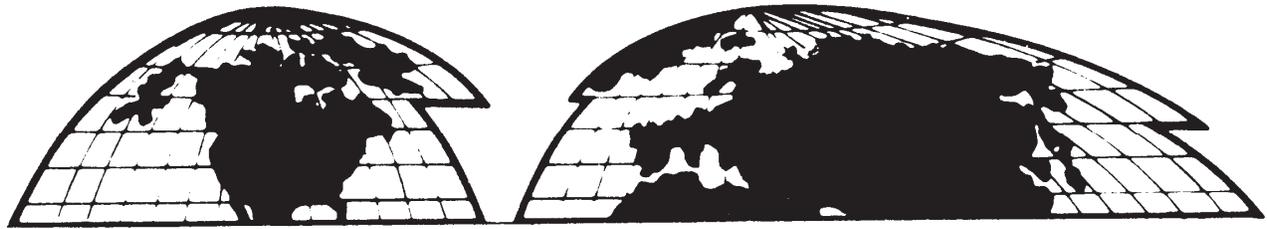
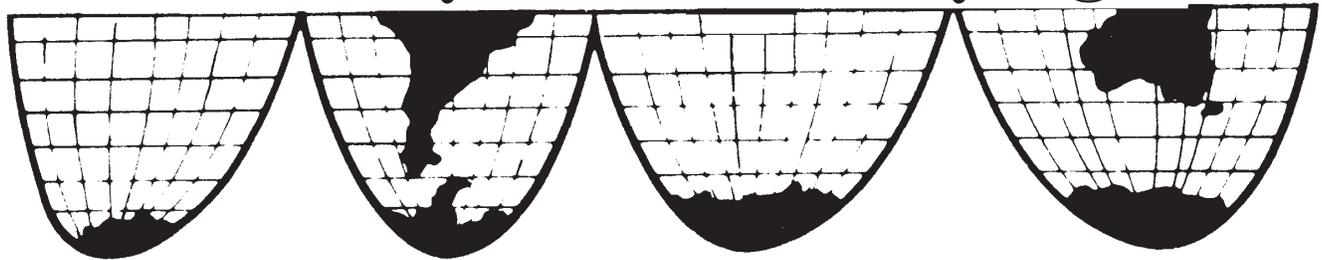


PRAYER IS THE MIGHTIEST FORCE • II CHRON. 7:14



# World Prayer Band Prayergram®



Challenging Christians to Pray — May 2009

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*“Intercessors are like eagles, they don’t flock, you find them one at a time.”*



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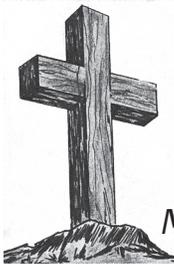
Roswell, New Mexico 88203-4676

(575) 623-6925

E-mail: [mwpbs@yahoo.com](mailto:mwpbs@yahoo.com)

Website: [www.worldprayerband.com](http://www.worldprayerband.com)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 686 • Roswell, New Mexico 88202 • U.S.A.



### VOICE FROM THE PAST

The Christian way is different: harder, and easier. Christ says “Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want you. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half measures are any good. I don’t want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down, I don’t want to drill the tooth, or crown it, or stop it, but to have it out. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked—the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours.

*C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) English scholar and courageous defender of the Christian faith*

## Let the Church Rise in Prayer by Matthew Skariah



Where are God's broken-hearted, soul-smitten, Spirit-anointed evangelical prophets, today, to call His people back to a disciplined life in prayer? More carnal programs, shallow Bible studies and concerts will not move the nation and the world in the direction of God, but a Holy Ghost empowered and Spirit-led Church will! The greatest blunder in Christian existence is pride; man is the epitome of pride and conceit. Beloved, it is time that every gospel preacher should "weep between the porch and the altar" crying, "*Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God?*" (Joel 2:17)

