



# Prayergram

Challenging Christians to Pray

March 2012



## Technology vs. the Unmatched 'Power of Prayer'

In our techno-culture, we're relying too much on technology, and less and less on God. Learn to depend on God, and in that dependency, you'll have all the answers you need. If a man doesn't know God, all his explanations have no meaning or validity none whatsoever. What good will it do to possess all knowledge without the fear of God. Truthfully, a humble rustic that loves God is better than a proud intellectual who ponders the course of the stars, and neglects his spiritual life. God is the sum and total of all our experiences, and without Him, we are nothing, less than nothing. When I speak about the 'power of prayer,' I speak one language, transcending race, gender and denomination. If prayer seems to be an old fashioned spiritual exercise, guess, who changed them?



Matthew Skariah

What's the point of talking about prayer, if one doesn't pray? There is a website on prayer popping up every so often and adding one more website to the technique of prayer is not the answer to our paltry prayer life. Recently, someone sent me an email, asking me to get on a certain website to know more about prayer. If you're like me, my problem is not knowing more about prayer, but not praying, and that's where the real rub comes in. I appreciated the thoughtfulness of the person who sent the information on the website, but as a Christian, I need to spend more time on my knees before God in sweet fellowship, without being hassled by the clamor of our ever-changing techno-culture. The blessed privilege of intimacy with the Lord is not to be confused with the modern day religious busyness. "The fruit of righteousness is peace," peace in our hearts, blessed peace in the midst of storm. The world needs to see the calm and gentleness of our character and the firmness of our resolve.

A Chinese evangelist, who had suffered much for the faith and was visiting America for the first time, was asked what stood out most to him about the Church

in the West. Without hesitation, he replied, *What amazes me most is how much you are able to accomplish without God.* Penetrating, probing, challenging, humbling, isn't it? The fact remains that without true contrition and heartfelt sorrow for our sins and the sins of the world, our spiritual progress is tenuous at best. But rather than creating spiritual legacies, some Christians seem bent on promoting technology at the expense of seeking the face of God in prayer. True prayer is a reminder of whose we are and whom we serve; and those who practice the power of kneeling aren't

deterred by polls and religious popularity. Friend, what's wrong in our culture cannot be fixed with technology; it's a moral, social and spiritual problem and it should be addressed accordingly. Isn't it true that many of us who claim to have been touched by Christ, and yet we have "weak knees" and hearts that faint? Beloved, it's in prayer that we grow in personal holiness. Charles H. Spurgeon was precise when he said, "Who ever knew an eminently holy man did not spend much of his time in prayer?"

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Intercession has been placed on the shelf, and simple prayer meetings are no longer appealing to those who dabble in carnality. Remember, no prayer goes unanswered. The moment a thing seems wrong to you, or a person's actions to be not what you think they should be, at that moment begins your privilege and responsibility to pray for those wrongs to be righted, or that person to be touched by Christ. Let's not use clever metaphysics and churchy cliches' when it comes to soul travail! What's wrong in our country, its leaders, its laws, and its

people should be a matter of concern to all of us, and they warrant our prayers. When we humble ourselves and pray as Jesus taught us, we will soon see an explosion of God's power breaking through the breath and length of our nation. We may never go beyond one room, or receive an invitation from the White House, and yet we may become part of

all of us, and they warrant our prayers. When we humble ourselves and pray as Jesus taught us, we will soon see an explosion of God's power breaking through the breath and length of our nation. We may never go beyond one room, or receive an invitation from the White House, and yet we may become part of

the most powerful force for good in our country, and in the world. We may never see the mighty work we do, but God sees it, evil sees it. Oh, it is a blessed life, the life of the one who intercedes!

One of Scotland's most devout men was John Welch, son-in-law of the great Scottish reformer, John Knox. Welch was not as well known as his famous father-in-law, but he was a very remarkable man of prayer, and when he went upstairs to pray, it was the grandest day in the history of Scotland. Dr. R. A. Torrey, in his book, *The Power of Prayer*, states: "Many people have the idea it was John Knox who prayed, *Give me Scotland or I die*. It was not; it was John Welch. Toward the close of John Welch's life he confessed that he counted that day ill-spent if he did not spend seven or eight hours in secret prayer." Intercessors are the unsung heroes down through the ages, and nothing has changed, and it is quite all right with them.

God knows who they are and that is all it matters in the final countdown! May I ask, "Who would stand in the gap for America at this sad juncture of moral collapse and spiritual melee?"

