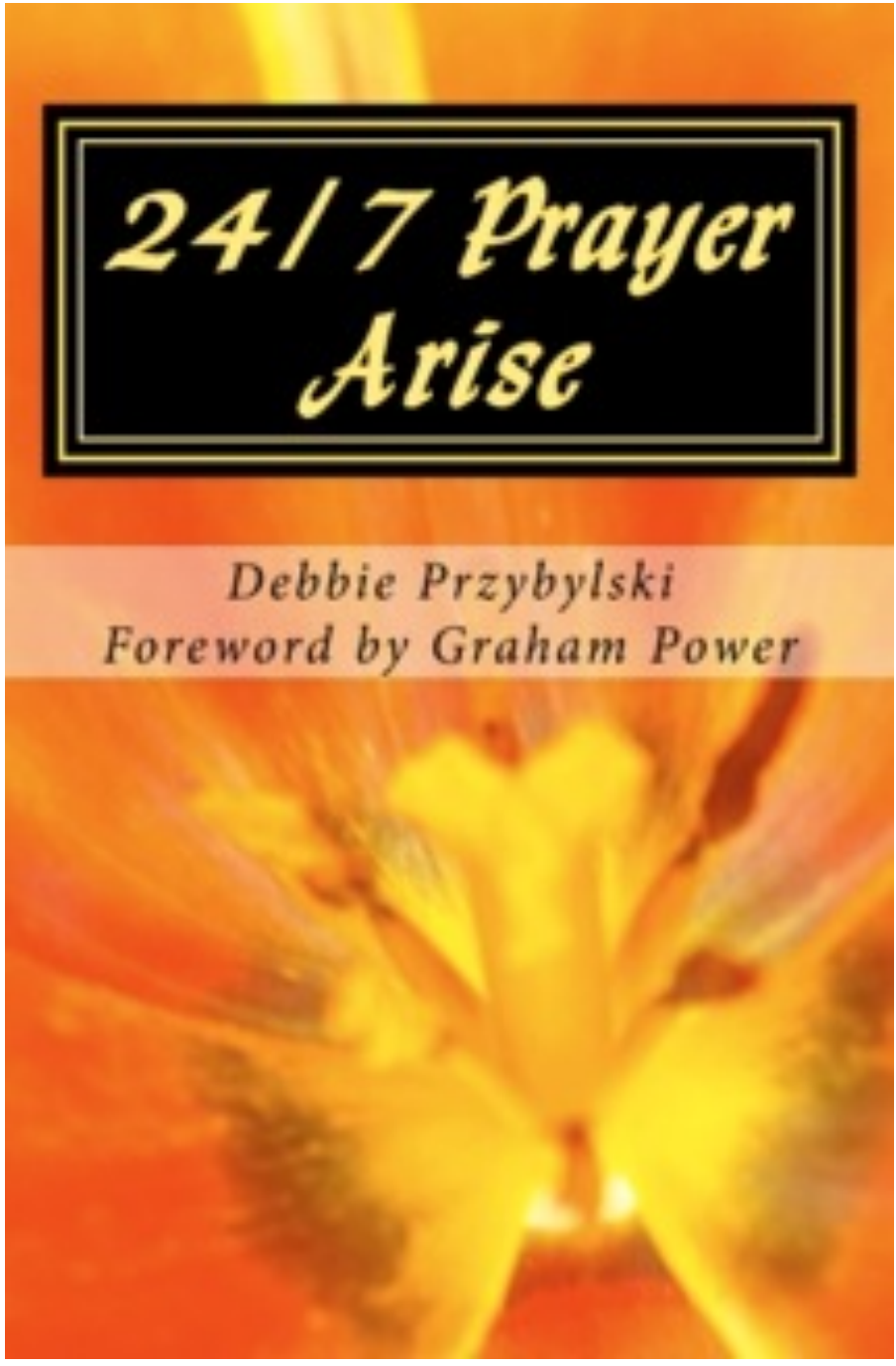
24/7 Prayer
Arise
Debbie Przybylski
Foreword by Graham Power

Endorsement by Mike Bickle

"In this hour God is orchestrating a worldwide prayer movement that far exceeds anything we have ever seen in the past. The global prayer movement is touching every nation of the world. *24/7 Prayer Arise: Building the House of Prayer in Your City* is a strategic book written for such a time as this to help encourage and instruct the Church globally as she arises as the House of Prayer for all nations. After starting and directing the International House of Prayer Missions Base in Kansas City, I recommend Debbie's book as a practical learning tool for 24/7 prayer. It has helpful insight into how you can build the House of Prayer in your city.

I believe that *24/7 Prayer Arise* will inspire you to spread the vision for day and night prayer into the place where God has planted you. Whether you are a beginner or a well-seasoned intercessory leader, this book will be helpful in getting you started right where you are. Debbie's experience with 24/7 prayer will give you understanding into what you will face step-by-step as you seek to see prayer permeate your city.

This 290-page manual on 24/7 prayer is not just a superficial book, but addresses aspects you will encounter as you attempt to join with others in your region to see 24/7 prayer cover your city. Learn from the testimonies and experiences of others. *24/7 Prayer Arise* is filled with stories to keep you engaged and motivated in prayer. It addresses the blessings as well as the difficulties that are commonly faced in establishing a prayer ministry. It will be helpful for churches wanting to grow in intercession.

Debbie offers practical applications at the end of each chapter for individuals as well as for group settings. May a House of Prayer arise in your region that far exceeds your greatest hope. We are living in the most dynamic season in history. It is time to arise as the Church to Jesus' great call to become the House of Prayer for all nations (Isaiah 56:7)."

MIKE BICKLE
Director
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Kansas City, MO

24/7 Prayer Arise

Building the House of Prayer in Your City

The Intercessors Arise Books

Debbie Przybylski

Foreword by Graham Power
Founder of the Global Day of Prayer

24/7 Prayer Arise
Building the House of Prayer in Your City

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Dedication

This book is dedicated
to intercessors and worshippers
throughout the world
who are faithfully building
the House of Prayer
in their city.

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Foreword

Prayer is truly the most effective tool that a Christian has at his or her disposal—not only does it connect one to God (the source of all true life), but it also gives you strength, encouragement, insight, and blessing to face your daily journey and change the world around you.

When I accepted Christ as my savior in 1998 I would never have imagined that God would use me to mobilize millions of people to prayer and repentance! After all, I am a guy who had spent his life growing a company that builds roads, houses, and commercial developments. It would have been much easier for me if the Lord had simply asked me to build clinics or orphanages. But, God knows what is best. And so the Lord gave me an instruction to call together all of the Christians in our city, Cape Town, South Africa, for a day of repentance and prayer in 2001. To my amazement 45 thousand people came to that first day of prayer at the Newlands Rugby stadium! Something special had begun, and those stadium prayer events spread throughout South Africa, Africa, and eventually the world. In 2008 we had over 350 million people from 215 of the world's 220 nations participating in Global Day of Prayer events on Pentecost Sunday all across the globe! It is humbling and awe inspiring to see what God can do through obedience and prayer.

From the very start I knew that the Global Day of Prayer was intended not as a 'single day' event. No matter how many people we brought together for a single day of prayer in a city, it would never be enough. What God desires is a lifestyle of prayer. It is a joy to witness how the humble cooperation between churches during the ten days leading up to the Global Day of Prayer each year is bringing about such a lifestyle of community based prayer. In South Africa alone we have more than six thousand 24-hour a day, 7-day a week, prayer watches—these include churches, marketplace ministries, educational institutions, and even prisons!

I am certain that God is pleased by this commitment to pray for our world, interceding for the needs and concerns that break God's heart

as much as they break ours. I can also say with certainty that prayer changes things! We have thousands of testimonies of how faithful and righteous prayers have transformed both individuals and communities.

It is for this reason that I was overjoyed to learn of this book on 24/7 prayer. Debbie has done a remarkable job of explaining the finer details, and practical considerations, that one needs to take into account in raising up a prayer covering for your city. Debbie's insights are inspiring and encouraging, and I am certain the fruit of her hard work will be many, many more people who are mobilized to pray for their cities. And of course the outcome of that will be transformed cities, nations, and continents.

My prayer for you is that you will be blessed and encouraged as you read this book, and that you will have the courage and the commitment to act upon what God may want to share with you about prayer for your city! If we stand together we can see the whole earth transformed by the Glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14).

GRAHAM POWER
Founder and Chairman of Global Day of Prayer
Chairman of Transformation Africa
Chairman of Unashamedly Ethical
Cape Town, South Africa

Acknowledgments

With special thanks:

To the Holy Spirit, who partnered with me in writing this book on 24/7 prayer. I learned so much about Your heart for Houses of Prayer, and I am so blessed in being part of what You are doing throughout the world in prayer and intercession.

To my husband, Norman, who desires to help establish 24/7 prayer in the nations and unreached people groups of the world. I appreciate your heart for the nations. Thank you for encouraging me to pursue this ministry of Intercessors Arise International and for releasing me to focus on prayer.

To my parents, Harold and Mary Jane Busse, for always being present when I was growing up, and for encouraging me through all the years of my life. It has been a joy to be your daughter, and I love you both very much.

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To the intercessors, who have prayed for us throughout the years. Your prayers have meant so much to us on this journey. We thank you for your faithful intercession.

Introduction

> The Holy Spirit is orchestrating a global prayer strategy in these very days. It will far eclipse any other prayer movement in Church history. The Holy Spirit is equipping the Church to partner with Jesus' intercessory prayer ministry at the right hand of the Father. The end result is the great harvest of souls being added to the Kingdom of God. The number of people coming to Jesus at the present hour across the nations is unprecedented in history. I believe this will continue to increase numerically and in both power and intensity.[1]

The call of God is beaconing each one of us to enter into a new level of intimate prayer far deeper and far greater than ever before in all of human history. The winds are changing everywhere, casting us into a time that calls for a far greater dependence, a far deeper commitment to prayer than we ever imagined possible. Yes—we've entered into a new place—and we must be ready to not only survive what is coming upon the world, but learn to live through it joyfully and successfully.

We are in a new season, and we can't go back to how it used to be or even how we thought it was. We must launch forward in this new day with courage, faith, and steadfast joy. But you may be thinking:

- "How can I possibly live successfully and joyfully when so many hard things seem to be coming upon the world—earthquakes, hunger, and unpredictable weather patterns?"

- "Not only are the world difficulties looming in front of me, but I am personally struggling with the food prices, feeding my family, and keeping my job."

- "How can I live in peace and help others in my city in the midst of it all?"

In this book I want to share with you a secret to living peacefully, joyfully, and fruitfully in the end times. My desire is to show you how you can influence and bring life and peace into your city, neighborhood, and church through prayer. I want to show you a way to live that will

help bring the very presence and power of God into your city. We are living in a day where God is spreading the vision for 24/7 prayer all throughout the world. Already many Houses of Prayer have been started in several countries, cities, and churches—and the number is increasing daily. We are in a season where prayer must become our primary focus.

With all the dangers, famines, weather changes, and terrors globally, this is the time for 24/7 prayer to arise in every nation, city, and church.

I have personally been involved in prayer and intercession for several years, and now something big is happening on the horizon. Prayer is starting to become popular. There was a time when I would never have dreamed that this could be possible. But this is a new day. Many are beginning to see that it must be a primary focus in the Church globally. We are entering days where we cannot live without it.

I am praying that a House of Prayer is started in every city in every nation and that many smaller Houses of Prayer are started in many churches. And guess what? I believe it will happen. Join with me in this prayer. God's heart is for day and night prayer. He is planting Houses of Prayer throughout the world in strategic locations within the city and in many churches. Some will be full 24/7 Houses of Prayer, but perhaps the majority will be ones that cannot cover 24 hours a day because the Christian population in their nation or city is small. Regardless of how big or small a House of Prayer will be, each one is vitally important in God's eyes. And they will enlarge as the day of Christ's return draws near.

24/7 Prayer Arise: Building the House of Prayer in Your City is a mentoring manual for Houses of Prayer in the end times. If you are wondering how to reach your city through the power of God and want your church to become a praying church, then this book is for you. If your desire is that the darkness and evil that is permeating your city and nation retreats, or if you desire to grow in personal prayer and take others with you, *24/7 Prayer Arise* will help you. It is designed to challenge and ignite a flame within your own heart for Houses of Prayer.

Don't let the idea of Houses of Prayer scare you. This book is designed to help you right where you are living. It will give you bite size steps to enhance your own prayer life, as well as ways to introduce prayer into

your church and city. It will help your church increase in prayer step-by-step and grow into a House of Prayer. It will help you to know how to develop your prayer meetings and connect with the wider prayer movement within your city and in the world. It is designed to open your eyes and give you a desire for more prayer in your city.

The Holy Spirit is orchestrating a worldwide prayer movement. God is raising up prayer all over the earth. I have been personally involved in prayer for over forty years, but I have never seen anything like I see today. The winds and rains are beginning to blow all over the earth, and the days we are facing are not like anything we have ever seen or could even imagine in the past. It's time to give prayer our central focus individually, as a church**,** and as a city. It's time to start united prayer in our cities, even as the end times unfold right before our eyes. We are entering days of enormous harvest.