Arise, believers, servants of God, arise! America, our beloved nation is about to be swept away by the tides of sin and debauchery and financial meltdown and she is fast ripening for judgment. It could, however, soon be ripe for revival and restoration if *His people, who are called by His name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek His face, and turn from their wicked ways; then God will hear from heaven, and will forgive our sin, and will heal our land.* (2 Chronicles 7:14). Let's lay aside the garments that are spotted by the world and cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, separate ourselves from the fellowship of the world, stop playing church and live and walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, claim our inheritance in Christ Jesus, and fearlessly and indomitably proclaim the whole counsel of God. *Will you, child of God, ministers of the gospel, Join the faithful praying minority in these last days that are committed to the yoke of Christ, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, to revive and resuscitate the life of holiness, power and purity? Pastors, will you challenge your entire congregation to do likewise? Will you act Judiciously and timely? God forbid that we should fail in this critical hour when our nation is bleeding spiritually and morally and socially and economically! The survival of America and the world depends upon our unequivocal response.*

The modern church as we know of today has become puzzled and uncertain about her message of redemption from sin. Many in the Christian leadership are wavering in the faithful presentation of their distinctive doctrines and the foundation of their cherished Christian virtues, ideals and biblical precepts; they are being influenced more or less by a culture that is hostile to the Christian message of power and purity. Consequently, the true faith is being undercut, compromised or mimicked almost as never before in history. The so-called emerging church has not altogether rejected the Apostles' Creed, but she has presumed to modify the Apostles' standards. She has theologically retained the cross as God's way of atonement but has denied it vehemently as His way of life. The early Christians turned the world upside down; today, the world turns us upside down. What a strange dichotomy!

Harnack, German historian and theologian, at the turn of the century said: "*The church never had so much influence in the world as when she kept herself apart from the world.*" Decades of profligate and self-centered living and lack of godliness have taken their toll on many evangelical Christians. Years of prosperity teaching and the absence of holy living and self-denial have attenuated real faith. And now we have reached the moment of reality: Either we firm up, stand up, speak up, and pray with importunity, or we run the danger of becoming a mere shadow in the night, or an irreverent religious circus. There must be a radical change and it must begin now. There is no other way. We need a prayer revolution immediately. But we cannot have such a revolution until the church gets a divorce from the world. The modern church has become worldly and now her members are demanding all sorts of entertainment and if they cannot find what they are looking for, there is always a church around the corner eager and ready to implement such programs that pacify the flesh in the name of Christian experience, (or should I say experience and leave the Christian out of it?), that is light and flippant and carnal, and fed on pure fleshly gyrations. Holy visitations and fruits of the Spirit have given way to displays of the manifestation of the flesh. But quite the contrary, the early Christians believed in unction from on high, not entertainment from men.

How did the early church get the people at Pentecost? By Madison Avenue advertising, by concerts, by posters, No? The people were arrested by a power that was beyond human tricks and manipulations. Are people arrested by such Holy Ghost power today in our services? The people came willingly as they heard sounds from heaven, and believe me; the heavenly sounds are dying out in our churches. To our dismay, the institutionalized churches are becoming a monolithic tomb of the spiritually dead. Today's church is not acting like she is the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ; she is simply responding to the demand of the culture in which she conducts her daily affairs. The promoters of the so-called emerging church is strenuously attempting to create a gospel of "happiness and entertainment" to supplant a gospel of holiness and

purity. They have accepted carnality for spirituality, human applause for heaven's approval, worldliness for godliness, and a brief excursion in the Spirit for a life in the Spirit. Instead of being the "salt of the earth," they presume to be the "sugar of the earth." Is it any wonder, that the diluted saltiness of many evangelicals does but little to hold back the rapidly worsening moral and social corruption of our nation, and the world? The salt irritates the wound and is necessary for the healing of our spiritual wounds.

The so-called emerging church is on a crusade to rearrange and rewrite the Christian history by manufacturing a mush god in their own image; a god who winks at sin and carnality. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ needs no reconstruction by fickle men; the true Church has survived the test of time for centuries and will continue to be a beachhead for many generations to come. I am not a member of the "emerging church;" I am a member of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood has cancelled all my inbred sins and guarantees my passage to heaven.

Let me be frank with you. A Church that does not believe in the God of the Bible is a farce. Baal has become the god of the twenty first century and those who attack sacred traditions have no concept of the holiness of God. Let's remember the words of Dr. Charles Malik, a brilliant scholar and a humble Lebanese Christian: *"The Church is neither Western nor Eastern; she is neither Aryan nor Slav; she is neither Anglo-Saxon nor Latin; she is neither capitalist nor proletarian; she is neither white nor colored; she is neither European nor Asian nor African nor American; she is the Church of Jesus Christ by whose Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free"* (1 Corinthians 12:13). Let the Church therefore remain faithful to the kingdom of God and His Christ. If — God forbid! — the world and its kingdom should go up in smoke, let at least the name of Christ remain above every name and let the Cross shine above every symbol. Amen and Amen!