Some of the greatest intercessors the world has ever known never saw a computer, I-Pod, I-Pad or Smart-phone, and yet they were the most powerful men and women on their knees. For example, David Brainerd, George Fox, Robert Murray McCheyne, John Hyde, John Welch, John Wesley, E.M. Bounds, George Muller, Leonard Ravenhill, Irish Ann, Amy Carmichael. Madame Guyon. to name just a few. We are still reading their treatise on prayer and discipline. Beloved, searching and perusing through the internet, looking for fancy websites and "snack-bar sermons" on prayer can never top one vital experience in prayer. Am I old-fashioned, when it comes to prayer?—you better believe it! Most everything we hear today in Christianity has a knee-jerk quality; everything comes out in uniform and predictable form, like chickens laying eggs. Originality has become a thing of the past; prayer is an original form of worship.

Let's not be myopic as to what the real power of prayer is all about! "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (Acts 12:5). The Church at Jerusalem had neither power nor human influence to save him; there was no earthly help, but they gave themselves to fervent and importunate prayer. Consequently, God sent His angel, who woke Peter up from sleep and led him through the "iron gate" to safety. Beloved, is there an iron gate in

your life that is keeping you from spiritual freedom? Let's look at our own situation as to where we are in our prayer life! The Church is floundering and the nation is in moral and social peril, and yet we fold our hands in utter dismay and act like we're powerless to go up against the forces of evil. Desperate situations call for intense prayer, not wasting precious time surfing through the internet looking for religious jokes, funny remarks and silly quips.

Think of Elijah on Mount Carmel, bowed down on the ground, with his face between his knees—that was one 'urgent and intense' prayer—the man was in agony and anguish. Elijah's heart was on fire and words were absent, and his whole being was interlocked with God. Have you ever prayed in this fashion, with your face between your knees? Believe me; such prayers are needed when at a time the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is gasping for spiritual breath! It is indeed mind-boggling how much television people can watch, how many hours of 'internet and face book' absorption, without quite grasping the essential silliness and vagueness of it all!

Charles H. Spurgeon puts it succinctly, "Groanings which cannot be uttered are often prayers which cannot be refused." Child of God don't be like the world, always living in a trauma filled vacuum, but pray with importunity and fervency! Let's get off the 'moral and intellectual' panic treadmill!

Are you fearful, discouraged, and disappointed and wandering here and there, going from church to church, preacher to preacher, flipping television channels, clicking and looking for ready-made messages on the internet, and dragging chains of doubt and unbelief, and loaded with cares of life, then, "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" for answers (Isaiah 55:6). Dear friend, our world is never outside of God's care, and never removed from the sphere of His influence. Beloved, God cares; He wants us to live in victory. He is our Father and His kingdom remains unshaken. The deeper we probe into the heart of God the greater our capacity for intimacy.

A disciplined 'prayer life' is the key to staying in spiritual shape. To keep your 'spiritual portfolio' healthy, be sure to exercise or activate your prayer life regularly and realign when necessary. Prayer is an essential! It provides spiritual power in the intense battle waged for the hearts of people who need the touch of God in their lives. If we've no intimate fellowship with our

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heavenly Father, what purpose will it serve us to have friends, fortune and fame? In today's religious climate, Bible studies are very popular and they should be, but when it comes to actually having an intimate conversation with Jehovah God, there seems an aversion among many Christians, just like the Israelites who came to Moses and said, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:19). We want God's servants speak to us, but not God. Astounding, isn't it?

Beloved, prayer is not experiments on God; it is not rendering advice to Him as how to conduct the affairs of His universe. Let's not draw any hasty conclusions to our prayers! What's lacking in our prayer is our vision of God. Dear friend, one sight of God will show us how unholy we are and how holy God really is! It was in prayer; Thomas Aquinas, the greatest systematic theologian ever lived, was brought to bear the "majesty and holiness" of God which made all his stupendous writings like straw. Have you ever seen God in this realm? Please don't let your prayer life be a pathetic humbug! When the storm clouds gather

over us, we will prayerfully seek the face of God as He calmly takes us to the harbor of safety. Our first defense is to pray, not so much to criticize or render solutions to the problems at hand.

Prayer is about spiritual hunger and passion for God. As praying people, we don't just create a spiritually conducive environment; we are given the opportunity to make history. Beloved, prayer is not an escape mechanism; it is touching the heart of God through intimacy. Do not get caught up in the mechanical aspect of prayer, but do pray, pray with passion, faith, authority, and with righteous intensity and holy immensity! Pray in the midst of darkness, soon the darkness will disappear, and you shall be led into the clear light of the day. Remember, prayer

takes the sting out of the wind of criticism and lethargy. Prayer is quintessential to our spiritual survival! May God give each one of us "callous knees," is my prayer! None ever sought God in vain. Someone has wisely written, "No man stumbles, when he's on his knees."

