

Are You Zealous for God?

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When you hear the word “zealot” what do you think of? Fanatic? Weird? Overly religious? Maybe an extremely emotional person? I think that most people would say of zeal that it’s just not who they are. Many people have a tendency to identify being zealous as an overly emotional or extreme personality type and would distance themselves from being labeled a “zealot.”

The Bible, however, looks at zeal not so much as an emotion, but as an expression of faith. You become zealous because you have come to know God. It is the awesome character and nature of God that creates zeal within those who worship Him. The more you know the Lord, the more you become zealous for him.

From this perspective, zealousness is more about earnestness toward God, consecration, and undivided service. To be zealous is to focus all our attention on one thing...or rather, one person...the person of Jesus Christ. Perhaps most important for followers of Jesus, to be zealous is not an option but a command. Consider these scriptures which speak of a zealous life:

- “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deut. 6:5).
- “Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart” (Ps.119:2).
- “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding” (Prov.3:5).
- “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart” (Jer.29:13).
- “Even now, declares the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning” (Joel

2:12).

The greatest example of zeal is the One who knows the Father the best, our Lord Jesus. The prophet Isaiah spoke of the zeal of Jesus in Is.59:17: "He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak." In the gospels, John wrote: "His disciples remembered that it is written: 'Zeal for your house will consume me'" (Jn.2:17). Following in the steps of Jesus means becoming as zealous as He is.

Living the Christian life is not a casual attachment to religious activities. It is an all-out, loving desire to walk with Jesus day by day. With single-minded passion we draw near to Him and serve him with everything that is in us. Our prayer life moves from mundane requests to zealously seeing the purposes of God brought to earth by our cries of intercession. May it be said of us, as was said of our Lord, "Zeal for your house will consume us!"

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THE DEVIL GOES TO CHURCH

COMBATING THE
EVERYDAY ATTACKS
OF SATAN

FOREWORD BY HENRY BLACKABY

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PRAYER AND THE END OF DAYS

PRAYING GOD'S
PURPOSES IN
TROUBLED TIMES

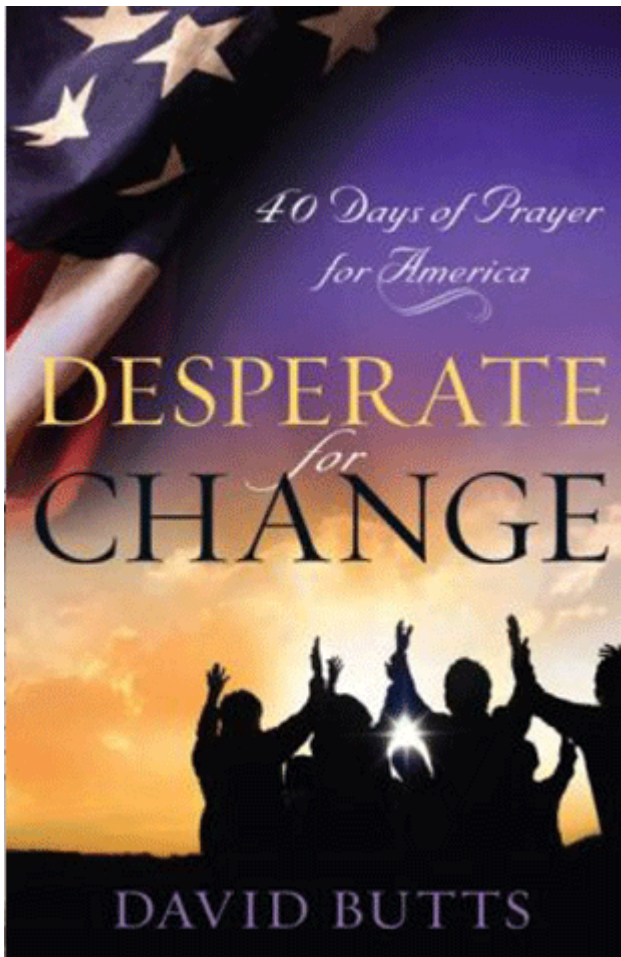




FORGOTTEN POWER

A Simple Theology for a Praying Church

DAVID BUTTS



*40 Days of Prayer
for America*

DESPERATE *for* CHANGE

DAVID BUTTS

Praying for Peace

Are You Zealous for God?