Can you sense it? Can you grasp the fact that God is up to something big?

Journey with me in the pages of this book, and let it impact you deeply so that you begin to take action in your church and your city. God is right now raising up Houses of Prayer throughout the entire world, and you want to be involved in His present-day plan for the nations.

Each chapter of *24/7 Prayer Arise* has an application at the end to help you to begin to apply this both individually and with others in your church and city. It is designed for beginners in prayer as well as well-seasoned intercessors and worshippers. One of the goals of this book is to help bring the body of Christ together in united prayer. There are three separate teachings in each chapter that are practical, motivational, and helpful for personal and corporate growth in prayer.

As you read this book, go through it slowly. Absorb it strategically and methodically. Observe**,** reflect**,** and access. Read a teaching, and then pray and think about it. Study it together with others. Review it. Carefully do the applications as the end of each chapter before moving onto the next one. You may want to go through some of the chapters again and again.

The way we look at Houses of Prayer in these days is critical and life changing. It has everything to do with how successfully we maneuver through the end times. It's time to change the world through our pray-

ers, both individually and corporately as the Church. Houses of Prayer will help us to become all that God desires as we anticipate His soon return.

I pray that a House of Prayer will start in your city and your church. May the Lord open our eyes and reveal to us the necessity of 24/7 prayer in every city worldwide. May the presence of God permeate our cities and churches so that all may know and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, our Savior and King. May we as God's people rise to our full stature as the victorious Church and the beloved Bride of Christ, knowing the hope to which He has called us, the riches of his glorious inheritance, and His incomparably great power to us who believe.

> *I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way* (Ephesians 1:16-23).

CHAPTER ONE

Houses of Prayer and the Foundations

By the grace God has give me, I laid a foundation
as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it.
But each one should build with care.
For no one can lay any foundation
other than the one already laid,
which is Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:10-11

CARS, TRUCKS, AND PEOPLE were hurling into the Mississippi river! While visiting my family in Minnesota, this local news quickly caught my attention. The bridge in Minnesota had collapsed. It seemed unbelievable. My sister and brother used that bridge all the time. The Interstate Highway 35 W Bridge that looked and seemed so sturdy had collapsed at the height of rush hour. Over 140 thousand vehicles use that bridge daily. This was one of the main north/south inlets to downtown Minneapolis.

Workers were repairing the forty-year-old bridge but now it lay in a crumbled green wreckage on the east bank of the river, and a huge section of the concrete roadway lay on the west bank. Fires burned with black smoke billowing out from the wreckage.

Miraculously not many lives were lost. A school bus of children narrowly escaped. Many were injured but only a few died. The roadwork on the bridge caused the usual four lanes to be a two-lane in one direction, so only half the bridge was in use. It could have been worse. In-

vestigations were looking into the cause of this collapse. There were cracks in the structure of the bridge. Small cracks probably led to its final collapse. It was detected but never thought serious. But it finally gave way when small cracks in the structure eventually led to disaster.

In the same way, we will collapse over time if we do not have a strong foundation of prayer. God wants to build spiritual strength in our lives both personally, and also in the foundations of the prayer movement. He is carefully working in all of us, refining us so that when the pressures of life in the end times come heavily upon us, we do not crack and collapse under the weight.

- We must build our personal lives on prayer.
- We must be strong and let God refine us in the prayer room.
- We must carefully build our House of Prayer without cracks.

As this book begins, realize that God is building an immense foundation of prayer all throughout the earth. He is beginning to connect prayer networks and Houses of Prayer throughout cities that will begin to connect from city to city and nation to nation. Because His Church will become a House of Prayer for all nations, the foundation is extremely important in order to withstand the weight of what is about to happen.

Let us prepare and build the foundations of this new Kingdom.

You may wonder, "What is needed in building a foundation of prayer that will not collapse under pressure in the end times?" In the next few pages learn about the roots of the 24/7 prayer movement. Find out how to be steadfast and persistent in building prayer in your city, and discover the secret of foundational strength.

This chapter will help you to partner with others in your geographical area who are serious about building a House of Prayer in your church or city. It will help you to strategically discuss how to lay a strong foundation and pray together on a consistent basis for this to happen. The assignments at the end of each chapter should help bring individuals as well as groups into the familiarity of praying in a prayer room.

The Roots of the 24/7 Prayer Movement

> The very zealous Moravians had found a worthy leader in Zinzendorf. He was a man of serious devotion, fervent prayer, and was known for his commitment to radical holiness. In modern terminology, we would say that he had a tremendous hunger for God.[1]

The concept of 24/7 prayer may be new to many of you. Others of you may have been aware of the prayer movement for quite some time. Wherever you are in your awareness, none of us has come to the full understanding of what God is beginning to create all throughout the nations.

It's exciting! It's radical! It's exhilarating and at the same time, it calls for a deeper level of commitment than any of us have ever known before.

God's plan for intercession is central. Before looking at how a hundred-year prayer meeting started, let's take a few moments and look at what the Bible says about day and night prayer. Take time to study these Scriptures. God has so much to teach us about prayer as we look at Biblical history.

The Biblical Examples of Prayer

Did you know that the first prayer meeting started in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:8)? The priests in Exodus and Leviticus had to keep the lamps in the temple burning day and night (Leviticus 6:13). They worked in shifts with non-stop prayer, worship, and singing because the fire on the altar was never allowed to go out.

Did you know that Israel began as a nation at a prayer meeting when called to rule as priests after leaving Egypt (Exodus 19:6; Revelation 5:10)? The first project given to Israel was to build a worship sanctuary (House of Prayer) (Exodus 25:2). When King David became king over Jerusalem, he established day and night worship (1 Chronicles 15-16).

In the New Testament, we see that Jesus Himself began His public ministry in the wilderness where He fasted and prayed for forty days

(Matthew 4), and He ended His life in a prayer meeting in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26). During His time the Essenes, one of the four branches of Judaism, believed in praying for 24 hours. The early Church began in a prayer meeting (Acts 1-2) and will end in a global prayer movement (Isaiah 62:6-7; Luke 18:7-8; and Revelation 5:8; 8:4).

The very end of the age will be a huge battle over two Houses of Prayer—the Holy Spirit's prayer movement and the antichrist's end-time worship (Revelation 13:8). In Revelation 4-5 we will worship around God's Throne in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 4:8). And there's so much more, but we don't have the time to write about it here. But the fact is clear—God's plan in the Bible was to make intercession central.

And something on a huge scale is presently developing.

The prayer movement is quickly spreading around the world, but it is not without persistent prayer and hard work. As you read about the establishing of Houses of Prayer in cities and see the largeness of the task, you may be tempted to ask yourself several questions:

- Is 24/7 prayer possible for my city?
- Has this ever been done before?
- Can we have faith for such a big venture as day and night prayer where we live?
- What is the value of such intensity in prayer hour after hour and day after day?

These questions are legitimate because we need to really believe in prayer in order to pay the price. It will cost each one of us time and effort. We can't begin and then quit. We are in this for the long haul. These questions have an answer that should motivate each one of us.

One Hundred Year Prayer Movement

There has already been a hundred year, non-stop prayer meeting with absolutely fantastic results. The way has been paved before us in the spiritual realm. As we arise in 24/7 prayer, or even consider the idea, it is important that we look at our historical roots. Understanding the

historical beginnings of day and night prayer should challenge and give us courage for the future.

It has been done in a place called Herrnhut (meaning "on watch for the Lord") in Germany. It can, therefore, be done in each one of our cities. In fact, it is going to be worth more than we can comprehend because it is of the highest value to God. This 24/7 prayer meeting started over 280 years ago and launched a worldwide missionary movement. Let's find out more about this one hundred year prayer meeting.

The Moravian hundred-year prayer meeting started in 1727 by Count Zinzendorf. He was a deeply spiritual man and traced his intense devotional life to one event on a single day when he visited an art gallery and saw a portrait of Christ wearing a crown of thorns on his head. At the bottom of the picture was written:

> All this I did for you, what are you doing for Me?[2]

Count Zinzendorf was only nineteen years old, but as he read this, he was so touched by the Holy Spirit that it completely changed his life forever. He could never live the carefree lifestyle of a European nobleman. He dedicated his entire life to the service of Jesus Christ. Let's see how this one man's dedication led to one hundred years of non-stop prayer.

> For more than one hundred years, beginning on August 26, 1727, there was a Moravian brother or sister somewhere engaged in prayer, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Among the brethren this meeting was known as the "Hourly Intercession." There was literal prayer without ceasing for one hundred years. The prayer focus soon moved from those at Herrnhut to lost souls in Europe and around the world. The Lord gave the entire community a burning desire to see sinners come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and this fueled young Zinzendorf's fire for evangelism. [3]

Count Zinzendorf gave inspirational leadership to this prayer movement through the love that he had for the Church and for prayer. His acceptance of strangers, his selflessness, and his great love for the Lord inspired many others. He had a powerful interest in prayer. He would set aside whole days and nights to fast and pray when he was a university student. This non-stop prayer meeting began because of his stead-

fast faithfulness in prayer in his small corner of the world called Herrnhut.

Doesn't that sound familiar to some of us who feel like are we trying to start prayer in the small corner of our world?

The group of men and women Count Zinzendorf led in this hundred-year prayer meeting were called the Moravians. The Moravians followed his example in living a holy and loving life. "In every detail of their lives—in business, pleasure, in Christian service, in civil duties—they took the Sermon on the Mount as a lamp to their feet." Their powerful motto was "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; and in all things, love." [4]

Their testimony has spread all around the world but it began during one Communion service. This is what happened:

> The Holy Spirit fell on the group as on the day of Pentecost. Hearts were radically changed, and prayers were answered beyond expectations. Many more villagers began to set aside time for earnest prayer. Soon, prayer was going on 24 hours a day. Even the children organized prayer circles. This wave of prayer did not cease for a hundred years. So transformed was the village that John Wesley, visiting in 1738, called it the happiest place on earth![5]

The focus of the Moravians at the Herrnhut prayer meeting soon became world missions. Shortly after this hundred-year prayer meeting started, Count Zinzendorf felt strongly that they were to spread the Gospel of Jesus to the unreached people around the world. The focus of fervent prayer became world missions. This became known as the Moravian mission movement. They all felt the call of the Great Commission. Within twenty years, the Moravians sent out more missionaries than all Protestants in the previous two hundred years.

> Moravians quickly spread out all over the known world, propelled by that incredible prayer meeting, preaching the gospel of the community… When a clergyman named John Wesley encountered the joyful witness of Moravian missionaries on a transatlantic ship in a storm, he headed off to Herrnhut straightaway for discipleship from Zinzendorf.[6]

Martin Luther had tried to turn his training institutions toward world missions, but it wasn't until he got involved in Zinzendorf's 24/7 prayer meetings that the greatest missionary movement came forth from his generation. Three thousand missionaries went to the ends of the earth during the next two hundred years.

The continuous prayer meeting that God is presently initiating around the world will have the same focus. This is the season of harvest in every nation of the world. As we pray we will receive the heart of God for the nations. We will receive the burden of the Great Commission and the anointing to reach our neighbors. We will no longer be able to contain or restrain the empowering and convicting force of the Holy Spirit. This is where we are now headed.

With my experience in the 24/7 prayer movement, I notice that we are beginning to move into more prayer for the nations and for the lost. In a recent early Sunday prayer meeting at our church almost every prayer was concentrating on the lost. As we were praying Scripture, there was a harmonious direction in prayer towards the harvest and towards lost souls. God is directing our intercession. His heart is towards the lost and the nations. This prayer meeting was very powerful, and I believe it is because God is saying something.

He seems to be showing us that it is time for all of us to open our eyes and look onto the fields for they are ripe for harvest (John 4:35). He is beginning to focus us onto the lost just as he did with the Moravian prayer movement.

Ways to Apply the Moravian Example

Let the Moravian example challenge you to rise up higher in prayer than you have ever been before. The following quotes taken from the Moravian prayer movement are ways you can apply this in your prayer meetings.

- *He dedicated the rest of his life to the service of Jesus Christ.* Pray that those in your prayer meeting will grow in an intense personal devotional life. Expect God to deepen everyone's dedication to the point of sacrificial living.

- *The Lord gave the entire community a burning desire to see sinners come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.* Open your heart to

those who do not know Christ. Be a witness and shine God's light outside of the prayer meeting.

- *The Lord gave the entire community a renewed call of the Great Commission, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel.* Incorporate times to pray for the lost and for the nations. Be willing to reach out to the lost where you live.

- *This resulted in the greatest concentration of Christian workers being sent out into foreign missions since the first century.* Expect that God will call some from your prayer meeting to go to the nations. Be willing to go or to send as God directs.

- *This fueled young Zinzendorf's fire for evangelism.* Expect God to burden those in the prayer meeting for evangelism and for your city. Cry out to God for your city. The Moravians had a burden for the lost.

