly turned to alcohol and drug abuse. But millions are finding that only Jesus Christ heals the ache in their hearts and the deep wounds in their souls.

For other Muslims, it is rage that is driving them away from the Qur'an and the mosque. They are seeing far too many Muslim leaders and governments and preachers both advocating and acting out cruelty toward women and children and violence even against fellow Muslims. Not all of these find Jesus in their journey away from Islam, but millions do.

In 1993, a Saudi sheikh delivered a sermon entitled "Christian Missionaries Sweeping the Islamic World". Eight years later, in December 2001, another significant Saudi cleric, in a live interview on Aljazeera satellite television confirmed that, "every hour, 667 Muslims convert to Christianity". Al Qataani warned: "Every day, 16,000 Muslims convert to Christianity. Every year, 6 million Muslims convert to Christianity."

(Source: *The Macedonia Project*. Tel.: 012 755 8139, fax: 086 630 3193. Website: <http://www.macsa.co.za> or e-mail: info@macsa.co.za).

This heartrending prayer is a desperate cry of a Muslim woman to Allah (god). May it inspire you to pray even more fervently for Muslims to meet Jesus Christ and to experience His power in their lives.

Prayer of a desperate Muslim woman

I am barren. Every month I hold my breath and say a prayer – many prayers – and every month the turning moon mocks my fragile hopes as it calls for another river of blood. O Allah, what would I give to stem that implacable tide! I am despised by men who do not see any purpose for me apart from bearing children. I am pitied by women who are more favoured than I, and of whom I am jealous with a great intensity. I am utterly alone, and full of emptiness that devours me from the inside out, a long slow agonising death of the heart. Little by little I am being eaten alive. Empty womb, empty arms, empty heart. I am a dry stick, a withered vine, a hollow tree. My body is a vast promise, unfulfilled.

I watch helplessly as my husband's eyes follow the movements of younger women. I have dishonoured him by not producing a son. He will divorce me soon. I try not to think about where I will go, what I will do. I have no schooling, no education. My parents will not take me back – I am no longer their responsibility. Every morning I wake up and pray that I will have a roof over my head for one more day. Sometimes I pray that my husband will love me, but I would be happy if he would just not beat me or shout at me for not giving him the children that I am desperate to have. One son would dissolve my shame forever.

Prayer encouragement: From Cape to Cyprus

A South African lady now living in Cyprus wrote this encouraging letter to us recently: Cyprus is like heaven without crime, but it is a very dark place! When I was coming back and forth to SA, I was always overwhelmed when I set foot on South African ground! The presence of God was so tangible it was like stepping into a fountain! You hear people talking about God everywhere and you see people reading their Bibles on the planes! It is like breathing in hope! I know that it may seem difficult for you to believe right now, because there is such a desperate need for prayer, but be encouraged - God is hearing, even if one person is praying, let alone the thousands and thousands scattered around our great nation! Don't grow weary! The darkness here is so awful because it is so hidden! When you first come here, you are so impressed with the appearance of the make-believe 'happy family' facade! Then you discover all the affairs and divorces and molestation and abortions as a form of contraception, and you see that the devil shows no mercy anywhere! He has no new tricks, just different packages! His aim is always to kill and destroy and he just has different ways of doing it in different locations! The challenges in SA have made us run to God! Thank you for the privilege of partnering with you in prayer, even though I am so far away! There is no distance in the spirit! (Gaenor Erasmus, e-mail: gaenor@hfhhospitality.co.za).

Prayer testimony: Generosity that 'rings' true

A radical concept of giving is helping to fund the drilling of water wells in Africa. Ali Eastburn is the executive director and founder of the charitable organisation known as *With This Ring*. She got the idea for the organisation while attending a women's conference. "And I looked around the room and looked at the rings on the fingers of the women as well as my own and realised how much wealth I had on my own finger," she recalls. "So I decided that (of course, with my husband's permission) I wanted to donate my ring. And then I told a girlfriend about it and she said, 'I want to donate mine, too.'" Those two diamonds, she says, laid the foundation for a "movement of radical generosity". Her organisation encourages radical giving, whether it is a wedding ring, class ring, or other jewellery items. Some, she adds, have even donated money from selling a car or a home. "It is not where people are getting divorced and they just decide that they don't want their ring anymore," she explains. "Most of the time it's someone who loves their husband very much, and they look down and realise [they've] got \$7,000 to \$8,000 sitting on [their] finger and that [it] could save 1,500 people's lives." So far *With This Ring* has provided the funds to drill eight clean water wells in Africa with five more in the works. (Website: <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=501482>).

