

The Task of A Watchman

By Dave Butts

“I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give Him no rest till He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth” (Isaiah 62:6-7).

“Then He returned to His disciples and found them sleeping. ‘Could you men not keep watch with Me for one hour?’ He asked Peter. ‘Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak’” (Matthew 26:40-41).

A Watchman's Story

The young watchman stood silently at his post on the wall. The cool Judean night caused an involuntary shiver. It had been a quiet evening...a few latecomers were allowed through the pedestrian gate, but nothing else. It was almost time for his shift to end when his eyes caught a glimpse of something glowing over the nearest hill to the north. Peering into the darkness confirmed that something was amiss not too far from the city. It could be a movement of enemy troops with their torches betraying their position. Of course, it could just be the campfire of travelers...but why now in the middle of the night?

Whatever it was, the young watchman's orders were clear...he was to sound the alarm. Raising the trumpet to his lips, he sounded the three short blasts that would bring his superiors to the wall. Within minutes, the quiet sentry post was filled with soldiers. An armed scouting party was sent to the general area of the fire. The glow from beyond the hill died down and

soon the soldiers returned. A shepherd's hut had caught fire when a gust of wind blown across the sleeping shepherd's coals had ignited the thatch.

Though the fire was not a danger to the city, the watchman was commended by his commanding officer for his sharp eyes. It could easily have been a threat that would have been stopped by the watchful eyes of the young man. This was the very reason why the watchmen were in place.

Watchmen of Today

There is a movement of prayer taking place all over the planet that is firmly rooted in Scripture. It is the call of God to His people to take their places on the wall as watchmen. Whether we look to the Old Testament or the New, we find that God is calling us to watch and pray.

Our modern culture does not readily identify with the ancient concept of watchmen on the walls. To accept the Lord's call to this great movement of prayer then, we will need to train ourselves in what it means to be a part of this great company of the "alert." The Isaiah 62 passage, quoted above, helps us greatly in this task.

It is clear that the job of a watchman is a continual commitment. It is not sporadic or dependent upon our feelings. Because of the life or death nature and constancy of the watchman's task, it is an assignment for the many, not just the one. Believers working in tandem, sharing shifts of prayer, will be the most effective. Isaiah 62:6-7 describes an intensity that must be shared...day and night...never silent...give yourself no rest. Only groups of committed believers who band together in watchful prayer will be able to stay at their post.

Notice also in Scripture that it is God who posts the

watchmen. This is a divine assignment, not just the latest prayer fad. To stand on the wall as a watchman, stationed there by the Lord Himself, is a great privilege. We need to receive and obey such a call with gratitude and humility.

Perhaps the overwhelming characteristic of watchman prayer is that it is to be done with open eyes. This does not necessarily imply physical eyes, although it certainly can, but our spiritual eyes must be held wide open. We are to watch and pray.

What is it we are looking for as we pray? I would suggest that we first look for an enemy attack. Certainly in Old Testament times, this sort of defensive watchfulness was at the heart of the task. The watchman on the wall was always on the alert for any attempt of an enemy to attack or infiltrate the city. Too many times, the walls of the Church and of our cities today are open to attack because of a lack of watchfulness. In 2 Corinthians 2:11, Paul wrote that we are "not unaware" of the schemes of the enemy. Unless praying watchmen are on duty, we too often find ourselves painfully unaware of the attempts of the enemy to disrupt and destroy.

On the opposite end of matters, I believe that the watchmen are also to keep their eyes open to see and discern moves of God. All too often we miss out on what God is doing because we are not paying attention. The watcher should always be asking, "Lord, what are You doing in our church or city this day? Is there something You are calling Your people to do in cooperation with what You are doing?" How much more effective we would be if, instead of starting our own projects for God, we found ourselves moving alongside a current move of God!