- *Prayers were answered beyond expectation.* Expect God to answer your prayers. Look forward with anticipation for the answer to your united prayer. Expect souls to come to Christ.

- *He was a man of serious devotion, fervent prayer, and was known for his commitment to radical holiness.* Expect God to move those in your prayer meeting into radical holiness. There is no room for sin in one who is hungry for holiness. Confess all known sin on a daily basis.

- *In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; and in all things, love.* Let unity and harmony be a high priority in all of your prayer meetings. Do all things in love.

- *In every detail of their lives—in business, pleasure, in Christian service, in civil duties—they took the Sermon on the Mount as a lamp to their feet.* Pray through and live out the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle as a group and individually. Study and read it regularly. Let your life shine for Christ in the marketplace.

- *I have one passion; it is he and he alone.* Narrow your life down to a passionate pursuit of Christ.

Is your passion for Christ?

God's first priority is that we love Him with all of our heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37-38). It's the First Commandment. This theme will be carried throughout this book. It's a wonderful foundation for all of life. In giving God extravagant devotion, we make a great impact on the world around us. There is sustaining power if we make Him our foundation. It takes time and effort to prioritize our lives towards God and prayer. It goes against the world system.

But it's dynamic. It's refreshing. It's absolutely life transforming—and it's the highest and greatest lifestyle.

Let's admit it. Life is becoming very pressurized because of constant change and stress. God wants to teach us to live without fatigue and sweat. There is purity in being devoted to Christ and the devil knows it. He aims to get us off track and confused (2 Corinthians 11:3). But God wants to show us the highest way to live.

Our primary calling is internal. When we are energized by intimacy we will be able to sustain spiritual intensity throughout our life. God is searching throughout the earth to find those whose hearts are loyal to Him (2 Chronicles 16:9). He is searching for those who will pray and intercede.

Are you willing to pay the price to seek Him, not only for yourself, but also for your own city? It's time to lay the foundations for Houses of Prayer in all the cities throughout the earth. Let's change the history of His church worldwide. Let's adopt Zinzendorf's motto personally and corporately.

> Zinzendorf's motto, "I have one passion; it is He and He alone," would fan into a movement that God would use to change the history of His church.[7]

Foundational Strength

> You may feel your community is relatively safe, that the oppression upon the land does not concern you. Your optimism is a delusion. Unless there is a buffer of prayer and aggressive Christianity in your town, it will only be a matter of time before it is in-

> vaded by the advancing flood of evil. Jesus is seeking to bring His church to the place where it becomes, literally, a house of prayer.[8]

When things do not go our way and when storm clouds come, where do we get our strength?

When I went through dark storm clouds in the fall of 2005, I couldn't suddenly get something I wasn't cultivating day by day. I had to get my strength in what was already there on the inside. It was frightening and shocking to say the least when I came face-to-face with the news from my doctor, "Debbie, you have breast cancer." Could this be "me"? I know it happens to other people, but certainly not me. Thoughts flooded my mind—I still have so much life to live, so many plans and dreams. I don't have time for cancer. I'm too young. Cancer just happens to other people.

But after the initial shock waves subsided, I realized that it was me who did have breast cancer and that God was the only one who could carry me through it. I learned in those months that the relationship I had built with God throughout the years would sustain me. I realized how important foundational strength really is.

The well-known hymn, *On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand,* proves to be so true when facing a life-threatening disease or tragedy in life. In those months of uncertainty, I realized that my strength was cultivated through years of walking with Jesus. That's what sustained me. It's choosing to live for God and for Him alone in the easy times. Our foundation must be strong. We can't suddenly manufacture strength during a moment of need. It has to be there ahead of time.

Our hope is in Jesus. We need a strong relationship with Him. The Bible says in Hebrews 6:19: ***We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.*** I lived on a ship sailing around the world for many years, preaching the good news of Jesus and encouraging the churches through Biblical seminars and training. We had two anchors on that ship. There were times when we were not able to go into port because of bad weather. You can only imagine what that was like. During those times the captain would let down the anchor outside the port city.

I remember being outside Auckland, New Zealand during bad weather. The swells on the ocean were huge, possibly fifty feet high. Although

the ship would rise high and dramatically fall, it stayed steadfast in that area without moving an inch. Thanks to the anchors, we weren't pulled out to sea or thrown into port. The anchors were essential. They kept us firm and secure until we could enter the city. There is a great need for 24/7 prayer in our cities because continuous prayer helps the Christians to develop a deep relationship with God. Then they won't crash in hard times. A city can stand firm and secure in the storms of life when day and night prayer permeates the atmosphere.

The Church of Jesus Christ is going to rise up as a praying Church (Isaiah 56:7). Already many churches are putting a greater emphasis on prayer; there are Houses of Prayer arising in many cities in the world. Although the strength of our endurance in prayer will be tested severely as the times grow harder, the Church will rise up as a victorious, faith-filled Church (Hebrews 10:38-39; 11:1-40).

Build Foundational Strength

> The Lord will test the endurance of this new praying church, but gradually the power of God will be released in the cities of prayer. The extraordinary presence of the living Christ will make miracles seem ordinary. Faith will once again rest on the demonstration of the Spirit and not upon the wisdom of man; multitudes will be genuinely saved… The only way we can stand victorious before our enemies is if we kneel humbly before our Lord together.[9]

In order to stay stable and secure in difficult days, there are several areas where we need to be strong. Building strength in the following four areas will help us to stand strong against the enemy:

- **Personally - In personal prayer and intimacy.** Our entire lives must be built upon our relationship with God. Intimacy and praise is the key to living strong personally during times of stress. Knowing God and His character calms our heart and gives us courage.

  You are my strength, I sing praise to you; you, God, are my fortress, my God on whom I can rely (Psalm 59:17).

- **Corporately - In corporate prayer and worship.** We must pray that the Church of Jesus Christ in every city increases its

focus on prayer and worship, and becomes a praying Church and a praying community. As life becomes more difficult, praying corporately will become necessary. Together in prayer we will find God as our refuge.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1).

- **Relationally - In all our relationships.** We must learn to walk in peace, forgiveness, and repentance on a continual basis with everyone. We cannot afford to become bitter or judgmental. It is time for the body of Christ to unite and to realize the power and strength of that unity.

  The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace (Psalm 29:11).

- **Spiritually - In the Word of God.** We cannot listen to the enemy's lies any longer. This is a season where we must hold onto the Word of God as our truth in every situation we face. Learn more about praying the Word of God in chapter four.

  My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word (Psalm 119:28).

We need to be like Noah who knew God intimately and obeyed Him. He built an ark when people were partying and having an easy time. Could you have taken the courage to do that? Noah knew what God told him to do even when outward signs did not speak of a flood that would cover the entire earth. He continued in obedience and faithfulness even when he was the only one.

Many of you are called to be forerunners. You are called to promote, lead, and encourage the prayer movement in your church and city. You know what the Lord wants. You know that 24/7 prayer is critical for your city. The highest identity of God's people now and throughout all of eternity will be through intimacy-based intercession as Sons of God and as the Bride of Christ. We are created to interact deeply with God's heart. He will govern the universe in partnership with us through intercession.

This is your time to build a strong foundation. You may not be building an actual ark, but you are building a House of Prayer in your church

or city. Like the ark Noah built, when the storm comes the Houses of Prayer will protect people from destruction and will provide a covering, bringing more mercy to that city or town being prayed for. You must faithfully build one brick at a time, believing by faith that when the storms come, your city will stand because it is built on the rock of Christ and on prayer (Matthew 7:24-25).

There are others of you who are not the ones to lead in building a House of Prayer in your city, but you are the supporters. You say, "Yes" to prayer in your heart. You are the ones who pray and hold up the arms of those who lead the prayer movement in your city or in your church. You know how necessary prayer is for your city and you support it willingly in mind, heart, and action. You want to know God deeply and are willing to unite with others even from different denominational backgrounds than yours. You are a very needed part.

How can we be strong? How can we take the necessary steps in whichever part we are to play?

Displaying Strength and Taking Action

Well-known prayer author, Francis Frangipane, emphasizes the Biblical truth that if we know God, we will be able to display strength and take action:

> If we are fully given to knowing Christ intimately, not only will we enjoy His presence, but also we will gain spiritual strength for whatever the future holds! The key, therefore, to living victoriously in the last days is not knowing timetables, but knowing God. Daniel foretold that, in the midst of worldwide distress, those who "know their God will display strength and take action" (Daniel 11:32). From a position of knowing the heart and nature of God, in the midst of great difficulties we will "display strength and take action".[10]

The King James Version of this verse says that God's people will do great exploits. The definition of exploits in the Dictionary is "a heroic act, a deed of renown, a great or noble achievement." This is what we must pray for in the Church. The Church of Jesus Christ will take action, do noble achievements and heroic acts for God that shall be known worldwide! But it starts in the prayer room. The governmental

center of the world is in the prayer room. God's power is released through corporate intercession. What a weapon for the Church! There are three realities mentioned here for the church:

- **Know God.** We will know God in spiritual intimacy.
- **Be strong.** We will be strong in spirit to stand victoriously against evil.
- **Do exploits.** We will do great exploits and experience the power of God.

In looking at our personal foundation, one of the most important truths that we must individually know is that God loves us deeply. We must know our identity in Christ. We are lovers of God and are deeply loved by Him. This will keep us strong and stable during difficult times. This will give us the confidence we need to do great things for God.

When we are called to lead or support the prayer movement, we must have the foundational knowledge that we are greatly loved by God. Although many believers do not have this knowledge in their heart because of past wounding, spending time in the presence of God in a House of Prayer can make it "real" personally. When we are alone in an atmosphere of praise, worship, and prayer, then we can hear from God more clearly.

Daniel needed to know God's love personally. He sought the Lord in a 21-day fast (Daniel 10:2-3), got a vision from God (Daniel 10:5-6), lost strength because of the vision (Daniel 10:8-10), and then received a word from the angel Gabriel. He was told that he was greatly beloved and highly esteemed by God three times (Daniel 9:23; 10:11, 19).

Wouldn't that dramatically affect your life if an angel told you that?

And yet, God wants to affirm each one of us in the prayer room corporately and in our own prayer closets in our home as well. Many times I have gone into the prayer room struggling with a personal issue and have come out with the assurance of God's love and concern for me.

It is there, in that secret place dedicated to prayer, that we can hear the affirmation from our Father. And when we find it hard to receive His love, others in the body of Christ can help. We must know that God

loves us because it will be our strength in hard times. Because Daniel knew in his heart that he was loved and highly esteemed by God, he was able to rise up in strength and do mighty things for Him. He stood up renewed in his spirit (Daniel 10:11).

We all feel the need to be loved and have a bigger purpose outside of ourselves. A visitation from heaven calling you beloved of God would change your life. It would give you an inner strength that would affect everything you do for God. You would become bold and fearless in knowing that God was on your side and highly esteemed you. You would have an inner peace that no storm could destroy. Daniel had that kind of foundational strength.

It is time for us to align ourselves with God's heart for us personally and corporately. As the Church of Jesus Christ, let's build our foundational strength and receive the revelation that we are the "beloved" of God in our personal lives, our churches, and our city. When we truly have this revelation, we will praise Him from the depths of satisfied souls. We will want to be worshippers of God.

God desires that prayer and praise permeate every nation. We must align ourselves with heaven in order to see the powers of darkness broken over our cities and see revival break out. If all the Christians in a city knew their personal identity in Christ, they would be a powerful force in that area against the powers of darkness.

Through developing intimacy in the House of Prayer, we shall do mighty exploits for God's Kingdom. Jesus is our model who continues to govern through prayer and reaches the nations through intercession (Hebrew 7:25). Let's strengthen our foundation and align our lives with Him. In the prayer room we build intimacy through worship, reading and praying His Word, quietly listening, and many other ways.

> It is possible for Christ's church to be so properly aligned with heaven that the Holy Spirit actually displaces the power of darkness over our cities. To the degree that the church is so joined to God, the Lord's presence guards the city: crime and immorality proportionally decline; revival breaks out.[11]

A Call For Steadfast and Persistent Prayer

> Persistent prayer is a mighty move of the soul toward God. It is a stirring of the deepest forces of the soul toward the throne of heavenly grace. It is the ability to hold on, press on, and wait. Restless desire, restful patience, and strength to hold on are all embraced in it. It is not an incident or a performance, but a passion of soul. It is not something half-needed, but a sheer necessity. The wrestling quality in persistent prayer does not spring from physical violence or fleshly energy. It is not an impulse of energy or a mere earnestness of the soul. It is an inward force or ability planted and aroused by the Holy Spirit. Virtually, it is the intercession of the Spirit of God in us. It is "the effectual fervent prayer that avails much" (James 5:16). The divine Spirit supplies every part of us with the energy of His own striving. This is the essence of the persistence that urges our praying at the mercy seat to continue until the fire falls and the blessing descends.[12]

Are you convinced that 24/7 prayer is needed in your city? Do you see how it will change our cities as we unite in prayer?