Growing up in the sixties and seventies gave me a firsthand view of the peace sign used by anti-war protestors and many others. Those two fingers signifying peace was all about being against war. Though being against war is good, the peace that Jesus speaks of is far more than the absence of hostilities. The peace of Christ is more about what is happening inside of you than what is happening around you. Ultimately, biblical peace is all about the presence of Jesus being lived out in your life.

When Jesus comes walking among His people, nothing remains the same. His presence brings His peace. Anxiety and fear have no place to hide when Jesus is near. Knowing of the fear of the Apostles, Jesus' first words to them after the Resurrection were, "Peace be with you" (Lk. 24:36). He is still saying that to His followers today. In the midst of our fears, worries, and anxieties, the Son of God is still speaking His peace.

Jesus warned us that in this world we would have tribulation. That's why it is so important for us to draw near to the Lord in prayer. When we do so, He promises to draw near to us (James 4:8). In His presence there is the peace we so desperately need. When Jesus makes a promise, you can count on its fulfillment. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not

give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

If you are feeling troubled or afraid, embrace this promise of Jesus today so that His peace may overcome the turmoil of the world and rest within your heart.

Pray: Lord Jesus, Your word says that if I will draw near to You in prayer then You will draw near to me. Please fulfill Your word and allow me to know Your nearness today. You have promised to give me peace as only You can give. I know I can't find peace in this world, but only in You. Please keep reminding me that Your peace dwells within me because that's where You have come to dwell.

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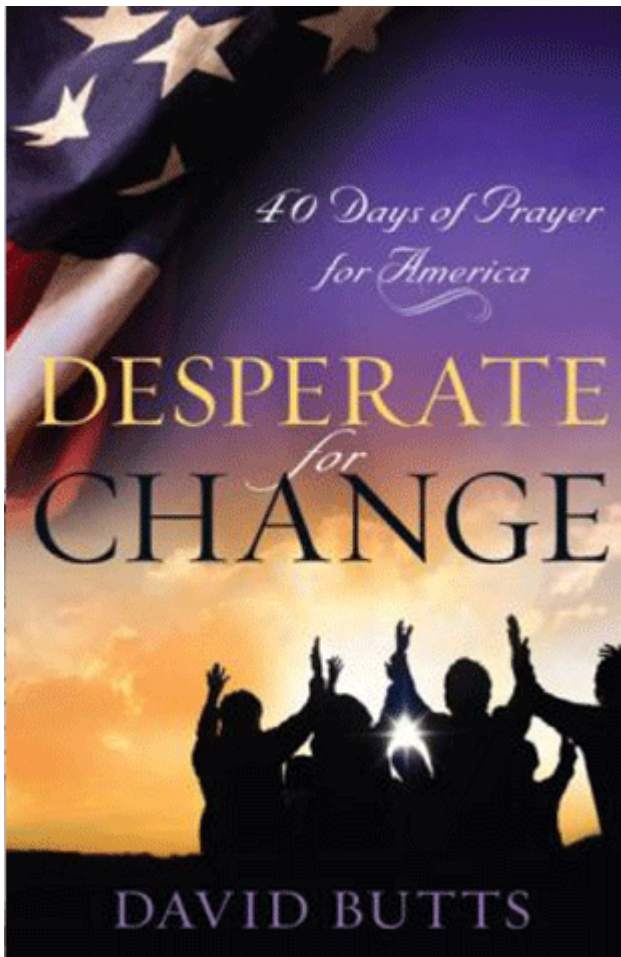




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Is Ceaseless Prayer Really Possible?

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Have you ever wondered how to respond in a practical way to Paul's admonition in I Thessalonians 5:18 to "pray without ceasing"? Some of you may have some of the same questions I have wrestled with over the years: How do you do that? What do you pray about continually? Is this even possible?

One extremely useful way to do so in my daily prayer life came to light for me with this one verse: *"But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his Law he meditates day and night" (Ps.1:2).*

Psalms 1 shows us that unceasing prayer begins with an attitude... delight. That which delights you will be that which you desire and seek after. The Psalmist speaks of the one who has found delight in the Law or Word of the Lord. Rather than looking at prayer as a duty, we should consider looking at it as a delight. A changed attitude changes everything!