The other area for watchfulness is discerning the needs of the people of God. A watchman on the wall in the Old Testament would often see human needs and be able to send someone to meet those needs. Is there someone among you who is prayerfully watching the people of God to see who is hurting

or who is in need? We often talk about shepherding the flock of God. What greater way to shepherd than to continually watch in prayer over the sheep the Lord loves?

What will be the results of watchmen prayers? According to Isaiah, we will see the firm establishment of the Kingdom of God. The prophet speaks of the establishment of Jerusalem, the dwelling place of God among His people. In both the Old and the New Covenant, Jerusalem represents God among man. Jesus' main message was the coming kingdom, present in Him. Emmanuel...God with us!

Another result of this powerful prayer movement will be that the glory of God will be seen among the nations. As we watch and pray, we find ourselves lining up with the prophet Habakkuk and crying out for the glory of God to cover the earth "as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14). Prayer warriors, it is time to ascend the wall of your city and begin to fulfill your calling as watchmen of God.

-Dave Butts was the co-founder and president of [Harvest Prayer Ministries](#) and the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee until his death in 2022.

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Dave Recommends:



If you would like to explore this topic further, we recommend “Watch and Pray” Issue 28 of *Prayer Connect* magazine. To read part of this issue (or all of it if you subscribe to *Prayer Connect*) [click here.](#)

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Prayer Evangelism Ignites the Church

Prayer Evangelism Ignites the Church

By Dave Butts

There’s a fascinating change taking place in the way the Church perceives prayer. From dusty devotions and meeting personal needs, prayer has taken center stage in our attempts to reach the lost. Prayer seems to have become the Divine Strategy for the completion of the task of world evangelization. Wherever the church is growing the most, you find the Church praying the best.

The explosion of prayer evangelism is happening in Korea, in Argentina, in many places in Africa...and it's beginning to happen in North America as well. Christians are creatively bringing together prayer and evangelism in ways that are overcoming both natural and spiritual barriers to Christian conversion.

I think it's important at the outset to understand that prayer evangelism is not some sort of mystical weirdness where we pray and then sit back and do nothing else. It is rather, a releasing of God's power through prayer that is focused on overcoming barriers to evangelism and on preparing the soil of an individual's life to receive the gospel. We pray powerful biblical prayers and then our evangelistic efforts follow, with far greater effectiveness.

We shouldn't be surprised by this. The New Testament speaks of the connectedness between prayer and evangelism in a number of places. When Jesus told His followers to look around them at the white fields (potential spiritual harvest), His first instruction to them was to pray. *"Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field'"* (Matthew 9: 37-38). Later, when Jesus had given His disciples the assignment to go to all people everywhere, teaching, preaching, baptizing and making disciples, their first step was to have a prayer meeting. *"They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers"* (Acts 1:14).

Paul wrote to Timothy that God wanted us to pray...interceding for everyone (1 Timothy 2:1-4). Why? Because God wants everyone saved. The New Testament teaches us much on the power of prayer in evangelism. Somehow the Church has lost the connection. My friend Terry Teykl of Renewal Ministries says that sometime after the first century the great divorce occurred—the divorce between prayer and evangelism. Prayer became devotional and liturgical, but not very practical, while evangelism was more and more a matter of human effort or even coercion at times. Fortunately, this New Testament concept is being recovered as prayer and evangelism are once again wedded together.

It's happening in many exciting ways. One preacher in Texas asked his

congregation to turn in the names of 100 people who needed to come to Jesus. Those names were prayed over by a trained team of intercessors and by the end of the year 92 of those people had come to faith in Christ. This type of focused praying by those who have been well-trained is central to effective prayer evangelism.

One way of praying for the neighborhoods around your church is an innovative method known as prayerwalking. Christians gather at the church building for a time of prayer and preparation. Then they go in groups of two or three through a particular neighborhood, walking up and down the street, praying for each house, that God would be at work in each home. It's done quietly, without calling attention to those who are praying, but effectively releasing God's power into people's lives. There's a great resource book written on the topic entitled "Prayerwalking: Praying Onsite with Insight" by Graham Kendrick and Steve Hawthorne.