We want God to stimulate us all to a higher level of steadfast, persistent intercession in order to see day and night prayer established. God will do it in His perfect timing, but we must be steadfast. He is working in our hearts, but it takes great prayer to see Houses of Prayer started and continue consistently day after day. It will take the unity of the Church to see this happen. Everyone is needed and vital. God is right now calling for the whole body of Christ to increase in steadfast prayer. He always lives to make intercession for us, and we are called to be like Him (Hebrews 7:25).

Intercession is growing all throughout the world, and people of all denominations are beginning to unite for the purpose of prayer. It definitely is time to drop our differences, rejoice in our diversity, and come together for the great purpose of seeing the Kingdom of God dwell in the nations. Although the enemy will oppose continuously, it is as we unite that we shall see the victory. The heart of God is for unity (John 17:20-23). When we are united, we can support and build one

another up as each one of us does our part in serving God (Eph. 4:3, 11-16). Through day and night prayer and worship the presence of God can reign in a city, multitudes can be saved, and ministries and churches can prosper. Night and day prayer changes the spiritual atmosphere of a city dramatically.

Justice is released in the city through 24/7 prayer. The International House of Prayer here in Kansas City began praying for several years regarding the problem of human trafficking around the world. Shortly after they started corporately praying for human trafficking, the police uncovered a huge trafficking ring from clues that just kept "popping up". This was a big answer to prayer as a result of united prayer.

An Architect's Mindset

To begin laying this great foundation in our cities for prayer, we need to have an architect's mindset. Like an architect, we need to see the big picture. So often we are overwhelmed as we think only of our own personal problems or what our own church is facing, but we need to begin to see our entire city through the eyes of God. We need to have a vision that is persistent. Seeing life from God's point of view changes everything. Our own problems become small in light of the needs of our city.

An architect can see a big, beautiful building even as he sees nothing tangible in front of him. He knows there is much work ahead for the workers in order to dig deep, and they must be willing to pay the price of hard foundational work. We also need to dig a deep foundation because we are building something of great significance and stature. We must be steadfast in prayer as we begin. Mike Bickle, founder of the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, says the following:

> The first key is to be steadfast in prayer regarding a 24/7 and to have an architect's mindset. The architect's mindset sees the big picture. To work with others to build a house of prayer, we must all think on the big picture. The more I understand the big picture, the more sense of responsibility I feel about getting the foundation right. What are we doing today that will impact tomorrow? I remind our staff that a building site starts with digging a large hole to build the foundation.[13]

It takes time and patience to build a solid foundation for day and night prayer. It takes great persistence in prayer. It can start with a couple two-hour segments with a committed group of people made up of worshippers and intercessors who will be faithful and steadfast. It may start with a one-month or one-week House of Prayer. Or it could start with increased prayer in your own church and your own life. We must pray that the foundation will be laid properly. We must have the persistence and steadfast heart to see a House of Prayer started in our church or city. We won't see it with a microwave mentality, but God is looking for long-term faithfulness and persistence.

There are many examples of those who have stood the test of persistence. One was the American astronomer Clyde Tombaugh who discovered the planet Pluto. Astronomers calculated its' probable orbit, but being only a "suspected" heavenly body, it wasn't even tangible. Tombaugh took up this challenge in March of 1929. Time magazine recorded the investigation: It was the most dramatic astronomic discovery in nearly one hundred years.

> He examined scores of telescopic photographs each showing tens of thousands of star images in pairs under the dual microscope. It often took three days to scan a single pair. It was exhausting, eye-cracking work—in his own words, "brutal, tediousness." And it went on for months. Star by star, he examined 20 million images. Then on February 18, 1930, as he was blinking at a pair of photographs in the constellation Gemini, "I suddenly came upon the image of Pluto!"[14]

You may not be trying to discover a planet, but you are attempting something that is challenging and may be exhausting at times. But it will be worth the effort. Astronomer Clyde Tombaugh saw Pluto with the eyes of faith, and you are beginning to see the possibilities of prayer in your city through the eyes of God. The day of smallness has great significance in God's sight (Haggai 1-2; Zechariah 3-4). Every House of Prayer will start small, but we can't despise the day of small beginnings. We read in Zechariah 4:10:

> *Who despises the day of small things?*

Realize that the starting of every House of Prayer is a dramatic accomplishment in God's eyes. It will change the face of your city. Increasing

prayer in your church is also big in God's eyes. Right now you may be looking at starting 24/7 prayer in your city, but think about your church as well. Scale it down to size and adapt this to your church even as you consider your city. Think about it. How do we begin to lay a strong foundation?

How to Lay a Strong Foundation

Keep in mind that persistent prayer will pay off as you lay the foundations of a House of Prayer in your city. You will move forward by God's grace because it's His ability, not yours. Notice these important keys to laying a strong foundation.

- **You must be willing to dig deep.** Remember we must dig a big hole first in order to build the foundation. This is not a superficial undertaking. You must believe in the power of prayer and be strong in prayer yourself. Develop a strong personal relationship with God. Strengthen your personal devotional life and love for God.

- **Partner with others.** Look for others who have the same vision in your city, and partner with other prayer ministries in your area. God will give you a core group of dedicated and like-minded people.

- **Cast the vision for day and night prayer.** Do this week after week. People need encouragement.

- **Realize that there is an incubation stage.** In this stage many in the area either have or are getting the vision, and there are many prayer meetings in the city in various churches. This stage may last for some time.

- **Develop your personal prayer life through learning to pray the Scriptures.** Practice praying Scriptures in your own devotional time with the Lord. I write about this in chapter four.

- **Develop some corporate prayer meetings in local churches.** Unity is essential and adds power to the prayer meeting. Also try combining worship and prayer together throughout some of the prayer meeting. This is called "harp and bowl".

- **Have realistic expectations.** Start small with a few prayer meetings in your church or in your city. Realize the value of a slow beginning. Strategize carefully and incorporate existing prayer activities. Understand the pressure people face in your society. Don't be critical, but make it easy for others to join in prayer at their own pace.

- **Understand the establishing stage.** This relates to the Church in the city or region and is not just one church. There is a need for a unified vision with unified values. Pursue the value of unity in the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:3, 13; Colossians 3:14).

- **Realize that faithfulness and a marathon pace are essential.** God is not looking for quick starts but for steady faithfulness over time. Keep it simple. Basically you are praying and calling people to pray. God's strategies are not complex, but they do require faithfulness (Galatians 5:22; Psalm 18:25; Romans 12:12).

- **Know that Jesus is in charge**. The House of Prayer will prevail because Jesus is the leader and the eternal intercessor for He rules as King in his high priestly ministry of intercession (Hebrews 7:25; Isaiah 53:12).

- **Go forward in faith and with God's peace ruling your heart.** Know that day and night prayer is God's desire. He will bless and sustain it. To be a House of Prayer is not a challenge but a Biblical command (Matthew 21:13).

A stonecutter may hammer away at a rock for a hundred times without seeing even a crack showing. Yet it may be the 101st blow that splits the rock apart. It is not the one blow that will lay a strong foundation, but it is the consistent hammering in prayer with a steadfast vision that will do it. God will give you and others that burning, driving vision to go deep with the foundations. He will enable you to pursue the deeper life and the lifestyle of abandonment to Him and His vision for your city.

Laying the foundation will take a long time. Keep the peace of God ruling in your heart. Day and night prayer is God's desire, and He will bless and sustain it with His power. Trust Him to build a strong foundation. Establishing day and night prayer is the most exalted occupa-

tion to those nearest His throne in heaven (Revelation 4:8). Set your heart to persist regardless of difficulties. God desires to find a resting place. Let's advance with faith and a determination to work. Let's keep the vigorous, steady glow of prayer burning.

> Praying that influences God is said to be the outpouring of the fervent, effectual righteous man. It is prayer on fire. It does not have a feeble, flickering flame or a momentary flash, but shines with a vigorous, steady glow.[15]

Building Foundations Life Application
How to Build a Foundation for a House of Prayer

Whether you are a forerunner leading the way, a support person, or just beginning to learn about Houses of Prayer, this assignment will help you to start moving into the prayer arena in your community. As you think about a House of Prayer in your city, begin by doing the following:

- Develop your personal prayer life by learning to pray the Bible regularly - Practice praying Scriptures in your own prayer times with the Lord. Begin incorporating Paul's apostolic prayers into your prayer times. See chapter four for these prayers.

- Pray that a House of Prayer would start in your city and that pray increases in your church - Pray persistently for God to raise up those who will begin to pray for 24/7 prayer.

- Make a list of like-minded people in your church and city who have a heart for prayer - Begin to pray through your list, asking God to give them the same vision.

- Partner with others with the same vision for Houses of Prayer - Get together to strategically talk about how to start a House of Prayer in your city. Try to include individuals from different churches. Or you may want to start by seeing more prayer in your own church. Partner with those in your church who have a vision for prayer, and talk about how to see it grow.

- Discuss the "How to Lay a Strong Foundation" keys - Talk over these points together as a group, asking God for His wisdom as you lay the foundations. Brainstorm together as a group, adding other like-minded people in your church and city to your list of contacts. End with praying "A Prayer for Foundational Strength."

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Meet weekly for persistent prayer. If you can't meet weekly, meet as regularly as you can. It could be in a church, home, or in a designated

place in your city. Decide on the amount of time you will pray and be consistent. Give sufficient time for worship and thanksgiving because this will bring you into the presence of God. Thank God for what He is going to do, and then thoroughly pray for a House of Prayer in your city and for increased prayer in your church. Let the Holy Spirit guide you in your prayers. Have someone write down what has been emphasized in your prayers, specific burdens, and Scriptures prayed. You will be amazed at the insight the Lord has given you in prayer.

Our Prayer for Foundational Strength

Lord, give us a heart for 24/7 prayer in our city. Like Zinzendorf, make us into men and women who are fervent in prayer and are committed to radical holiness. Teach us to walk in unity, and help us to do everything in love. As we pray for 24/7 prayer, give us expectant hearts. Help the churches in our city grow in prayer and commitment. Make the Church of [Name your city] a praying church. We long to do great exploits for Your glory. Help us to align ourselves with Your heart. Let prayer and praise permeate our city.

As we begin to lay the foundations for 24/7 prayer here, make us steadfast and persistent in prayer. Help us to build a foundation that is deep and strong. Keep us from growing weary in well doing. Help us to have realistic expectations and understand that it takes time and patience. Help us to be faithful. Teach us to pray your Word individually and corporately. Give our city a unified vision for day and night prayer, and teach us to seek You in prayer together. Help our churches to grow in prayer, intercession, and worship.

We thank You for being our faithful intercessor who will help us. You will give us guidance all along the way. Thank You that Your peace rules in our hearts. We thank You for the House of Prayer that You will establish in our city. You will give us the burning, driving vision to go deep with the foundation. You will enable us to pursue the deeper lifestyle of abandonment to You and Your vision for our city. We give You all the praise and glory for all that You will do. "We give thanks to you, O God, we give thanks, for your Name is near" (Psalm 75:1a). In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:10-11).

CHAPTER TWO

Houses of Prayer and Encountering God

Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
Look to the LORD and his strength;
seek his face always.
Psalm 105:3-4

AN AMAZING THING HAPPENS in a House of Prayer. When you enter the prayer room, you encounter God's presence. We have had a few non-stop, one-month Houses of Prayer in Spain and the U.S. In April of 2007, we had one in Virginia Beach, Virginia before the 400th anniversary of America. The location was significant because it was the birthplace of America, where the settlers first landed.

Susan, a friend who spent much time in the prayer room, gives a personal testimony of her experience in the 24/7 House of Prayer in Virginia Beach. Here is her outstanding testimony.

> The day I went there to pray for our nation, I had no prior experience with the House of Prayer in Virginia Beach. I was not prepared for what happened that first day and for days afterward, or for the transformation that would take place in my relationship with Christ after many years of knowing Him and teaching His Word.
>
> Within five minutes of entering I found myself on my knees weeping uncontrollably, and for the next several visits that experience continued. I believe now that God has designated the

House of Prayer a Holy of Holies of sorts, and before any of us who participated could press into prayer, we spent those first days in a time of repentance.

The manifest presence of God that permeated the prayer room for the entire month of April was profound. You would walk into the room at any time of day or night, and sense Him waiting for you. You felt His presence the minute the door closed behind you. I experienced Christ like I never have in my thirty years of knowing Him. The two hours I spent with each visit felt like two minutes.

The manifest presence of God was so strong that I learned to discern His moods. I knew when He wanted worship, when to be quiet, and when to pray. The changes in my life continue. My desire to please him continually has become my passion. I can't wait to spend time with Him morning and evening. I wake up with a smile on my face and joy in my heart, and worship begins my day.

In my daily walk, I am constantly aware of His presence even though I don't feel it. I have started receiving new revelation from His word regarding the future. Most of all, I have fallen in love with Jesus. To sum up the changes in my life since 24/7, I have joy in my heart and a new bounce in my steps because I am more aware He is beside me 24/7.