Women to pray: How do I pray when I have an incurable illness

Very few people don't know someone who suffers from an incurable illness, and there are many people who suffer from an incurable illness themselves. Some incurable illnesses have a slight influence on people's lives and others have a serious and restrictive influence. How do I pray for myself when I suffer from an incurable illness or when I want to pray for someone else who suffers from an incurable illness?

- It is important to distinguish between terminal and incurable illnesses. Incurable diseases/illnesses often lead to terminal illness.
- Make peace with the fact that you have an incurable illness. This does not mean that you should not pray for healing. You may and can still pray for healing. First of all however, you must accept that you have an incurable illness before you can pray for healing. Acceptance brings resignation and strengthens your trust in God, no matter what the situation.
- When someone has an incurable illness this person must make peace as soon as possible with the fact that he or she is going to die, whether as a result of the illness or not. Make peace with death. The sooner you do it, the sooner peace comes and you can live life to the full. Pray until you make a breakthrough, until you have peace, until you can see that death is not the end of the road, but that this life is but the beginning of everlasting life.
- You may pray for healing. God heals and you may pray for healing yourself and ask others to pray for you to be healed. But while you do not receive that healing, you can and must still live your life to the full. Do not allow the desire for healing to control your life; keep focusing on God.
- Learn to trust God with your life in a new way. Make sure you keep on believing in God. In this situation you must learn to understand God's character, that He is good, gracious and loving. Often people find this difficult to grasp. It is however, when we understand who God is and what God is like, that it helps us to also accept our illness.
- Many people become defiant, blame God, get angry with Him, see Him as merciless and unfeeling, think that God has let them down, lapse into depression and can or will not believe God any longer, or allow bitterness into their lives. The beginning of victory is to admit to these and other emotions before God. Confess them before Him. This mostly leads to a spiritual battle with God. Keep talking to God even if it is a difficult conversation and your emotions overwhelm you. Do not stop reading your Bible – especially take time to read the Psalms. Where necessary, speak to your friends, but talk to God more often. In the end we find our peace and comfort in the Lord Himself. Keep on trusting God; put your hope in Him, even if you don't understand everything and even if many questions are still unanswered.
- Be careful of negotiating with God. Many people bargain with God and undertake to do a great many things for Him if He heals them. Don't do this. Surrender to the Lord and do these things in any case, as far as possible. Even more, try to find other things that the Lord may have in mind for you. Don't become fixated on what you want, but seek His will in this situation.
- Many people, especially those who gave themselves unconditionally to God, testify that their illness brought them closer to God and that they understood the meaning of life better. It is important to ask the Lord why He allowed this sickness in your life. Sometimes the Lord does not give an answer straight away and sometimes He never gives an answer. But keep on praying and asking Him.
- The devil is a murderer of people and will try to destroy your life. If you are suffering from an incurable disease, he will also try to kill you spiritually. Resist him. Don't fall for his lies and know that he will keep on persistently trying to steal your joy and make you passive and despondent.
- Even if you suffer from an incurable illness it is important to remember that this is not death. We all die. It is extremely important that you live the life God gives you – live it to the full. Live the life that God places in you fully. It is *always* your choice how you will live, whether you are healthy and whether you have an incurable disease.
- Suffering from an incurable illness does not mean that God is punishing you for something you did wrong. God has not turned His back on you. He knows about you. He still loves you unconditionally. You should however, ask God if there are things in your life that stand between you and Him – draw near to Him, break with any sin.
- Use your incurable illness to reach out to others who also suffer from incurable illnesses and ask the Lord how to help and encourage them.

Take these guidelines and turn them into prayer requests and prayer directives to pray for yourself or someone else suffering from an incurable illness.

Did you know about China...

