

# Peace that Passes Understanding

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*And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)*

The Lord has amazing timing, doesn't He? For several months, I had been pulling together resources and studying Scriptures to write a devotional about peace. By the time I sat down to actually write it, peace had become far more than just a topic to study. It was becoming an integral part of my life. I had no idea how important that was to become.

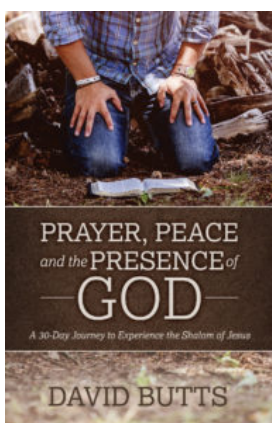
I often withdraw to quiet places to write, and I did so for this devotional. The Holy Spirit was at work and it seemed like the words flowed for several days. Then came the call. It was a call I was waiting for from some medical tests I had done a week earlier. The tests results showed that I had a rare form of cancer called Mantle Cell Lymphoma...Stage 4. I confess that the writing stopped for two days while my wife, Kim and I prayed and scoured the internet to learn all we could of this disease. We discovered things we didn't want to know! This was going to be a full-on struggle to survive! I can honestly say that though we had moments of uncertainty and stress, God's peace never left us because we had been immersed in it for months. Only the Spirit of God could have known exactly what we would need in this moment and had prepared us ahead of time.

Writing a manuscript on God's peace in an imperfect world was a miraculous blessing from God to prepare me through his Word, with his peace, for the news he knew I would soon receive. Far more than just an academic topic, his peace is a reality. A precious gift to be received and for which we give thanks.

It is a peace beyond understanding. A cancer diagnosis typically brings much fear and anxiety and I do not pretend that there have not been anxious thoughts. But in a way I do not understand and cannot begin to explain, God's amazing peace has guarded our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

I think the key word is "guard". It isn't that there are not anxious thoughts and fears that arise. But a guard has supernaturally been set upon our hearts through Christ Jesus. This guard is awake and alert and prevents the natural thoughts and fears from gaining a foothold in our lives. Our minds and emotions do not have to be subservient to the circumstances around us. The peace of God is a strong guard that protects us and allows us to overcome a situation with the thoughts that come from him.

Once again, the key to all of this is desiring it and asking for it. You can read Philippians 4:7 and feel good about it, but if you do not, through prayer and faith, accept it into your life, it is simply nice words. God's peace is available for all followers of Christ if we will ask for it and accept it into our lives. Then we can cultivate his peace through a life of prayer and trust.



Adapted from [Prayer, Peace and the Presence of](#)

[God](#) by David Butts

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DAVID BUTTS

# PRAYER AND THE END OF DAYS

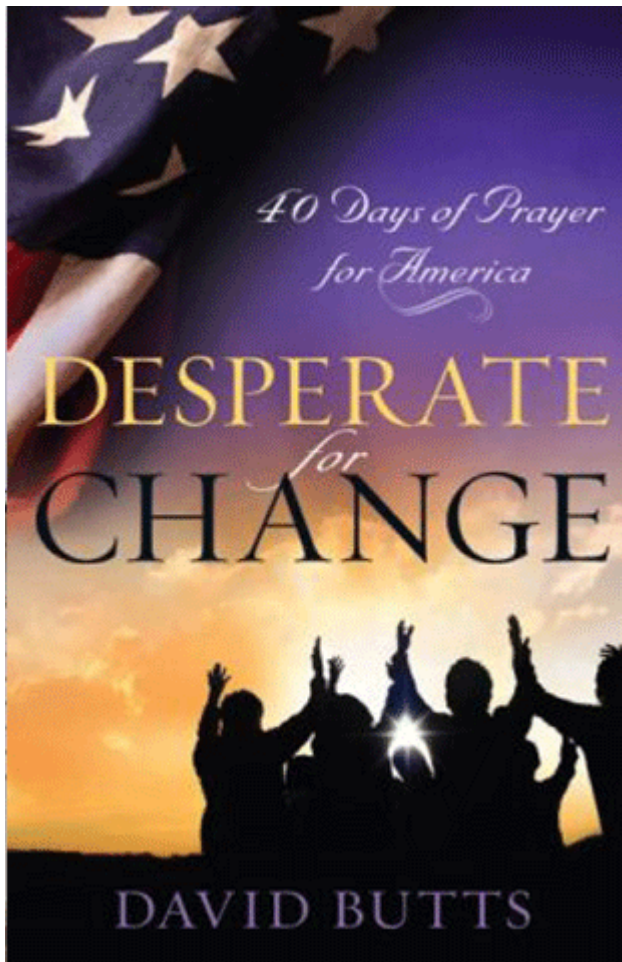
PRAYING GOD'S  
PURPOSES IN  
TROUBLED TIMES



# FORGOTTEN POWER

A Simple Theology for a Praying Church

DAVID BUTTS



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# 7 Ways to Pray in Difficult Times

By Kim Butts

We all know that in good times, it seems easier to pray. Our prayers flow from a place of gratitude and peace, thankfulness and joy. Yet, in difficult or painful times, it is much harder to press into the Lord in prayer. We know in our heads that God is the place we should go whether our circumstances are good or bad; however, sometimes we can feel paralyzed with fear, doubt, anger, disbelief, sadness, uncertainty, and a wide range of other emotions depending upon the situation.