Encountering God is life changing! Look at the change it made in Susan's life. Others testify to this same amazing fact. You may wonder, "How can I encounter God through a House of Prayer? How can I grow in intimacy and worship in the prayer room at my church?"

Find out the secret of adoring God in prayer. This chapter will help you grow in the area of fasting and intimacy with God. It will help you to plan a time of personal or corporate fasting with others who desire to see a House of Prayer established in your city. Learn the benefits of fasting and 24/7 prayer. Discover how to seek God's face together with others in the prayer room as well as when you are alone with God.

Places of Encounter with God

> Prayer rooms are places of direct encounter with God. So much of our faith, if we are not very careful, can be second-hand experience. We listen to talks that tell us what to think. We read books that inspire us with other peoples' experiences of God. But alone with God in a prayer room, it's time to get the Bible open for your self, going straight to the source. It's time to dialogue directly with God face to face without a middleman. In such a context, God often is able to speak to us and touch us in a way that no ministry session could ever achieve.[1]

Isn't a face-to-face encounter with God something you long for and desire? When I was in Germany, I was involved in teaching a course for God's people who were working in different countries around the world. The course was called "Face to Face." The goal of the course was to help bring individuals into a face-to-face relationship with God and also with one another.

The prayer room is the place of face-to-face encounter with God. I can't think of a better description of the 24/7 prayer movement. The prayer room is the place to access the heavenly realm and hear from God. In the prayer room God purifies our life. As you and I spend time in prayer, we carry the very presence of God out with us into the world. Our faces can shine with the presence of God.

Moses is a good example of a Biblical character that sought the face of God. We read about his encounter with God in Exodus 33:11a: *The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.* When he came down from the presence of God, His face actually shone with the glory of God.

> *When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD"* (Exodus 34:29).

There is an increasing hunger for the presence of God, not only individually but also corporately among His people worldwide. People from all denominations, cultures, and ages are beginning to seek after God's face. Kim Catherine Marie Kollins has established a 24/7 prayer

ministry among the world's 100 million renewed Catholics called Burning Bush International. She says:

> Everywhere I turn I seem to hear this same call to prayer being proclaimed—prayer for cities, prayer for nations. Everywhere I look I see writings calling the people of God to intense worship and adoration and intercession. Many new prayer initiatives are being called forth—houses of prayer are springing up, prayer mountains and prayer vigils are being held in response to this prompting of the Holy Spirit. Now is the time, and the trumpet is being sounded to the whole people of God. We are being called to awaken from slumber and be empowered anew by the Holy Spirit. We must become once again passionate adorers of the Lord and powerful instruments of intercession for the Church and the world.[2]

God Radically Changes Us in the Prayer Room

When we stand in the presence of God, He does a radical work within our hearts. He removes the sin in our lives as we sit in His presence. When diagnosed with cancer, I learned about the power of radiation and chemotherapy because these are the primary ways the medical world treats cancer. Thankfully I didn't have to have either one. Sin is like cancer. God's presence is like radiation therapy on the cancer of sin in our lives. The more we are in His presence, the more powerful the radiation of His life and love. We change in His presence because we are exposing ourselves to the eternal forces of His radiating glory. We begin to die to the sin tendencies in our lives, and we begin to live more fully for Him.

Time in God's presence is powerful.

You most likely won't realize it at first. A person who is exposed to the radiation of the sun's rays often does not realize that he is sunburned until later. When you spend time in God's presence, you may feel you are not accomplishing anything. The enemy may say something like this to you, "You're just wasting your time. God won't listen to you."

But if you continue spending extravagant amounts of time in His presence, you will begin to see His life manifested through yours. It takes

time, but everything within you begins to change—your desires, thoughts, actions, interests, and passions.

There is no quicker way to change as in the glory and radiation of His presence. I have seen people change right before my eyes as I watch them over time through exposure to God's presence. We read in 1 Chronicles 16:11 and Psalm 105:4: *Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.* Dr. Timothy John shares a personal testimony about how important 24/7 prayer has been in a small, inner-city church:

> Launching and sustaining a 24-7 prayer room in one of our inner city church properties has probably been the most important thing we have done to date. From inner city youth to suburban "boomers," each person has profoundly experienced the manifest presence and love of God in their selected hour of prayer in our holy space. Some of our members have actually encountered the Holy Spirit in the parking lot or even on their way to the prayer room. Needless to say, this has resulted in a wonderful spiritual renewal in our midst. Eternity and the heavenly realm are no longer concepts but reality.[3]

It is the place to leave the problems of earth behind and listen to the still small voice of God in such a way that inner transformation occurs. It happens individually and corporately. I have seen it in myself and in others. You can't stand in the presence of God without being changed. Most of us are busy people. You can't spend time in the prayer room without having it change your prayer life. Prayer becomes a delightful reality.

> One of the great things about a well-led season of 24-7 prayer is that it helps busy people like you and me to live up to our aspirations in prayer. It can even enable non-church-goers to prioritize prayer in their daily lives… 24-7 prayer is able to turn the idea of daily prayer from a guilty "should" into an exciting "could." Suddenly, a regular hour or more of solitude for personal prayer and Scriptural meditation becomes a delightful reality for people who normally don't find such things easy—people in ordinary places who desperately need an extraordinary outpouring of prayer and a deeper discovery of the glory of God.[4]

Benefits in Seeking God's Face

As you can see from all the testimonies, there are several benefits in seeking God's face and His glorious and radiating presence in the prayer room. Let's look at a few of them:

- **We experience personal transformation.** We become more and more fascinated with God rather than with the things of this world. We grow in intimacy with Jesus and develop a deep inner life with God.

- **We establish a lifestyle of encountering God in the place of prayer.** Our heart connection with Jesus becomes stronger and stronger. We learn what it means to keep our lamp burning like the wise virgins at the midnight hour (Matthew 25:1-13).

- **We find corporate unity.** When we are preoccupied with seeking God, our divisions disappear. Our unity empowers our prayers.

- **We find victory in spiritual warfare.** The atmosphere is changed in a city through 24/7 prayer. The powers of darkness are forced to retreat, and they lose their hold because the presence of God dwells in the prayer room and over the city.

- **We are trained in the Word as we pray and sing it.** Because there is such a focus on singing and praying the Bible, everyone begins to learn God's truth in a deeper way.

- **We are prepared to reach the lost.** There is an ability to receive the heart of God in the prayer room. His passion is for the lost, and he imparts that same passion and ability to reach out to the lost as one leaves the prayer room.

- **We realize God's personal love for us.** In the prayer room we can receive the Father's embrace. We are empowered by God's love and receive His sufficiency for any battle. Our lives become empowered with God.

- **We become more alive and can work harder for God.** When we abide in His love, we work harder than we do when

we are just being workers (Romans 6:13). His love gives us strength to work with great zeal.

- **We experience confidence in God.** We find that we are not condemned because of sin but are righteous in Christ. We realize our spiritual identity based on the finished work of Christ on the cross (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). We realize that we are pleasing to God (John 15:9).

Your first hour in the prayer room can be a scary thing, especially if it's in the night. It's a step of faith. You made a commitment to your first hour of prayer all alone in the prayer room, and you have no idea what it will be like. Let this testimony from Peter Greig—founding catalyst of the 24-7 Prayer community who has seen hundreds of 24/7 prayer rooms started all over the world—encourage your heart and the heart of multitudes who are just beginning to discover God in the prayer room.

Here's the beginning. You arrive and the person prays for you and goes home.

> And that's the defining moment: the click of the door as the previous person leaves. It's the moment you find yourself alone in a room with God in the middle of the night, the moment you discover the reality of God's promise to be found by those who truly seek him with all their hearts (Jeremiah 29:13). Suddenly all the talk about prayer, the guilt at your prayerlessness, the theory, the apathy, the hectic schedule, evaporates. It's now or never. You and God, face-to-face at last, looking for words in the silence. In a complicated world, this is the simple, inevitable core. When you look at what happened next and the way that a solitary prayer room became a thousand by accident, the only rational explanation is that God turned up in that first 24-7 prayer room and that he has continued to turn up in prayer rooms ever since.[5]

God wants to show up in prayer rooms all over the world. He wants to transform our lives in so many ways if we seek Him. It's time to seek

His presence. It's time to obey the first commandment and love God with all our heart (Matthew 22:37-38). He longs for us to develop a deep inner life with Himself and His Spirit. When we do, we receive instruction, strength, and supernatural courage to face everything.

God our Father longs for intimacy with His family.

He wants to bless you with His favor and approval. Think about this and let it capture your heart. He is your eternal Father who has prepared an eternal Kingdom for you from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34). He is thinking about you. You can relate to God just like Jesus does. You can call him "Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15). Jesus wants you to receive the Father's embrace. He takes all our brokenness and shame when we experience His Father's touch in our spirit. It empowers us to live victorious lives. We need to know that God our Father is our greatest cheerleader who longs to partner with us in life.

Seeking God's presence helps us to navigate through the ups and downs in life—times of joy or sadness, prosperity or adversity, love or loneliness. If we set our hearts to seek Him at all costs, we will find strength for any battle and sufficiency of His power for every moment.

Let's choose to love Him in the good and the bad through this short window of opportunity called life. Let's fix our hearts to draw near to Him rain or shine. It's our primary assignment and greatest goal. It makes our obedience easier when we obey out of love rather than duty. We shall be blessed if we do (Isaiah 30:18; Matthew 5:6). Even in difficulty His song shall be with us (Psalm 139:5, 11-12; 42:1-2, 7-8).

Are you one who desires to encounter God in the prayer room? Others will follow you as you do. Let's learn to seek Him in fasting and adore Him in worship and praise. It's time to seek His face and know the Father's love for us personally.

> *My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek… I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD* (Psalm27:8, 13-14)

Fasting and 24/7 Prayer

> Faith needs a life of prayer in which to pray and keep strong. Prayer needs fasting for its full and perfect development. It is only in a life of moderation and temperance and self-denial that there will be the heat or the strength to pray much. We are creatures of the senses: fasting helps to express, to depend and to confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, to sacrifice ourselves, to attain what we seek for the Kingdom of God.[6]

There is definitely power in prayer. But there is an added blessing in seeking God when we combine prayer with fasting. God's people in many nations are involved in prayer and fasting on a regular basis. People like to fast for various lengths of time and in all sorts of different ways. Individuals fast meals, sweets, TV, and anything else that is a personal form of self-denial and sacrifice for God's Kingdom purposes. Forty-day fasts are even becoming more popular. God leads each one differently.

But there is one important key that adds to its blessing. When fasting it is good to slow down and spend more time in the prayer room, more time on our faces before God, and more time in silence and stillness. Prayer rooms are excellent places to gain the most out of seasons of fasting. An atmosphere of prayer will keep you still before the Lord and away from the distractions of the world. You may be thinking:

"I'm not so sure—Is there really any benefits to fasting? If I fast from food when I'm very hungry, I want to know that it really does accomplish something."

Fasting is actually a form of voluntary weakness. When we fast we are submitting our strength into God's hands. Fasting is choosing voluntary weakness (2 Corinthians 11:23-28). It may appear foolish in man's eyes, but there is lasting strength and empowerment from God through fasting. Let me assure you, fasting has powerful, long-term results in your life and in the life of others. It's an empowering grace with God's divine ability and perfect sufficiency (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). It is a way of getting hold of God's infinite resources.

When we fast our hearts are enlarged to receive more from God at a deeper level. We become weak but God becomes strong, and we ex-

perience more of His power. We can fast in many ways—energy, money, words, giving, serving, praying, time, and so on. We submit our strength into God's hands and trust him to answer in His way, in His time, and with His power.

When we look at the life of Jesus, we see that He overcame the temptation of the devil in the wilderness while fasting and praying (Luke 4:1-14).

He overcame the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. It was an opportunity to manifest the strength of His inner man. And after that forty-day fast, he came forth in the power of the Holy Spirit for ministry. He was able to perform great signs and wonders from that point on (Luke 4:14). You can imagine the intensity of the battle in that wilderness position, but Jesus knew that the power of fasting and prayer was necessary to overcome the devil. He embraced this period of voluntary weakness and everything that went with it—loneliness, lack of strength and activity, lack of convenience, and so much more. Jesus embraced a life of weakness while on earth (Isaiah 49:3-4).

When we fast and pray we are developing a deep history with God just as Jesus did. We are learning to fix our gaze on Jesus and are discovering how to be victorious in spiritual warfare. We are learning to turn these wilderness experiences into an oasis with God where we grow strong in the Spirit. There are many benefits and long-term results from practicing this great spiritual discipline. Have you ever wondered which way to go when you needed spiritual discernment? Have you ever found it hard to hear God's voice?

Fasting will sharpen your ability to discern good from evil and will help you to see God's perspective (Hebrews 5:14). It will give you an increased ability to hear God's voice clearly and receive divine revelation (Acts 13:2). It will increase your perception of the unseen world because fasting removes distractions. We see with spiritual eyes and are able to focus more on the eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18).

I know in my life that there are times when the future looks difficult, and I need more faith and more spiritual power. Fasting increases faith and helps us to militantly hold on to that which looks absolutely impossible (Hebrews 11:1). I have experienced greater spiritual power after times of fasting.