- ✎ In Communist China, persecution comes largely in the form of government restrictions, fines, and imprisonment. Limits are placed on the ways Believers are allowed to worship, the number of Bibles in the country, expression of faith, and evangelism.
- ✎ China continues to enforce the old policy that prohibits religious education for children under the age of 18.
- ✎ The publication of Bibles and other Christian materials is restricted by the Communist government.
- ✎ Over 90% of Chinese Christians worship in unregistered house churches, therefore it is hard to know the actual size of the Christian church in China. Estimates range from 60 to 130 million.
- ✎ China continues to repatriate North Korean refugees back to their country, to sure punishment, including harsh labour prisons, interrogation, imprisonment of their family members and death.

(Website: http://members.opendoorsusa.org/site/DocServer/Church_Bulletin_Inserts.pdf?docID=3062)

Breakthrough: Abortion now a crime in the Dominican Republic

In response to recent efforts by international pro-abortion groups seeking to decriminalise abortion in the Dominican Republic, legislators of the Dominican Republic permanently enshrined the right to life for pre-born humans by rewriting the Constitution of the Dominican Republic with the words "the right to life is inviolable, from conception until death". The vote of 167 to 32 was held earlier this year and served as a major victory to those working to protect all human life.

(Website: <http://www.personhoodusa.com/content/abortion-permanently-crime-dominican-republic-pro-life-victory-comes-vote-167-32>). See the article on worldwide trends on abortion in the previous issue of *Jericho Walls Prayer Guide*.

Youth to pray: Dating, in or out?

Dating is important to all young people. It is a matter of urgency to us that we find the person we would like to get married to. It is still the deepest need of even those who just want to be in a relationship, want to 'enjoy' life and create the impression that they don't want to get married, to have a husband/wife for life, someone they can trust and who will be true to them.

How should I as a young person think and pray about this?

- It is your privilege and responsibility to pray for your future husband/wife. Ask the Lord to show you the right person. Don't lose heart if he or she doesn't make an appearance within the first week. Carry on praying about it regularly. Over and above giving your heart to the Lord, your choice of a husband/wife is most likely the most important decision in your life.
- Ask your parents to pray for you about this matter as well. It is also important to listen to your parents. *Never* go out with someone or get married against your parents' wishes. If you differ on this matter, talk to them, ask why they are against it and pray until you and your parents have peace about who this person should be.
- Choose not to go steady with someone before you know this is your husband/wife. This is a choice one does not make easily. Do not be in a hurry. Many young people say, "But how will I know if I don't have a steady relationship with someone and make sure?" This is not the way to go. God will show you. You don't have to try to find out for yourself. God alone knows the hearts of people and He knows who the right person for you is.
- It is fine to have friendships. But keep these friendships at a healthy level. Stay in a group. Make sure that as far as possible, you are always in the company of more than just one person of the opposite sex. Don't form intimate relationships and start holding hands, kissing and going further before you know who your husband/wife for life is. Remember, if you have an intimate relationship with someone and that person might not become your husband/wife, you are in a relationship with another person's husband/wife!
- When you feel that you have found your husband/wife, do things together and get to know one another, but do this within the protective context of a circle of friends. When there are enough indications that this person might be your husband/wife, you can spend limited periods of time together, but within all the perimeters of a pure and clean relationship.