One minister I spoke with some time ago prays for everyone in his church by name every week. To help him remember who is who, he has put all of their pictures on his laptop computer so that he can see their faces as he prays. Oh, did I mention that their attendance has gone from 150 to 1300 and he still prays for everyone by name every week!

Many churches are sending cards to homes in their neighborhood asking if there is anything they can be praying about. They are not asking them to come to church...not asking for money...or advertising a special program...just wanting to know if there is any way they can pray about what is important to them. It's not long before such a church is attracting people who are looking for a church that cares enough to pray.

The power of blending prayer and evangelism is not something that is limited to local churches. Whole groups of churches and large evangelistic outreaches are beginning to see the importance of prayer. One of the most exciting and ambitious efforts to reach this nation for Christ is called Table Coalition (formerly Mission America Coalition). Its goal? To pray by name for every man, woman and child in the U.S. and to present them with the gospel. It's a goal that no one group within the Church can do by itself. It will take the cooperation of many organizations, fellowships and congregations.

One of the things I like about Table Coalition is its emphasis on local

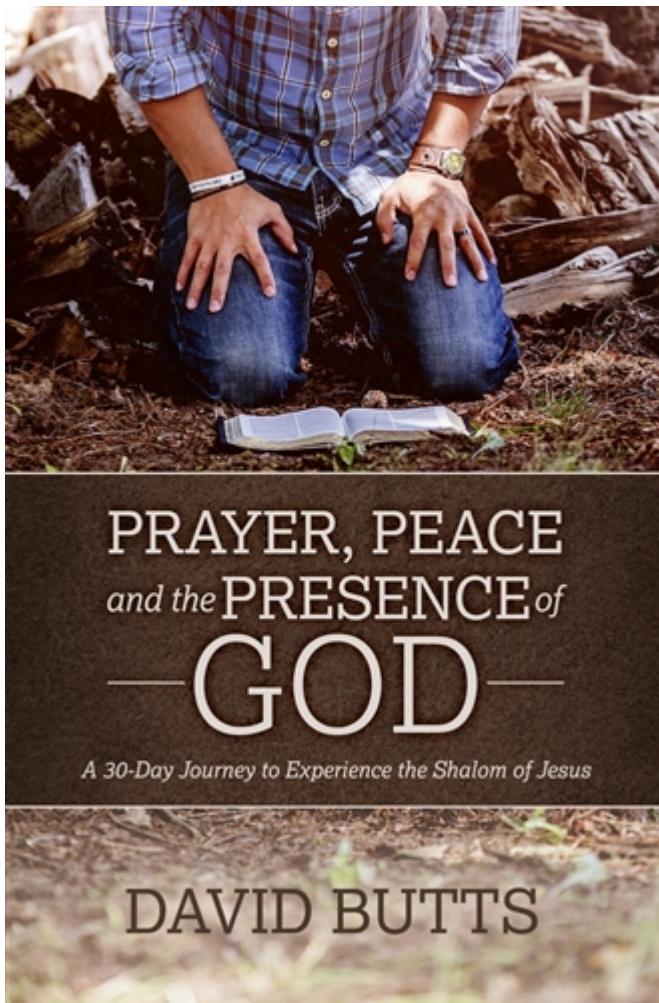
congregational involvement and voluntary cooperation. There is no monolithic program for everyone to buy into. It is simply a networking of ideas and strategies with a common goal—"The whole church taking the whole Gospel to the whole nation in this generation."

Another missional way to pray for neighbors and nations is to establish Lighthouses of Prayer. Over one and a half million Lighthouses of Prayer have been established in the United States with many more being added daily. A lighthouse is any person, family or group of people who will commit to pray, care and sensitively share Jesus Christ with their neighbors, co-workers, schoolmates or friends as God directs.

Billy Graham has said of this effort: "The Lighthouse Movement has brought the Body of Christ together in a way that is unique in American history. I am praying that God will use this movement to help bring about a massive nationwide renewal and spiritual awakening in the months ahead."