Are you becoming convinced of the power of this discipline? If you aren't satisfied with my answers, let's look at Isaiah 58:6-14 because these verses give us eighteen benefits of fasting. Let's look at these benefits.

Eighteen Benefits of Fasting in Isaiah 58:6-14

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear…

- Your light will break forth like the dawn (verse 8).
- Your healing will quickly appear (verse 8).
- Your righteousness will go before you (verse 8).
- The glory of the Lord will be your rear guard (verse 8).
- You will call and the Lord will answer (verse 9).
- You will cry for help, and he will say, "Here am I" (verse 9).
- Your light will arise in the darkness (verse 10).
- Your night will become like the noonday (verse 10).
- The Lord will guide you always (verse 11).
- The Lord will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land (verse 11).
- The Lord will strengthen your frame (verse 11).
- You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail (verse 11).
- Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations (verse 12).
- You will be called repairer of broken walls (verse 12).
- You will be a restorer of streets with dwellings (verse 12).
- You will find your joy in the Lord (verse 14).
- You will rise on the heights of the land (verse 14).
- You will feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob (verse 14).

There are some spiritually difficult circumstances where we will only see the breakthrough when prayer is combined with fasting. You may be praying for a lost son or daughter or someone trapped in drugs and alcohol. You may be praying for a breakthrough in a needy nation. Prayer with fasting multiplies your effectiveness.

The Global Bridegroom Fast

Mike Bickle has started a Global Bridegroom Fast (GBF), which is a monthly three-day fast where believers worldwide join together in prayer and fasting for revival. It's a monthly fast on the first Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of each month in the pattern of Joel 2, with seven days of fasting in December, totaling forty days of prayer and fasting throughout the year.

I can't help but encourage you to try this monthly three-day fast. My husband and I love this fast; it has meant so much to us. Imagine joining others worldwide in a solemn assembly fast. Believe it or not, it is not that hard. God is giving extraordinary grace to fast, and doing it together worldwide seems to be much easier and more powerful.

To help you during the fast, worship and pray with the International House of Prayer in Kansas City live via the free Global Bridegroom Fast webcast. Join us for live, high-quality web-streaming, 24/7 prayer and worship all month. I am on staff with the International House of Prayer (www.ihopkc.org) and receive many of my ideas for writing about prayer in the Global Prayer Room. If you don't know what to pray, then pray these Global Bridegroom Fast prayer requests during your fast:[7]

- **Fullness of the Holy Spirit and unity in the Church (John 14:12; 17:2-23)**. Pray for spiritual breakthroughs in the worldwide Church with unprecedented unity, purity, and power.

- **Houses of Prayer (Isaiah 62:6–7)**. Pray for the release of "grace for fasting" with worship and prayer to establish 24/7 Houses of Prayer in the cities of the earth, including Israel.

- **Wealth of the nations (Haggai 2:7–9)**. Pray for the release of finances for the great harvest, the prayer movement, and the poor.

- **The great harvest (Matthew 24:14)**. Pray that over one billion souls are converted by the power of God.

- **A youth revival movement (Malachi 4:6).** Pray for a world-wide revival especially among the youth and the poor of the earth.

- **Revival to Israel (Romans 9-11).** Pray for the fulfillment of all the prophetic promises to national Israel.

- **A wall of fire of protection (Zechariah 2:5)**. Pray for a divine protection over all that is birthed through prayer.

The prayer room is an ideal place to nurture your prayer life during seasons of fasting. It provides a solace from distractions and a place already filled with the Spirit of God. As the Church worldwide moves forward in the prayer movement, let's realize that fasting, prayer, and seeking God's face are increasing dramatically across the earth.

Your prayer room is part of a great prayer tapestry that is beginning to cover the earth. Fasting and prayer will increase not only the effectiveness of your intercession, but it will bring you to a place of deeper intimacy with God. And it will prepare the earth for the final harvest and the second coming of Christ the King.

The Great Men of the Past and Fasting

Fasting was popular among many of the men and women that God used throughout church history. Not only the well-known intercessors like Rees Howells, but also most of the great preachers and evangelists of all time practiced the discipline of fasting and prayer.

Did you know that Charles Finney fasted every week? When he felt less power in his ministry, he would fast two or three days. Then the power would return. Perhaps he is one of the greatest and most anointed soul-winners of all time. John Wesley required all Methodists to fast every Wednesday and Friday until 4:00 P.M. The famous John Knox impacted the nation of Britain through prayer and fasting. Martin Luther fasted one day each week with many additional fasts.

Look at what these men accomplished for God.

Their lives were ones of power. If we look at the Azusa Street Revival in 1906, we must realize that it started as a result of a ten-day period of prayer and fasting. In preparation for this mighty end-time revival and harvest, will it not take men and women from every nation and background fervently praying and fasting in increasing measure for this mighty outpouring of God?

The Increase and Need for Fasting Today

There has been a dramatic increase in fasting and prayer worldwide over the last several years. A few years ago Bill Bright, the founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, called for two million Christians to fast and pray for forty days for worldwide revival and for the fulfillment of the Great Commission. TheCall, led by Lou Engle (www.thecall.com), is calling young people to fast and pray. When I was in Orlando, Florida, hundreds of young people came together to fast and pray for twelve hours. You can watch many of these prayer events on God TV (www.god.tv). They are powerful, contagious, and life transforming.

Fasting combined with prayer and worship greatly affects our personal lives and releases the power of the Holy Spirit in us and in our cities.

When Solomon consecrated the temple (2 Chronicles 6:1-2) and requested that the Lord would be attentive to their prayer (2 Chronicles 6:40-42), the Lord answered, fire came down, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple (2 Chronicles 7:1). The Lord visited Solomon and made it clear that when the nation enters into a crisis, if they would humble themselves, repent, pray and seek His face, then he would heal the land (2 Chronicles 7:14).

This is God's strategy for us in times of crisis. It's time to return to the Lord with fasting, weeping, and mourning (Joel 2:12-13). We can change the future direction of a nation if we do this. God is gracious, merciful, and slow to anger. He is gracious and compassionate, and He relents from doing harm (Joel 2:13b). We often look to honor, money, and the size of our ministry, but God values humility, serving, fasting, and prayer.

The Joel 2 fast in Scripture was God's solution to calamity (see Joel 2:12-17). Disaster was coming to the land, but it was not too late to avert it. The Joel 2 fast may not only stop the judgment of God, but

it can also release the power of God. Isn't this what we so desperately need in these days in so many of our nations? Instead of disaster we want the power of God released on the land. We read in Joel 2:13: *Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.*

In the Bible blowing the trumpet announced the call to gather at the House of Prayer as a solemn assembly with fasting; it also signaled a crisis. The House of Prayer within a city is a perpetual solemn assembly. It is God's solution in days of crisis. God is calling people all over the earth to enter into a lifestyle of fasting and prayer, as the days get worse. The trumpet call is sounding all over the earth. Let's respond to the call.

> The trumpet call to fasting is being heard throughout the world. This is the decade of fasting and prayer. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly" (Joel 2:15)… Today, the trumpet call of the Spirit is clear. We are to prepare for the future with a great deal of prayer and fasting. Congregations and leaders are responding worldwide. Intercessory prayer, joined with fasting, increases the spiritual alertness and effectiveness of God's people.[8]

Adoration in Prayer and Worship

> The key is to maintain a rhythm, a heartbeat of disciplined prayer, in which I encounter Christ regularly, deliberately, and consciously. The spin-off of these times, as you will see in the character of any older person who has spent a great deal of their lives contemplating Jesus, is that His presence thereby moves by a process of osmosis from the conscious into the subconscious mind. As we open the door, again and again, to Christ, He comes in day by day and eats with us, laughs with us, shares with us, until we acquire His mannerisms and know his very thoughts. A season of 24-7 prayer can be a useful tool for bringing Christ back into the midst of our ongoing lives as individuals and as communities. And prayer rooms are an interesting expression of

> God's intention, which has always been to walk in continual communion with His people.[9]

As you and I walk through life we can actually have daily communion with Jesus, the Savior of the world and King of the nations. This is an amazing realization. Let's learn to do it with a heart of adoration in prayer and worship. In my life I want to keep the rhythm, the heartbeat of prayer, and seek to encounter God on a deeper level. I'm sure you do too.

The 24/7 prayer room helps us to keep consciously aware of Christ, not only while we are there but also throughout the day. We don't want to miss the beauty of Jesus in the midst of all of our activities. At a time when everything around us is trying to steal our hearts away from God, we want to learn to behold Him throughout the day as well as in the prayer room. The enemy wants to get us so caught up with busyness that we actually lose our purpose in life.

Let's make every effort to continue to adore God through prayer and worship, not only on a daily basis but hour-by-hour. It will keep us focused throughout the day and alert us to open doors of ministry and evangelistic opportunities. It will help us to use our tongues wisely and will keep the joy of Jesus in our life during the difficult seasons of life.

The prayer room helps us to live a holy life because we learn to contemplate Christ and Him alone. We learn to focus on him regularly, deliberately, and consciously. We begin to think the way He thinks and act the way He acts. As we discipline our prayer and worship life, we begin to move into a deeper level of adoration. God becomes our all in all. When we do this we learn to live in a spirit opposite of the world. Instead of taking God out of our life—as the enemy is trying to do everywhere—God infuses our daily activities here on earth. Houses of Prayer help us to experience the presence of God. This is what we are made for! In his book, *24-7 Prayer Manual*, Peter Greig encourages pastors and leaders to open 24/7 prayer rooms. He says:

> These 24-7 prayer rooms are fundamentally and simply about the presence of God. Just beneath the surface of the life of every believer and pastor is a desperate longing to be in God's presence. This is what we were created for! The prayer room is a gentle, humble expression of the heart of the Father. So many

> people have said, "Walking into the room is like walking into the arms of my heavenly Father." 24-7 prayer rooms transcend theological differences and worship styles because every room ultimately takes on the personality of the group that uses it. The resulting transformations are highly personal, flowing as they do from a succession of one-on-one encounters with God. I believe the Spirit of God is stirring up an appetite for his presence in this hour, and I encourage every pastor and leader to take the leap of faith and open a 24-7 prayer room.[10]

What do we center our lives on?

When I went through cancer, I saw the necessity of being consumed with the person of Christ rather than my own problems. I could easily have gotten centered on the problem, and there were days when I did, but I soon found that choosing to praise and adore God was the key to victory in my life. I encourage you to do the same as you face various issues in your own life. If you and I can move pass our temporary struggles and learn not only to praise God, but also to adore Him for His attributes, we will rise up into a new dimension of relationship with Him. God wants us to be consumed with who He is.

Do you remember how you felt in those first moments after you accepted Christ into your life?

It was a joyful experience for my mother and I. We would talk about what God had done in our lives day and night! Do you remember the sheer amazement and joy of first knowing that you had eternal life? God wants us to recapture adoration in our heart just like the first moments when we were saved out of darkness. Here is a wonderful description of the word "adoration" from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Take time to read and meditate on this because it is quite powerful.

> Adoration in the distinctively religious sense is the human response to God's disclosure of Himself in Jesus Christ as the God who, by His free act of grace, is in all His majestic love and power the God who is for mankind… The affections of man are stirred to the limits of their intensity and respond with an unearthly delight, an unspeakable joy, and a peace that surpasses both man's understanding and his power to articulate. Adora-

> tion is the effort of the total man to give total expression to his joyful comprehension and approbation of his vision of God in Jesus Christ. Since his response to this vision never adequately expresses that peace and joy which passes his understanding, he reaches for the liturgical aids of song, music, and symbol.[11]

Adoration is being wholly consumed with the person of Christ. Adoration is God-centered rather than self-centered. In adoration, just as the encyclopedia says, our affections are stirred to the limits of their intensity and we respond with an unearthly delight and an unspeakable joy and peace.

The Heart of David

When I think of a Bible character that adored God, I think of David. He was a man who sought God's face continually. I want to be like that, don't you? He was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14), a student of God's emotions, who continually worshipped Him all His life. He committed himself to obeying the commands of God.

David's primary occupation was to seek God's beauty (Psalm 27:4). He knew the love of God in good times and bad. God was with David when he adored Him out in the fields as a shepherd boy. And God was with him as he adored Him while ruling as King. Even while being pursued by Saul, while hiding in damp dark caves, David experienced the love and strength of God. David, as shepherd and king, knew how to pray and strengthened himself in God (1Samuel 30:8).

The highest and chief goal in David's life was to know God.

He dedicated his life to finding a resting place for God on earth (Psalm 133:1-8). He sought the Lord with his time, talents, and treasures. He spent time in God's House fasting and worshiping Him continually. He prioritized seeking God even as a military leader. He prioritized seeking God as a shepherd when nobody was watching. When he was young and when he was old, he sought after God. Whether he was in victory or in depression, David set His heart on God's beauty.