- When such a relationship develops, go to mentors who can help you. Allow these persons to ask you difficult questions: Are you mature enough for a relationship? Can they tell by what they see that you are suited to one another or do they see warning signs? Are you drawn to this person because of his or her appearance or is it about this person's character and that you and he or she will be able to have a deep relationship?
- Make sure your husband/wife is a Christian. Do you understand the consequences that this relationship is for life? Do your parents approve of the relationship? Are you satisfied that God approves of it and that it is His will, or are you trying to twist His arm so that He will give His permission? Search your heart prayerfully.
- Young people often confuse love with emotions and hormones. A person's sexual urge is particularly strong at a young age and it is easy to confuse these desires in your body with love. Make a determined decision not to become involved in an intimate relationship before you are married. I don't know of anybody who has regretted this, but there are literally hundreds of millions who regret not having waited.
- You always have a choice how you wish to handle this situation. It is so important that you make the right choice about how you will handle it. Your choice must always be in line with God's will, purity, respect for your own body and the body of the other person and for the person herself or himself. Know that your choice, whichever way it goes, has consequences. There is no middle-of-the-road here. Make a radical choice about this matter, no matter how difficult it is, or if your friends find it ridiculous. Don't become known as a cheap girl. Don't be a guy who destroys the lives of young girls, who breaks their hearts and even robs them of their virginity. Choose for sex within marriage. Sex outside the marriage bed is a sin in the eyes of God.
- Never make the mistake of thinking it's all right to marry an unsaved man or woman and once this person is married to you, you can lead him to the Lord. It hardly ever works out this way.
- Love is not the only condition for marriage. The condition is the will of God. If you marry for love you might think the marriage can break up if there is no love. In the eyes of the Lord marriage is a permanent institution. For a Christian, marriage lasts a lifetime, until one of you dies. God's intention with marriage is to bring forth a spiritual offspring (**Mal.3:15**). Most people in western culture get married because they love each other and do not understand that it is also God's intent that a spiritual offspring will be brought forth. Ask the Lord what this means and make sure the man/woman you marry, wishes to pursue and practice it as you do.

Children to pray: Praying for atheists

Many people who are without any religious belief are unhappy because they cannot find purpose in life. Will you not spend 5 days to pray for people who do not believe in God?

1. **Open their eyes!** Even if they are not Christians, almost 85% of the people in the world believe in some kind of god. Some worship the moon or stars, rivers, plants or animals. But an estimated 938 million people in the world do not believe in any god at all! They are irreligious. Read **Romans 1:20** and pray: *Father, will you reveal Yourself to all irreligious people as the One who created them!*
2. **Touch their hearts!** There are three types of irreligious people. Atheists do not believe God is real. An agnostic thinks you cannot know for sure if God is real. The third group doesn't really care if God is real or not. Read **Acts 17:26-28** and pray: *Eternal Father, help irreligious people to know that You can fill the emptiness in their hearts.*
3. **Let them know You made everything!** Irreligious people do not pray or believe in miracles, heaven or hell. They think the world happened by chance. Read **Matthew 13:22** and **Revelation 3:17-18** and pray: *Wonderful Saviour, help irreligious people see that true riches are found only in You.*
4. **Let them hear!** Irreligious people often look at the lives of Christians and they do not look any different to them than their own. That makes them think they are no worse off without God than Christians. Read **Daniel 6:20** and pray: *Father God, You are the only Living God. Like Daniel showed the heathen king You are alive, please show irreligious people that you are alive through the testimony of other Believers.*
5. **Help them see You are real!** To irreligious people the Bible is just another book. But many have never even considered picking up a Bible to read, or have not even heard of the existence of the Bible. Read **Luke 4:4** and pray: *Father, You are the living Word. Please help irreligious people find a Bible and be curious enough to read it. Please touch their hearts and minds to see You are real.*

Prayer multiplication: Pray for others and see God providing those who will pray for you!

After our survey at national level (in Benin), I decided to change my strategy. Instead of developing prayer partners, I would pray. I began to contact people and I prayed for them, instead of asking them to pray for me. This developed into a pattern of praying for 30 different people every month on a day-by-day basis. On the first day of each month I pray for the same person. On the second day of each month I pray for a different person, and continue like this throughout the month. This means I have 30 people I pray for every month. When possible, I pray with them in person or by phone. If not possible, I send an SMS or e-mail containing my prayers for each of them. The result of this process is that 30 people respond to my prayers by praying for me. As I talk to them about this process, I encourage them to pray for 29 other people on the days they are not praying for me. So, in one generation the prayer network goes from 30 to 900 people praying. We pass prayer requests back and forth on this network. We encourage all participants to find 30 people to pray with every month. By three generations there are 27,000 people in the prayer network. That's $30 \times 30 = 900$ and $900 \times 30 = 27,000$. This is exponential growth. If the process is only 10% effective there will be 2,700 people praying. If it is only 1% effective there will be 270 people praying! (Source: Sossa Claude, e-mail: sossa2@yahoo.fr).