Sometimes, it is only out of the absolute desperation of our heart that we overcome the paralysis and run to the Father...even if that running involves no words at all. There are times when it is all we can do to come into His presence and just sit in our pain, loneliness, fear, or whatever emotion is overtaking us. But one amazing truth about God is that our hearts can cry out in the silence...and God still hears. This is a key principle of prayer that we must always remember: God is always there! He is present with us continually.

Be assured, His word says that He will never leave us or forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6). He will not leave us in this difficult place unless we insist on staying there. If we seek Him with all of our heart, we will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13). He longs to comfort us and sit with us in the midst of our trial. His will, plan and purposes are unfolding in His perfect timing even when it doesn't seem this way to us.

Here are some specific ways to pray during difficult times, as well as when any trial comes your way, and they will:

- 1. Pray that God will be honored and glorified, whatever your circumstance, even if you have to suffer or go through a difficult time:** "...and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me" (Psalm 50:15). "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Peter 1:6-7).
- 2. Love and pray for people who cause harm or suffering to you, or to others:** "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you'" (Matthew 5:43-44).

3. **Pray for God to show you what He needs you to learn in the midst of difficult times:** “He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way” (Psalm 25:9).
4. **Give thanks to God in the midst of whatever you are walking through:** “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). **Important note:** He does not say to give thanks *for* your circumstances, but to give thanks *in the midst* of them!
5. **Pray that God will help you to be faithful instead of fearful when trials come:** “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him” (James 1:12).
6. **Pray that God will help you to be a light in the darkness to those who don’t yet know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior:** “In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). When people see the way you walk through difficulty, they will want to know where you draw your strength from!
7. **Give thanks to God because He has overcome the trials and troubles of the world:** “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

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## **Harvest Gives Gift to NDOP**

# National Day of Prayer Task Force Expands Operations through Gift from Harvest Prayer Ministries

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.** – The [National Day of Prayer Task Force](#), which mobilizes thousands of gatherings of the National Day of Prayer across all 50 states and in Washington D.C., is expanding its operations through a generous gift from [Harvest Prayer Ministries](#).



Harvest Prayer Ministries, who for the past 25 years has equipped pastors and leaders across America to develop prayer ministries in their churches, has gifted its resource division to the National Day of Prayer Task Force. The gift includes the [Church Prayer Leaders Network](#) and its [PrayerLeader.com](#) online platform, PrayerShop Publishing with all published assets and the [Prayer Connect](#) Magazine.



Combined, the gift adds more than 20,000 constituents, plus hundreds of print and online resources, to the National Day of Prayer Task Force, and arms the organization with a publishing house capable of producing up to eight books a year, a quarterly magazine and a store fully equipped with a processing center and fulfillment system.

“At a time when our nation is reeling from another heartbreaking tragedy, when people are looking for answers to



their pain and a way forward for us to heal and be whole again, it has never been more important for Christians to pray fervently for a spiritual awakening in America,” said Dr. Ronnie Floyd, president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force.

“This is precisely why we are so thrilled for Harvest Prayer Ministries’ generous gift. These resources strengthen our ability to equip pastors, ministry leaders and churches to be more effective in gathering and calling their communities to prayer. Most important, the gift broadens the scope of the National Day of Prayer beyond a single day, helping us to mobilize Americans to pray daily for our nation and our communities.”

“America might need a thousand solutions for the challenges we currently face, but no solution we can come up with will be able to accomplish more than our unified prayers,” Dr. Floyd said.



For Dave Butts, president and co-founder of Harvest Prayer Ministries, donating a significant portion of the ministry he and his wife Kim started was a matter of seeing the larger picture.

“As we see the desperate need in our nation for revival and spiritual awakening, individual ministries like ours must stop protecting their own turfs and work together toward the greater purpose of God’s Kingdom,” said Butts. “We believe in the National Day of Prayer Task Force’s mission to mobilize Christians to unified prayer for America, and we pray this gift will expand, strengthen and take this mission to a new level.”

As part of the gift acquisition, Jonathan Graf, vice president of resources at Harvest Prayer Ministries, and an additional

employee will join the National Day of Prayer Task Force. Graf will bring his expertise in digital content marketing to the National Day of Prayer Task Force, expanding its content creation and resource division.

“I am both humbled and excited to join the National Day of Prayer Task Force. Together we have the opportunity to reach more people, equip more churches and create a prayer movement that can change America,” said Graf.

Officially, the acquisition will occur in March, but the two ministries will complete the gift acquisition after the 2018 National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 3, when millions of Americans will gather in Washington D.C. and across thousands of events in all 50 states to pray together for America. Anchored around Ephesians 4:3, this year’s National Day of Prayer theme is “Pray for America – Unity.”