After becoming King, David set up a worship tabernacle in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6). He had a revelation of worship according to God's order in his heavenly sanctuary. He then prepared a place for the Ark of God

and set it in the Tabernacle of David (1 Chronicles 15-16:1). He established Levites to worship before the Ark. During David's lifetime he raised up four thousand paid musicians and 288 paid singers to worship in God's house (1 Chronicles 23:5; 25:7).

God has promised to restore David's Tabernacle in the future. This speaks of Jesus' Millennial government over all nations based on 24/7 Davidic worship and intercession (Amos 9:11).

And now is the time when God's end-time Church will have a vision to restore worship and prayer as David commanded, and will rise up to do this all across the earth. Adoring God was David's main ambition. He was on a lifelong treasure hunt to discover the beauty of the Lord. God wants to pour out His love within our hearts as well. He wants us to love Him wholeheartedly as David did.

- Is the secret of our life loving and adoring God?
- Are we a people after one thing—God Himself and His glory?
- Is knowing God intimately the preoccupation of our life and our highest ambition?

If this is not the case, we are out of alignment with what we were created for. This can bring great emotional fatigue and feelings of hopelessness. God wants to fill us with hope that nothing can destroy in all the situations we face in life. We read in Romans 5:2b, 5:

> *And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God… And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*

You may also want to read 1 John 2:5; 4:12; and 17-18. We need to tap into our power source. We need to find our identity in intimacy with Christ. Refreshment in God's love helps us to stand firm. Mike Bickle prays the following:

> Father, I ask to be supernaturally empowered to give a witness of the glory of the Man, Christ Jesus and of His delivering power from all the oppressions of Satan so that many unredeemed people might be made whole and then passionately filled with our perfected love for your beloved Son and His dear church.[12]

Captured by God in the Prayer Room

It happened one night in our one-month House of Prayer in southern Spain when the pastors were praying in the prayer room. The House of Prayer was taking place in a large hotel called the Solana Hotel and a room was designated as the prayer room. You can read more about it in chapter nine.

During that month of prayer a non-Christian named Allison, a hotel employee, was hosting the coffee and food bar. She's an attractive British woman about forty years old who relocated to Spain with her husband Matthew because of the warm weather and sunshine. They had been through many difficulties, the most recent being a disappointing conflict with Jose, the owner of the hotel Solana. Their heavy drinking evidenced the pain and confusion they faced. During the weeks of the 24/7 prayer in the Solana, some of us would chat with them, answering their many questions.

They felt the love, peace, and joy among us. Allison listened attentively to what we were praying and watched as we praised and adored God in worship. We held large and small prayer meetings right in front of the coffee bar area where she worked. We prayed for God to reveal Himself to her heart. We could see a change in her face during the month.

One night at the end of the month, the local pastors were having their third all-night prayer vigil in the prayer room. Allison could resist no longer. She was drawn by the power of the Holy Spirit into the prayer room at about 1:30 A.M. She went over to my husband, Norm, and asked, "Will you pray for me?" His first thought was, "How are we going to pray with her here?" Probably many of us would have thought, "Isn't this a bit inappropriate to come in and interrupt the pastor's prayer meeting?" But as soon as Allison sat down she started crying, "Jesus help us! Jesus help us!"

This brought the quickest answer to prayer.

Norm said to her, "Allison, do you believe you are a sinner?" She answered, "Yes." He then asked, "Do you believe Jesus died for your sins?" Again she answered, "Yes."

As he led her in a prayer to receive the Lord, a pastor had his hand on her head. She later said she felt a warmth come into her body.

We all saw a great joy in Allison the next day. Her life was radically changed. She was drawn into the prayer room through the adoration, praise, and prayer of God's people. She could not resist the beauty she saw, because through his people she saw Christ. She knew that He was what she needed in her life.

This is the first fruits of what we will see in the prayer room. The lost are going to be drawn like a magnet to the beauty of Christ through the praise and adoration of His people. I believe that in the coming days we shall see multitudes saved in the prayer room. They will be drawn by the presence of God that abides there.

Ways to Adore God in the Prayer Room

Your statutes, LORD, stand firm;
holiness adorns your house for endless days.
Psalm 93:5

Let's get ready. Let's learn how to love and adore God in the prayer room both personally and corporately. Let's get ready for the harvest. Here's some ways we can do this:

- **Express your love and longings for God as a group.** Have extra times of worship without asking for anything but just praising God.

- **Delight in Jesus Himself.** Don't just worship God for what He has done for you, but delight in Jesus Himself and Who He is.

- **Learn to be unselfish in your prayers.** Don't always be me-centered but learn to be God-centered.

- **Pray the attributes of God and Jesus.** In your prayers say: "You are holy," "You are righteous," "You are good, forgiving, loving, merciful, etc."

- **Pray the names and descriptions of God and Jesus.** Worship God as: "Wonderful Counselor," "Prince of Peace," "Savior," "King of Kings," etc. Pray verses that go along with each name or description such as Isaiah 9:6:

> *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

In the coming days, may we be consumed with the person of Jesus Christ. May our affections be stirred to the limits of their intensity, and may we respond with an unearthly delight and an unspeakable joy.

This is what happened to a woman who delighted to worship Jesus with all that she had. She knew how to sit at Jesus' feet and seek one thing—Him alone. She was not caught up in the tyranny of the urgent as many of us are today. She knew what was essential. She was determined and single-minded. She beheld the beauty of the Lord (Psalm 27:4). She went beyond the call of duty in her devotion.

It was extravagant—it was powerful—it was a consuming reality.

In Matthew 26:6-13, we read about this woman who took an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume and poured it on Jesus' head as he was reclining at the table. Like Allison, this woman crossed the line of social and religious propriety when she entered a roomful of men.

But nothing could stop her from pouring on Jesus' head a jar of very expensive perfume worth a year's wages. We read in verses 8-9: *When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. "Why this waste?" they asked. "This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."*

But Jesus defended this woman when He said to those present, *"She has done a beautiful thing to me."* The word "beautiful" means noble, fine, and elegant. It pleased God. I am sure it excited His heart.

ADORATION. Extravagant passion. This woman knew what really mattered. Everything else springs from this. She teaches us the most important lesson—to love God extravagantly. Let's learn from her example. Let's learn to continually love God in the prayer room and to take that adoration and love everywhere we go.

> Whether we think of, or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for Him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than His love and the desire of pleasing Him. All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer when it is done in simplici-

ty according to the order of God… In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.[13]

Encountering God Life Application
How to Encounter God

The prayer room is a place for encountering God. In the prayer room we learn to adore God. And when we combine fasting with prayer, we can encounter God in a deeper dimension. Now seek to apply this chapter by prayerfully doing the following:

- Study the benefits of seeking God's face in this chapter - Write a paragraph about a time when you sought God's face in prayer. What did God do in your life as a result?

- Identify any personal transformation - Can you identify any victory or personal transformation that took place as a result of seeking God? Write about it.

- Study the eighteen benefits of fasting in Isaiah 58:6-12 - Write down any benefits you have found in your life as a result of fasting?

- Plan a time of personal fasting - Put it in your schedule for the next week or month. Journal during your fast, writing down anything the Lord may be saying to you. Take time to study this chapter during your fast.

- Spend extravagant time adoring God for who He is and what He has done in your life - Practice the section called "Ways to Adore God in the Prayer Room" during your fast and every day this week. End with "A Prayer for Encountering God."

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Get together with those who are interested in 24/7 prayer in your city. Have each person complete this assignment personally before meeting together. Be sure to discuss the eighteen benefits of fasting in Isaiah 58:6-12. Choose a day to fast and pray together for a House of Prayer. Before your fast, have each one study and apply "Ways to Adore God in the Prayer Room" from this chapter. On the day or evening of your fast meet together in the prayer room, whether it is in your church or in a House of Prayer in your city. Meet for at least two hours.

Come prepared with the Bible, music, no unconfessed sin, and a worshipping heart. Have live music or play a CD, and begin a time of worshipping God. Apply this chapter by praying the attributes of God and the names and descriptions of God. Take time to pray for each one's personal needs, especially as relating to this chapter, and together pray "A Prayer for Encountering God." Incorporate praying the attributes, names, and descriptions of God in your prayer meetings.

Our Prayer for Encountering God

Lord, we long to encounter You in our lives. We want to be like Moses who sought you face-to-face. We want our city to be one that seeks after Your presence. Bring us into unity as we seek Your face. Give us Your heart with Your passion in this prayer room, and burden our hearts to reach out to the lost that live here. Help us to fast and pray for transformation in our city. You promise in Your Word that our light will break out like the dawn, Your light will guide us; You will satisfy our needs and strengthen our frame, etc. [Continue praying through Isaiah 58:6-12, bringing before God His promises.]

Help us to fast and pray like Charles Finney, Rees Howells, and You when You fasted forty days and nights. Give us a hunger for prayer. Help us to focus on You alone. Come into the center of our every activity, and remove those things that keep us from encountering You. Capture our hearts, and reveal Yourself to us individually when we are praying alone, and corporately when we are praying together. We want to adore You and be wholly consumed with Your person.

We praise You because You are holy, righteous, good, all loving, merciful, etc. [Pray the attributes of God.] You are our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). You are the ruler of the kings of the earth, the faithful witness, the Alpha and Omega, the Almighty, the Living One (Revelation 1). [Pray the names, descriptions of God, and the Word of God.] We want to be like the woman who took an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume and poured it on Your head because she loved You so much. Help us to love You extravagantly with our lives. In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.
Psalm 105:2-4

CHAPTER THREE

Houses of Prayer and The Church

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened
in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you,
the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,
and his incomparably great power for us who believe.
Ephesians 1:18-19

WITH GREAT CURIOSITY and a sense of the unknown, we drove to a tiny village with our Spanish-speaking friends who knew the area well. After all, they had grown up in this remote part of Spain. They were so excited to show us around as they drove up and down curvy little mountain roads, displaying with great delight all the landmarks that made them who they are today—where they were born, where they first met and later were married—and now, at this final stop, a beautiful little park in a small village where members of their church had been baptized.

It was an unexpected day of adventure, and I thought to myself, "I wonder what this last stop will reveal to us. Where are we going now?"

Stepping out of the car, we walked slowly through the park. Suddenly, there it was—a small lake with a very calm surface and very clear water. But to my surprise, little bubbles were popping up everywhere. It was a bubbling brook. Deep down was an artesian well releasing tiny bubbles of air escaping to the surface—something I had never seen in such a way as this. It was quite a sight, and the water looked so clean you could probably drink it.

We walked on to the edge of that bubbling lake, and to my amazement we saw a small waterfall with water gushing forth and streaming out of that quiet, calm, bubbling lake. The water had turned into a flood like a mighty river going forth in power. It was something you would have never expected when you looked at this quite humble and insignificant-looking lake.

I thought to myself with excitement, "This is just like the 24/7 prayer movement. The artesian well is like the 24/7 prayer room."

- It's a place of peace and joy in prayer.
- It's a place of depth where God's people can gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and seek Him with all their hearts and soul (Psalm 27:4).
- It brings us into the reality of heaven and unlocks our hearts so we can enjoy God more.
- It increases our faith and teaches us to passionately pursue Him.

God is enlightening His Church to know the hope of their calling, the riches of their glorious inheritance, and His incomparable great power. This is what happens deep in the prayer room. Like these artesian wells, it never runs out of deep water but just keeps producing it continuously. It never runs dry. The bubbles are like the prayers of the people when they pray, intercede, and sing to the Lord. They surface out of that calm environment and make a mighty river of God's power that goes everywhere like a large, gushing flood.

God is raising up 24/7 prayer like this artesian well. Churches in cities throughout the world are catching the vision for prayer. People are beginning to pray as never before, and the bubbling brooks of prayer and worship are surfacing and making a powerful impact. Like a gushing river, God is beginning to move through the prayers of His Church.

In this chapter learn how 24/7 prayer helps the Church arise and prepares it for the future. Discover how Houses of Prayer can prepare the Church for revival. The following pages will help the Church in your city to pray for the needs in your community as well as nation. It will encourage and help churches to practice prayer combined with worship

as you pray for revival in your city. It will encourage churches to work towards building a House of Prayer as they read about the benefits of 24/7 prayer for the Church.

Helping the Church Arise

> The revelation David had about the emotions of God equipped his heart for a sustained abandoned pursuit of God, through his many weaknesses and failures, as well as his stunning victories. David is the picture of the end-time church, which will be a lovesick, worshipping warrior bride, and a people after God's own heart.[1]

After traveling extensively throughout Europe, I realized more than ever how day and night prayer would help advance what God is doing around the world. Darkness seemed to be invading every segment of society—you could sense the blindness as you talked with people on the streets and in the stores. God did not seem to be welcomed there.

Yet, there is such a desperate need for God to permeate every city, and this can only happen through prayer and worship. It is only the light that can cast out the darkness. Evil seems to be intruding into our nations at an alarming rate. At the same time, God's manifest presence can invade our cities through Houses of Prayer.