It is exciting to see what God is doing in the midst of His people as he draws us to Himself in prayer. Prayer is re-igniting the Church's fire of evangelism as we reach out to this nation and to the ends of the earth. "Lord, teach us to pray...in your way...and in your will" seems to have become the battle cry of the Church in these exciting days!

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PRAYER, PEACE, and the PRESENCE of GOD by David Butts

As believers, we are supposed to walk in the peace of Christ, yet we all have stressful issues and circumstances that rob us of this peace. Subtitled “A 30-Day Journey to Experience the Shalom of Jesus,” *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God* powerfully encourages the reader on how to hold onto that peace in any circumstance.

The author, David Butts (1953-2022), started writing this book and 10 days into it he got word that he was in stage 4 with a rare form of lymphoma. God allowed him to live in a greater way for five additional years of full-strength ministry. Dave has challenged readers in *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God* to seek after His best life, no matter what it holds.

His 30-day devotional will encourage, inspire and challenge you that you, too, can experience and walk in the peace of Jesus no matter what circumstances you are walking through.

[Learn more about purchasing this book here](#)

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Prayer, Evangelism, And The Purposes Of God

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God is doing a new thing today. If you want to be “in” on what God is doing, you must begin praying with greater passion and intensity. If you want purpose and meaning to life, and if you want your life to really count for God and to make a difference in this world...PRAY! Prayer is what God is calling His people to do today as a part of His plan for this world.

God is moving all things toward completion. I don't pretend to know when or how or any of the details that people often get so excited about. But I do know the key to the completion of God's purposes on this planet. It is evangelism. And the key to evangelism is prayer. Let me show this to you through the words of Scripture:

Jesus said, *“And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come”* (Matthew 24:14). The Gospel is going to be preached to all nations...Jesus said so. If Jesus said it, I firmly believe it will happen. Sometime after the Gospel has been preached to the whole world, the end of all things will come. Evangelism is tied to the second coming of Christ. Without delving into issues of dates and times, the question for us

today is, "Do we want to be a part of the fulfillment of Jesus' words?"

Jesus ties together prayer and evangelism in Matthew 9:37-38: *"Then He said to His disciples, ' The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.'"* The instruction of Jesus to His disciples regarding reaching the lost is that it begins with prayer. There is certainly more to do after we have prayed. But evangelism will never be truly effective apart from the biblical beginning place of prayer.

The Apostle Paul continues this teaching in his first letter to Timothy: *"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth"* (1 Timothy 2:1-4). Notice that Paul urges that prayers be lifted up, because God wants everyone saved. Prayer and evangelism are brought together in a powerful way and linked to the very purposes of God.

Not to be left out, the Apostle John shows us in his unique way that prayer and evangelism are inextricably connected. There are two passages of Scripture in Revelation that you may not have noticed before that are exciting in their presentation of prayer and evangelism: *"Each one has a harp and they are holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints"* (Revelation 5:8). *"Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand"* (Revelation 8:3-4).