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*"Satan trembles  
when he sees the  
weakest saint upon  
his knees."*

*—William Cowper,  
17th century  
English poet and  
hymn writer*

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## **PLEASE PRAY FOR THE IMPRISONED IRANIAN PASTOR YOUSEF NADARKHANI AND HIS FAMILY**

He has been told to recant his faith in Jesus Christ or face death. Pastor Yousef is standing 'firm and tall' in his devotion to Christ, and serves as a powerful example to us all as we follow the way of the Cross.

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*"A church that does not remember its persecuted brethren is no church at all."*

Pastor Richard Wurmbbrand—Author of *Tortured for Christ*

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## **SOMETHING TO PONDER** by Matthew Skariah

*Do not presume on God or His will for your life,  
Do not linger on God's gracious invitation,  
Do not treat God like a side-kick,  
Do not take His moral laws lightly,  
Do not attempt to infuse a dose of human expertise to strengthen the hand of God.  
Do not patronize God, just back off and step aside, and let the Master speak,  
and when He speaks, please listen intently and carefully.  
Do not impose your will over God's will.  
Do not raise the flag of revolt.  
Do not quarrel with God.  
And finally, do not jump off the roof, if you do, you know what will happen.*

Our faith ought to rest in the bosom of God. "I AM that I AM" is the only true biblical ground for our faith. How can we have faith without obedience? How can we receive a word from the Lord without reverence and respect for His presence? In this chaotic world of ours, we should be men and women of courage, rectitude, faith and hope. The greatness of a person is his reverential attitude towards God and how he conducts himself before His creator. The unbeliever is full of self and selfishness and he's willing to side-step everything that is good and holy and pure. How can we achieve greatness when we lack humility?

When we speak about the Church, we do not speak in terms of mega churches, or country churches. When we speak about Christians, we do not speak in terms of educated Christians, wealthy Christians, poor Christians, Black Christians, Caucasian Christians, Brown Christians, but Christians plain and simple. We are Christians—brothers and sisters in Christ, bound for heaven and united by a glorious faith. The Cross is no one's private property. It belongs to us all. Jesus is a Savior without borders.

As followers of Christ, we need to be very careful about the usage of the word—"mega;" mega-churches and mega-preachers. Let's not detract the glory from Jehovah God who said, "...I will not give my glory to another" (Isaiah 48:11). To God, there are no small churches or big Churches. The God of the stupendous is also the God of the infinitesimal. In sports, we have superstars; in politics, we have super politicians; in Hollywood, we have movie stars, but in Christianity we have followers of Christ. In fact, we don't even bother to use the word SUPER when it comes to defining Christianity! Can you imagine, Christians running around calling themselves super Christians, and that would be a contradiction in terms. "Christianity is Christ and Christ is Christianity." There are no superannuates in God's ranks. God will not cast

## Bull's-Eye

Matthew Skariah on the

## Glory of the Christian Faith

anyone aside on the basis of race, color, age or status. He will use all of us in His own way as long as we are willing to be led by His Spirit. The Christian humbly trusts the

issues to God and issues of life are always in His hand. But on the other hand, the carnal man is impressed with his own impressions. The most delightful people in the world are not those who clamor for attention, but those who 'grasp and understand' the sovereign God who does all things so well. When we draw nearer to the heart of God, others become a mere shadow to us.

*The gentle and meek spirit of a humble Christian touches us all—it's so refreshing, so contagious, so inviting and so inspiring. Christians do not fear the future because God is already there.*

Beloved, there is no faith like the Christian faith; no Savior comparable to our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; and no book like the Holy Bible. Victor Hugo, the French writer wrote, "England has two books—the Bible and Shakespearean. The Bible made England and England made Shakespeare." Yes, it was true once upon a time, but not anymore because England has become a secular nation. An English preacher once said, "When the

Bible was removed from Great Britain; all the greatness went along with it." Need I say anymore! Stunning and prophetic, isn't it? May God help us that our beloved nation (America) will be spared from such horror!

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### Area-wide Prayer Summit with Matthew Skariah

**March 9-11**

Sponsored by Tucumcari Baptist Churches  
Tucumcari, New Mexico

First Baptist Church  
Tucumcari, New Mexico  
Pastor John Hinze

Moderator Dan Pierce  
Area Missionary

### 2012 Nigeria 'Prayer Summit' for Pastors/Christian Workers with Matthew Skariah

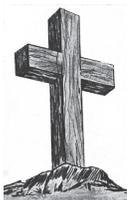
**April 1-5**

Ambassadors for Christ Church  
Port Harcourt, Rivers State  
Nigeria, West Africa

Moderator Pastor Jonathan Erondu

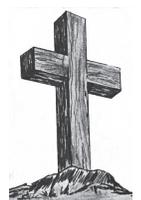
### Area-wide Revival April 6-9

Port Harcourt, Rivers State  
Nigeria, West Africa



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PRAYER IS THE MIGHTIEST FORCE — 2 Chronicles 7:14



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