Beloved, America is spiritually a drift and we Christians have no one to blame except ourselves. We have not prayed for our beloved land as we should. We watched our morals being shred into pieces; instead of waging war against the enemy of our soul, we're waging war against the truth of God's holy Word and our sacred traditions in the name of social and cultural engineering. Christians need to love God passionately, preeminently and supremely. It is not enough to hide behind a cloak of religiosity but our love must go to the very heart of God. Dear praying saints, blood-washed people of God, let's give ourselves to prayer.

It is now or never, time to enlist ourselves in God's praying army. Either we pray with passion for an ego-slashing renewal or forever we hang our harps on the willows in utter helplessness and shame. The lost souls are eagerly waiting for our next move. This is the hour we have been waiting for. So on with our agony and soul-passion. God's praying people are inextinguishable and they are changing the spiritual landscape of the world.

May I ask you: Are you satisfied with your prayer life? Are you conscious of your Father's presence? Are you on speaking terms with God? Do you ever feel like "holding your heart in your hand," fearing that almost the next moment something awful is going to break out — both in you and in the world? *Prayerless Christians are powerless Christians*. But on the other hand, the praying people, of course, will remain as a powerful force in the world. Prayer is about spiritual hunger and to pray with passion and faith, we have to believe in the ultimate victory of God over sin and death. And once we are led into the glory of His presence, it's breath-taking, exhilarating, and life-affirming. Prayer is addictive. Those who pray with passion for souls just don't create a spiritually conducive environment; they are given the opportunity to write history by looking back with wisdom and discernment.

God does not force His favors on us; He longs for us to ask, and then He is right there with all the resources of Heaven at His command. We need to search for men and women with strong faith and undying hope in the resurrected Lord, those sensitive Christians who steadfastly refuse to go along with the regular run of the mill crowd. We can no longer be the timid little sheep who blindly accept the fondest notion of those who reject our Lord's precepts. In the final analysis the case for biblical Christianity must rest upon the living testimony of its followers. Let's set our sails, and the Spirit of God will propel us forward, and with His help, we shall succeed. *"To go bravely forward is to invite a miracle"* (St. Thomas Aquinas).

Prayer transcends race, nationality, age, gender and denomination. Child of God, don't panic but pray. One blessed thing about prayer, of course, is that it has no need of human manipulations — it holds its unique power and greatness within itself. Praying saints will always look ahead — never behind. Prospect is the word for them and they always go forward, backward never. For me, prayer isn't just a religious ritual. It's transcendent worship. *Lord, grant us the tenacity to endure, the resolve to intercede, grace and mercy to love and the courage to resist temptation.*

*Intercessors carve their names on hearts, not on marbles. They expect less from others and give more of themselves; they're God's "Green Beret" soldiers, a breed apart!*

## You Make the Call . . . Prayer is no soda pop

We're now living in the "Information Age" and the sheer volume of glossy magazines, 24 hour news cycle, and psychobabble on the tube, fancy web site and 10-pound Sunday papers can be overwhelming. Even after ploughing through all that information, people in general are more troubled, exhausted and depressed than enlightened. We are told that technology helps provide more time for leisure and relaxation and yet we are the most crunched up generation in history. We're still a restless society, constantly banishing boredom through entertainments. What is really happening to us? We are stressed out. We are constantly being filled by amusements from the outside. The more we rely on the outward impressions; we become emptier and emptier on the inside. The words of Jesus become more and more true: "*Whosoever will save his life shall lose it.*" In trying to save our lives with modern technology and mass media entertainments, we only lose them. We are still hurting, and always searching for something that tickles our fancy.

People no longer appreciate simple pleasures of life such as taking a walk in the park, reading a book, or writing a note of encouragement or visiting someone in their hour of need. The promotions we hear today from the religious and non religious segment are "log on here, log on there," and stop being a human. Some folks travel hundreds of miles to attend a teaching seminar or Bible conference and yet they never cross the street to attend a prayer meeting. If God is as great as we say, then, "*why is there such reluctance in talking to Him?*" We pay only lip service to the power of prayer and do not worship Him though prayer; many of our worship leaders are not men

and women of prayer; they approach the subject purely on the basis of entertainment. Beloved choose simplicity, not sophistication. The world accuses Christians for many things; but never for praying too much. By the way, what are we going to do with all that extra time we now have?