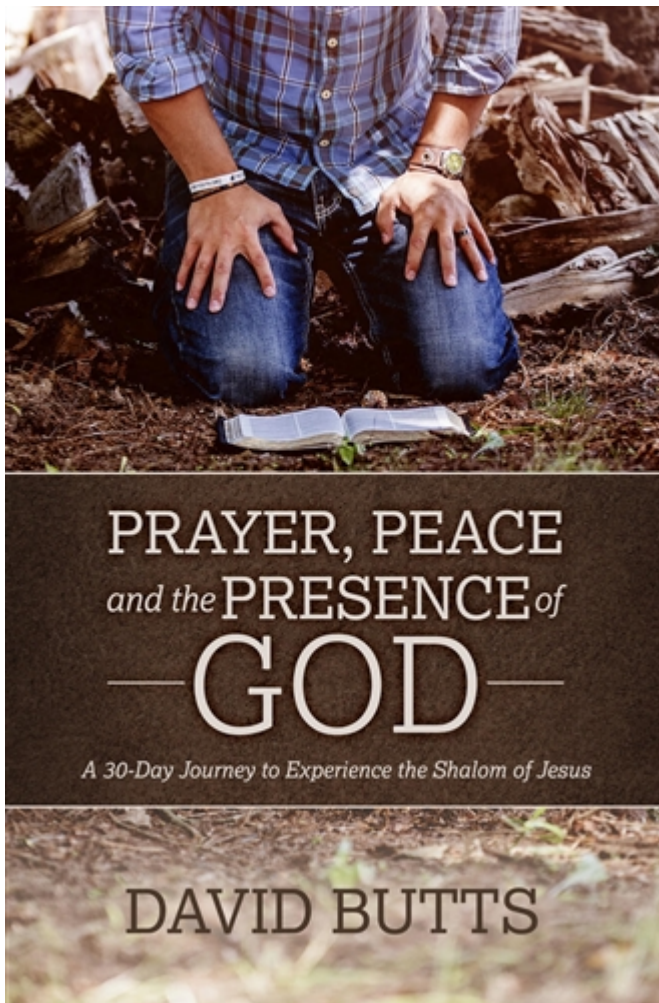
After each of these incidents, in which the collected prayers of God's people are poured out before God, angels are loosed upon the earth to cause events intended to bring people to repentance and salvation. God uses the prayers of His people to bring about the establishment of Christ's Kingdom.

The second passage in Revelation comes in the midst of a half an hour of silence. Author Walter Wink explains the connection well: "Heaven itself falls silent. The heavenly hosts and celestial spheres suspend their ceaseless singing so that the prayers of the saints on earth can be heard. The seven angels of destiny cannot blow the signal of the next times to be until an eighth angel gathers these prayers...and mingles them with incense upon the altar. Silently they rise to the nostrils of God. Human beings have intervened in the heavenly liturgy. The uninterrupted flow of consequences is dammed for a moment. New alternatives become feasible. The unexpected becomes suddenly possible, because God's people on earth have invoked heaven, the home of the possibles, and have been heard. What happens next, happens because people prayed. The message is clear: history belongs to the intercessors."

Dick Eastman said it this way: "God's ultimate purpose for mankind, the completion of Christ's bride and the establishing of His eternal Kingdom on earth will result only from the release of the prayers of God's saints."

Graham Kendrick and Chris Robinson wrote the hymn, *All Heaven Waits*. See if their words call to your heart and stir within you a passion to be a person of prayer:

"All heaven waits with bated breath for saints on earth to
pray,
Majestic angels ready stand with swords of fiery blade.
Astounding power awaits a word from God's resplendent throne.
But God awaits our prayer of faith that cries, "Your will be
done."



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7 Focused Ways to Pray for Lost People

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God loves every person on the planet and has called us to go and make disciples of everyone we can! We are also instructed by God to pray for the lost in our families, our neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, and to the ends of the earth! Here are seven scriptural ways to begin praying for lost people every day:

- 1. Pray for the salvation of those who have yet to attain an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.**

“But don’t forget this, dear friends, that a day or a thousand years from now is like tomorrow to the Lord. He isn’t really being slow about his promised return, even though it sometimes seems that way. But he is waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent” (2 Peter 3:8-9).

- 2. Pray against the powers of evil who fight to keep the lost in darkness.**

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm” (Ephesians 6:12-13).

- 3. Pray that God will remove the blinders that the Devil**

tries to put on the eyes and minds of unbelievers.

“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

4. Pray for the encouragement, growth in discipleship and protection of new believers.

“For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light” (Colossians 1:9-12).

5. Pray to the Lord of the Harvest to raise up more workers to send into His harvest field.

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field’” (Matthew 9:36-38).

6. Pray that the Father will draw lost people to Himself.

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:44).