Next the Psalmist tells us that this man meditates on the Law (Word) day and night. Here's the connection to praying without ceasing. The man who delights in the Word of God will be the one who meditates on it day and night. It becomes like breathing to him – something absolutely necessary for life. The Word fills his thoughts and quite naturally those thoughts come before the Lord.

As we look to this model of one who meditates on the Word of God day and night, we realize the Spirit of God has given us an extremely practical way to pray without ceasing. The content of our prayers will be formatted by the Word of God. We begin to think on the Word (meditate) as we go through the day and the Lord births within us the prayers He desires us to pray. Prayer is no longer a requirement or even a scheduled event. It is a lifestyle of delighting in the Lord's Word and continually talking with Him about that Word. Take this to heart and you will find that it is indeed possible to pray without ceasing!

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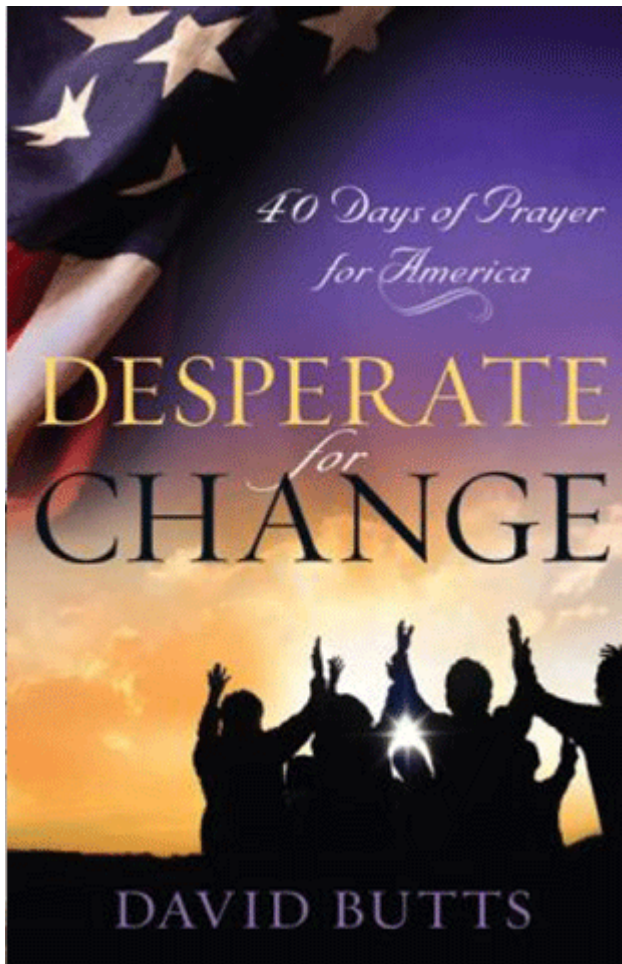
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**Praying into the Second
Coming of Jesus**

Are You Zealous for God?



Dave & Kim Butts with Billy Graham's daughter, Anne Graham Lotz.

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt.24:14).

May I suggest to you that this massive, world-changing event, which Jesus told us to watch for, happened during the funeral of Billy Graham. In every nation, even those we call closed nations, the funeral of the world's greatest evangelist presented the gospel of the kingdom with clarity and power. Oh, yes, I know that there is still much evangelism ahead of us. But it is a mopping up operation after the gospel has gone around the world.

If this is the case, and I strongly believe that it is, then we are living in amazing times that require much of us. Prayer

must move to the forefront of every initiative of the Church as we work in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Living toward the end of the end of days means we must draw closer than ever to the Lord in intimate prayer and receive our clear marching orders from Him. We should expect to see a Spirit initiated revival in the Church.

The death of an astonishingly effective evangelist like Billy Graham often brings the question of who will take his place. We are often drawn to the Old Testament story of the mantle of Elijah being passed to Elisha and we ask who will receive the mantle of Billy Graham. The answer is, "No man!" It is a mantle for the Church to wear as we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. Prayer and evangelism are to become a lifestyle for the whole Church as we move out of our comfort zones and into the war zones of front line Christian living!

There is a wave of prayer that is moving across the face of the earth right now. It is prayer that is focused, not on receiving what we want from God, but on the advance of His Kingdom. In Billy Graham's latter years he gave himself more and more to prayer. That is a picture of what needs to happen in the Church right now. We must give ourselves more and more to prayer as we cooperate with God in His work on earth.