The cyberspace generation says. "God makes me happy and be my celestial errand boy." We live in a culture that all it takes is a 30 second commercial to convince us the validity of a person or product. That is the peril of theatres, movies and television. So much of our secular and religious relationship are based on the most passing acquaintance in wasted language without spiritual substance or lasting endurance, chatting about things of no consequence, simply to fill the embarrassing void with worthless chatter, cheap and obvious talk and worn out cliches and tired salutations. Macbeth's description of this world is so accurate: "*Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.*"

So where does one go for replenishment? May I humbly suggest a simple yet powerful solution — prayer or meditation. *Prayer is no soda pop.* We can't just slurp it down on the run. We've got to sit down, meditate on it, and take it in. Quietly. Humbly. Slowly. Reverently. And pretty soon our life begins to glow in the dark and our anxieties will disappear. This profound experience in prayer becomes a magnificent reality. Prayer is perfectly safe; it has no side effect. Preaching has a snare; intercessory prayer has none — it is simple and pure and heartwarming. In intercession, God comes first; others come second and the participants come last. *Let intercession resonate!*

*To pray is the right thing to do in every situation.*

## Culture Watch . . . Living Calmly in Turbulent Times by Matthew Skariah

In these turbulent times we tend to lose the inimitable presence of the almighty God who controls all things, and consequently, we become faithless and paranoid. God is in the forefront. He is never relegated to the background. An elderly saint expressed his secret of a happy life in the following words, "*I've learned how to cooperate with the inevitable.*" As the prophet Isaiah describes the truth of God's Word, "*In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength*" (Isaiah 30:15).

It is noble for one to think that the world is full of harmony and love. We must not expect to live in a world where everyone agrees with you. It is our responsibility to maintain a level of peace with God in the midst of adverse circumstances. Only God's wisdom can rightly and amicably decide anything — settle any dispute or problem. When man wants to do something he so often rushes to action. It is the way of the world. The Lord says: "*Be still and know that I am God.*" Act only as God prompts you. There is always a blessed calm with God. He is never in a hurry; never agitated and there is no shade of anxiety on His face. Calm is trust in action. It is our abiding faith in God that keeps us calm and steady in the midst of murkiness and confusion and chaos. All great work for God is accomplished first in the inner soul of the worker.

Don't be in a rush! Wait. God will do great things for you, if you will wait on Him. Dwell in the clear light of His glory, and not in the shadow of this ever-changing world. Christians need to relax, trust in God more and depend on Him for wisdom and discernment. His words are true and we don't need to second guess Him. He does not have a plan B

in case plan A fails. God will not forget us; He has engraved our names on the palm of His hand. Many people including some Christians are having difficulty in accepting the fact that God is winning and His ways are always perfect. They look at this cynical world and are being drawn into the ever-growing cascade of pessimism, unbelief, and the commonality that everything is going to the dogs. Listen, the Lord is not fighting for control or struggling for control. *HE IS IN CONTROL.*

Please, if you ever want to lose yourself in the wonder of God, just contemplate on His majestic creation and the splendor of His imperial presence? Men have forgotten how to show reverence for the Creator and respect for His Word. When the overriding perception of our world is that "*life is a cosmic accident rather than a divine incident,*" it is no wonder reverence for God is at low ebb. Every time I spent a portion of my time with God in sweet fellowship, I come away with the stunning conclusion: I serve an awesome God who loved me enough to become my Savior and Lord. Let's praise His holy name; praise is giving glory to the One Who won the victory for us. Do not worry. Let's be calm and Jehovah will light our way home. Remember, whatever is built upon the strength of man will be overthrown; but that which is built upon the foundation of God's immutable Word shall stand forever. God has a thousand attributes. And all of these should humble, and bring us down to our knees. Blessed is the man who humbly trusts the issues to God. So let's remain steadfast and calm and sure; stand true to God and to the highest and best

*"I will bless the Lord. I am yet upon my Rock, a lasting foundation." (William Penn)*