7. Pray for the blessing and peace of God in every person’s life you are praying for to come to Jesus. Pray prophetically that God will work in every new believer’s life, and that the Holy Spirit will enable them to

fulfill their redemptive purposes.

“For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey him, and then helping you do what he wants” (Philippians 2:13)

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs, and don’t forget to thank him for his answers. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

“This is what I have asked of God for you: that you will be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love, and that you will have the rich experience of knowing Christ with real certainty and clear understanding. *For God’s secret plan, now at last made known, is Christ himself.* In him lie hidden all the mighty, untapped treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:2-3).

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful” (John 14:27).

“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good” (Titus 2:11-14).

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Drinking From Old Wells

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By Dave Butts

I love the written word. Books, new and old, have made a major difference in my life. I have been taught, encouraged, rebuked, and given fresh vision by great authors. Some of my favorite books are still being written. The Lord is using my contemporaries to minister to me through their writings. However, I most often find myself irresistibly drawn to older

authors. There seems to be a depth and a passion that is rarely matched today. It could be likened to drinking from the clear, cold water of an old well that goes deep.

I'd like to share with you some of my favorite quotes from a few of these authors. Some might be from centuries ago, while others are as recent as the last generation. My prayer is that your heart will be stirred, as mine was, while reading these gems from the past:

"Oh! men and brethren, what would this heart feel if I could but believe that there were some among you who would go home and pray for a revival – men whose faith is large enough, and their love fiery enough to lead them from this moment to exercise unceasing intercessions that God would appear among us and do wondrous things here, as in the times of former generations." – C. H. Spurgeon

"Revivals begin with God's own people; the Holy Spirit touches their heart anew, and gives them new fervor and compassion, and zeal, new light and life, and when He has thus come to you, He next goes forth to the valley of dry bones...Oh, what responsibility this lays on the Church of God! If you grieve Him away from yourselves, or hinder His visit, then the poor perishing world suffers sorely!" –Andrew A. Bonar

"To arouse one man or woman to the tremendous power of prayer for others, is worth more than the combined activity of a score of average Christians." – A. J. Gordon

"I would rather train twenty men to pray, than a thousand to preach. ...A minister's highest mission ought to be to teach his people to pray." – H. MacGregor

"The true man of God is heartsick, grieved at the worldliness of the Church... grieved at the toleration of sin in the Church, grieved at the prayerlessness in the Church. He is disturbed that the corporate prayer of the Church no longer pulls down the strongholds of the devil." – Leonard Ravenhill

“Does it grieve you, my friends, that the name of God is being taken in vain and desecrated? Does it grieve you that we are living in a godless age? ...But, we are living in such an age and the main reason we should be praying about revival is that we are anxious to see God’s name vindicated and His glory manifested. We should be anxious to see something happening that will arrest the nations, all the peoples, and cause them to stop and to think again.” – Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“The history of missions is the history of answered prayer. From Pentecost to the Haystack meeting in New England and from the days when Robert Morrison landed in China to the martyrdom of John and Betty Stam, prayer has been the source of power and the secret of spiritual triumph.” – Samuel Zwemer

“We give ourselves to prayer. We preach a Gospel that saves to the uttermost, and witness to its power. We do not argue about worldliness; we witness. We do not discuss philosophy; we preach the Gospel. We do not speculate about the destiny of sinners; we pluck them as brands from the burning. We ask no man’s patronage. We beg no man’s money. We fear no man’s frown...Let no man join us who is afraid, and we want none but those who are saved, sanctified and aflame with the fire of the Holy Ghost.” – Samuel Chadwick

“The evangelization of the world in this generation depends first of all upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need for men; deeper, far, than the need for money; aye, deep down at the bottom of our spiritless life is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, world-wide prayer.” – Robert E. Speer