As God prepared the earth for the first coming of Jesus two thousand years ago, He placed in Jerusalem two older saints, Anna and Simeon. They gave themselves to prayer in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah. God is doing the same thing today in preparation for the return of Jesus to planet earth. He is raising up his saints who will give themselves to prayer that paves the way for the coming of Jesus.

I don't know about you, but I want in on that prayerful mission that will see the triumphal return of Jesus in His timing and in His way!

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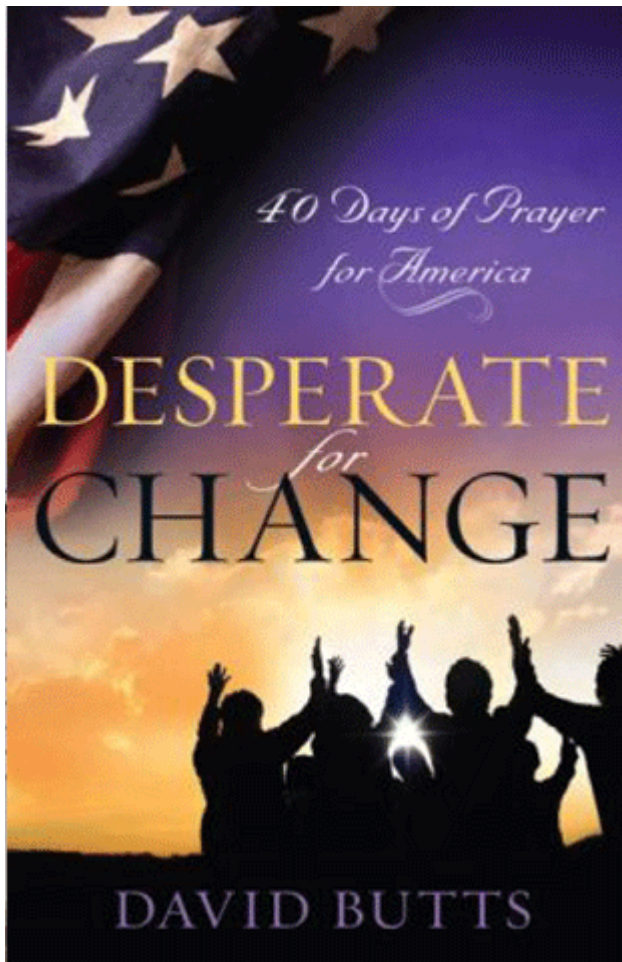
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The Key to Relieving Your Fear

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Though unwanted, fear seems to be a universal part of life.

Reaction to fear varies from person to person, but fears that are not dealt with can bring damage and paralysis to a life. An example would be the individual with acrophobia (a fear of heights) who may be paralyzed with terror when faced with

being in a tall building, or even climbing a small ladder. That's just one example of many of how fear can bind us and keep us from a fulfilled, joyful life.

Christians should and often do, turn to the Lord and ask Him to take away their fears. That is a simple request and really is something we can do in full assurance since the Lord does not want us to live in fear. One of the most common commands in scripture from the Lord is: "Fear not!"

Where difficulty enters in is when we pray, asking for fear to be removed, and nothing seems to happen. We find ourselves as paralyzed by fear as before we prayed. What happened? Or rather, what didn't happen and why? There are probably many answers that have to do with our unwillingness to let go of fear. But I believe God's Word gives us a wonderful way to bypass the blocks to removing fear and receive great peace.

David's prayer in Psalm 34:4 "I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears," contains the key: "I sought the Lord." His desire was not so much for fears to be relieved as it was to experience the presence of the Lord. He sought God, not just what God would do for him or give him. It's a pure prayer that focuses on the Lord and brings delight to God's heart.

What about the fear issue? David made it clear that when he sought the Lord, the Lord delivered him from all his fears. Just like a parent coming into the room of a fearful child, that's the natural response to the presence of our Heavenly Father.

It's just as Jesus taught us, if we seek Him first, then many good things will follow. As you seek the Lord and enjoy His presence, you will find that your fears have subsided and peace has taken their place.

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Some of Dave's Book



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Prayer: Power for Revival



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