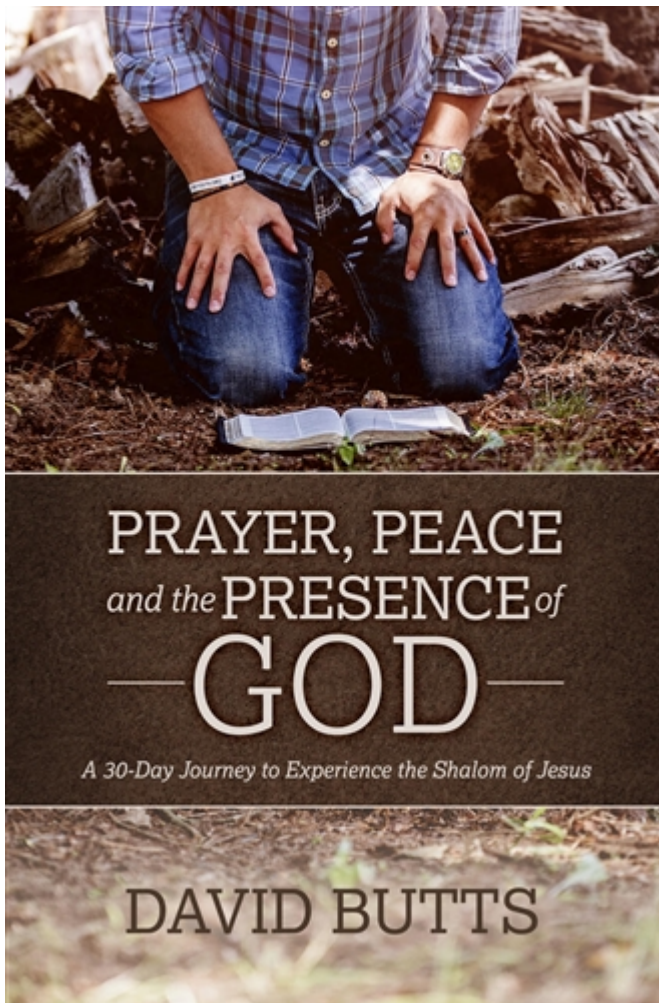
“Oh, for closest communion with God, till soul and body, head, face, and heart – shine with Divine brilliancy! But oh! for a holy ignorance of our shining!” – Robert Murray M’Cheyne

“Some people do not like to hear much of repentance; but I think it is so necessary that if I should die in the pulpit, I

would desire to die preaching repentance, and if out of the pulpit I would desire to die practicing it.” – Matthew Henry

“There is need of a great revival of spiritual life, of truly fervent devotion to our Lord Jesus, of entire consecration to His service. It is only in a church in which this spirit of revival has at least begun, that there is any hope of radical change in the relation of the majority of our Christian people to mission work.” – Andrew Murray

“The love-slave has no pleasure like that of serving his master. This is his joy, and his very ‘crown of rejoicing.’ The love-slave is altogether at his master’s service. He is all eyes for his master. He watches. He is all ears for his master. He listens. His mind is willing. His hands are ready. His feet are swift to sit at the master’s feet and look into his loved face, to listen to his voice and catch his words; to run on his errands, to do his bidding, to share his privations and sorrows, to watch at his door, to guard his honor, to praise his name, to defend his person, to seek and promote his interests, and, if needs be, to die for his dear sake; this is the joy of the slave of love, and this he counts his perfect freedom.” – Samuel L. Brengle



PRAYER, PEACE, and the PRESENCE of GOD by David Butts

As believers, we are supposed to walk in the peace of Christ, yet we all have stressful issues and circumstances that rob us of this peace. Subtitled “A 30-Day Journey to Experience the Shalom of Jesus,” *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God* powerfully encourages the reader on how to hold onto that peace in any circumstance.

The author, David Butts (1953-2022), started writing this book and 10 days into it he got word that he was in stage 4 with a rare form of lymphoma. God allowed him to live in a greater way for five additional years of full-strength ministry. Dave has challenged readers in *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God* to seek after His best life, no matter what it holds.

His 30-day devotional will encourage, inspire and challenge you that you, too, can experience and walk in the peace of Jesus no matter what circumstances you are walking through.

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