A good example of how this can happen is by looking at Asaph in Psalm 73. He was facing extreme difficulty and had almost lost his footing. Can you identify? He envied the arrogant when he saw their prosperity. They seemed to have no struggles and were free from burdens. They were carefree and increasing in wealth. They seemed to get away with violence and were actually prospering. Asaph felt as if it was useless to live a good life (Isaiah 73:1-16). The whole thing seemed to be extremely oppressive.

Now if we were honest most of us would say, "Hey, Asaph, that's exactly how I feel. I'm tired of seeing the wicked prosper."

But notice in this Psalm that everything changed in verse 17 when Asaph entered the sanctuary of God. It was right there that he began to

understand their final destiny. In the sanctuary of God (House of Prayer), he gained a fresh vision of the reality of God's love and justice (Psalm 73:17-28). Suddenly they would be destroyed and cast down to ruin. They were on slippery ground. They would be punished for their sin.

Asaph realized the personal love of God for himself. God was always with him and would guide him—God was his strength and would take him to glory—God was his refuge. The wicked were only enjoying temporary success.

Houses of Prayer will help the future Church arise.

Entering the sanctuary of God through prayer will help the Church to see the true reality of the situation out there in society. When it looks as if the wicked are prospering, the prayer room will keep the Church focused on the eternal rather than the temporary. The Spirit will release the glory of God upon the Church at the end of the age. God has put eternity in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Day and night prayer will help the Church to see the purposes and plans of God. Prayer will help us to know the hidden wisdom of God ordained before the ages (1 Corinthians 2:7-10). It will help us to persevere and stand together in unity. It will impact our communities and the world.

Benefits for the Church

Look at more ways that Houses of Prayer will benefit the Church. Take time to think about these benefits. Evaluate your own church as well as the corporate Church in your city in light of these benefits. Where does your church need to improve? Begin to pray these qualities into the Church in your city or nation.

- **Houses of Prayer will help the Church to passionately pursue God**. As I already mentioned, David is our Biblical example of a man after God's own heart. He burned with God's desires. He was moved with what moved the heart of God. He was a man of prayer and worship who passionately pursued God. Just as David hungered after God, the Church will grow in its passionate pursuit of Him as members of the body of Christ get involved in Houses of Prayer. There will be a

rebuilding of the Tabernacle of David (Matthew 29:18-20; Acts 1:8; 15:15-17; Ephesians 4:11-16; Revelation 19:7-10).

- **Houses of Prayer will help the Church to pray God's purposes and plans over a city**. In the prayer room God will show His Church how He feels about a city. It is there in His presence where He will reveal His plans, purposes, and heart for the city.

  David studied the emotions of God's heart. He was a man going after what was burning in God's heart. He wanted to know what God was feeling and what He was thinking. He wanted to know, not just what God did, but why He did it. He wanted to be intimately acquainted with the passion and affection of God.[2]

- **Houses of Prayer will help change and mature the Church in the city**. When you and I know the emotions and feelings in God's heart through prayer and intimacy, we can better obey Him. We can walk obediently in His Word and live radically for Him because His love sustains us. We then are able to obey God long-term because we are linked to His power rather than our own weakness.

  When you know what God's heart looks like, then you know what you look like to God. This is what motivates us to change our lifestyles. You'll never get anybody to change their actions long term until they change the way they view themselves before God.[3]

- **Houses of Prayer will help the Church to know the love of God and who she really is in Christ.** We know in a deeper dimension His great love for us even when we make mistakes. Most of us have little grasp of the overwhelming love of God for us personally and the deep pleasure He has in our fellowship with Him. When we spend time in an atmosphere of prayer and worship, we begin to feel loved by God and we begin to feel that we are lovers of God. We begin to feel that God enjoys us even when we make mistakes. We begin to move into a higher realm of God's love.

- **Houses of Prayer will help bring the Church into lavish devotion and concentration on God.** A place of continual

worship and prayer will cause members of the Church to live undistracted lives, with a greater ability to live focused on God and hearing his heartbeat. It is the Church, as she is increasingly in love with God and His cause, who will make the difference in the world. We are the ones who will see and be part of this wonderful end-time harvest.

- **Houses of Prayer will bring in the Kingdom of God and touch the lost in a city.** Reaching a city for God is going to take dedicated prayer warriors in order to dismantle the ruling powers of darkness in a city. Houses of Prayer will help the Church focus on bringing in the harvest. So many of the lost people in a city are searching for love to fill the empty void in their soul. Houses of Prayer will help the Church focus on bringing in the harvest with God's love.

- **Houses of Prayer will help to unite the Church, breaking down the barriers that divide.** People of various denominations and backgrounds, who are praying and worshipping together, bring a unity in the Spirit that breaks down the age-old barriers that have divided us for so long. It is the united Church that will be empowered to reach a dying world. The world will know we are Christians because of our unity and love.

- **Houses of Prayer will help the Church stand as watchmen for the Church worldwide.** Churches will take responsibility to stand in prayer for cities and nations. They will pray not only for their own needs, but also for the needs of their community. God will expand His Church to become a House of Prayer with perpetual prayer and perpetual encounters with God (2 Chronicles 7:14-15; Luke 18:1-8; Acts 2; 4:4, 6; 9:31; 12:24; 19:20; John 5:39; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 1-3, 4-5).

Understanding these benefits should give us a desire to see the Church throughout the world arise. It's time for the Bride of Christ to arise in beauty, knowing who she is and why she is here. Let's realize that the House of Prayer is our eternal identity (Isaiah 56:7). We are God's House. We are His family. Our identity is being in His house with His family. What a joyful realization and comforting truth this is to so many who feel completely alone and homeless deep in their heart. And

being in God's family, He graciously rises to show us compassion and blesses us through our prayers (Isaiah 30:18-19).

It's so exciting to realize that we are in an intimate partnership with Jesus' heavenly intercession when we pray. We grow in intimacy-based intercession in the House of Prayer. We are created to interact deeply with God's heart.

When we do, God's resources are released into the earthly realm—His favor, wisdom, finances, and righteousness are released as we pray. His resources are not released until we pray and move His heart (James 4:2). That's a lot to think about. Just to realize that Jesus will return to earth in answer to the global prayer movement is amazing (Isaiah 42:10-13).

Do you realize that, like Daniel, you can actually move angels and demons by your prayers to God? (Daniel 10:12).

Let me give you a real life picture of how this needs to happen globally, and how much we need to passionately pursue Christ together, in order to bring the Kingdom of God into our cities.

The Church in Martos, Spain

We were up in the mountains visiting a tiny church in Martos, Spain. They told me there were about 35 thousand people in that city and only two churches. The church we visited only had two families. Imagine that. If you were only a few Christians in a city, wouldn't you want to be united? I know I would. We would need all the fellowship we could possibly find. Now in that city there are just not very many believers.

Yet in many of our cities, even though there are plenty of Christians, we are often so divided. We need to be united in order to bring in the harvest. In the book of Acts the united Church saw a few thousand added to their number in a day (Acts 2:41).

When I looked at Martos, I realized how desperately a House of Prayer was needed in that area. Prayer could change the atmosphere of the entire city. That city has a redemptive story that may have been buried or forgotten. God wants to uncover and reactivate it through prayer.

Praying Christians can see the city with hope, and through prayer can unlock God's redemptive plan for the people living there. There is an identity in the city, and through prayer God can give keys to unlock His future for Martos.

Let's dream a little and imagine how a House of Prayer could help the Church arise in Martos. It would help the Church—though presently very small—to arise to her destiny by passionately pursuing Christ. It would help the Church to pray God's purposes over Martos. It would help God's people living there to obey His promptings in evangelism, knowing fully well their identity in Christ and their calling to reach the lost.

Through prayer the Church would see God open doors of blessing and close doors of oppression in the city. Instead of being withheld, God would release His eternal resources from heaven. His Word, spoken over Martos would not return void but would accomplish what He desires (Isaiah 55:11). The Church would love more because she would know how deeply she is loved. She would mature into full stature and would be lavishly devoted to God and committed to His plans for the city. She would begin to see God's Kingdom and presence invade every aspect of society, and transformation in Martos would begin to occur through the supernatural power of God.

Isn't it time to pray for Houses of Prayer to start everywhere, in all cities big and small?

Day and night prayer will help the Church to arise to her destiny as the glorious Bride of Christ. She will arise in her eternal House of Prayer identity.

One day the Church from every tribe, tongue, and nation will understand the reality that Jesus passionately loves her just as a husband loves a bride. She will be established in her bridal identity. She will understand her place of privilege, friendship, and intimacy. She will see the Kingdom with loyal, devoted love. As the Church is anointed and victorious by the Spirit for intercession, she will be effective in reaching the harvest. She will be empowered to walk in the grace of prayer with great authority, honor, and dignity. And her prayers will release the great harvest throughout the world.

May she arise as a passionate Bride, wholeheartedly seeking her Bridegroom King.

> We cannot function properly until we have passionately given our heart to a person and purpose beyond ourselves. If we don't have something to die for, then we don't have anything to live for. We don't work right half-hearted.[i]

Preparing the Church For the Future

> We will soon see prayer become the chief purpose and focus of the church, above any other activity. Intercession is no longer just an option. The basic calling of the church is to be "a house of prayer for all nations" (Mark 11:17). There are no remedies for human problems without God, and the whole earth is about to learn this.[5]

The church is in transition and preparation. As we just mentioned, she will one day see her identity as an eternal House of Prayer and a glorious Bride—but she does not see it yet. There is a wrestling inside, almost like a butterfly in a tiny cocoon trying to escape and spread her wings. She is just beginning to hear the voice of the Bridegroom as John the Baptist did (John 3:29). She is just beginning to desire one thing above all others—to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord as David did (Psalm 27:4). She is just beginning to realize her unique privilege and the close friendship and intimate knowledge that she can have with God's heart.

Things are happening quickly worldwide. We are all in God's end-time preparation whether we like it or not. Now is the time to lay hold of the absolute necessity of day and night prayer and ask God to create it in our churches and in our cities. God is giving us grace and authority in prayer to seek Him at this time, so let's take advantage of it. Let's seek to grow in fervent prayer.

In unity, we will be doing and saying the same things the Spirit is doing and saying. We will be in unity with God as we learn to walk in daily obedience by pursuing Him in prayer and guarding our hearts with all diligence (Proverbs 4:23).

God desires for us to have a dynamic role as we partner with Him in prayer in bringing His Kingdom on earth. This is how He will govern His universe. As we unite in prayer and worship, we will keep strong and stable when everything is shaking around us.

The prayer movement in a city is going to be one of the greatest stabilizing forces for the Church in that region. God hears the prayers of His people and brings victory (2 Chronicles 6:35, 40; 7:15). This will create the spiritual atmosphere that will enable all of us to bring in the harvest. Evil is increasing at an alarming rate. A House of Prayer can spiritually penetrate into the darkest areas of the city, causing those lost in the deepest darkness to come into the light and be set free.

With such a dynamic role in partnership with God, we must pray fervently for the prayer movement to arise and spread like fire.

In his book, *Healing the Nations*, John Sandford writes that the Church is seeing the beginning of visitation throughout the world.

> Over the past several years, the Lord has raised up an armada of intercessory ministries around the world. Through their efforts, multitudes have come together in citywide prayer, solemn assemblies, prayer summits, and reconciliation services. God has used the earnestness of this intercession to bring millions to repentance. The prayer movement has touched the heart of God; in turn, He has touched the heart of man. As a result of this prayer movement, the church is seeing the beginning of visitation throughout the world. Renewal, revival, and supernatural manifestations are being reported almost daily. Many feel we are closer to a great awakening than at any other time…[6]

Early one Sunday morning as we were on our way to a church two hours away, we made a quick stop at a gas station. When I went inside that gas station, I was instantly overwhelmed by the delicious smell of fresh bread and donuts. "Ummmmm" was about all I could say.

It smelled so good that it was hard for me to leave. I wanted to buy coffee and donuts immediately because I had been captured by the aroma of that bread. I used my will power and didn't buy any donuts, but I was strongly reminded that the prayers of the Church will be like a fragrant aroma that captures God's attention.

The Church will become a House of Prayer for the nations. Churches throughout the world will put prayer at the center of all of their activities. They will cry out to God for their city, country, and the nations of the world. Those who are searching for truth will not be able to stay away from the sweet-smelling aroma of prayer that will come from the prayer room. People will be drawn into the Houses of Prayer, and God's future Church will be filled with the aroma of Christ. This is what we have to look forward to! And those who have been in the prayer room will bring this sweet-smelling aroma with them everywhere they go—to school, their workplace, and into the streets.

Prepare by Praying for God's Future Church

> Prayer must become the main focus of the church. We will not be able to continue to expect the grace of God without prayer. We will come to know that the Lord answers prayer, and we will also come to know the consequences of not praying. Prayer is soon going to become our greatest devotion because the true believers, the bondservants are going to know that He answers prayer.[7]

How can we begin to prepare the Church for the future? How can we encourage this visitation of God upon His glorious Bride?

Day and night prayer will be a major part. It will become our greatest devotion. As many become aware of this great challenge of establishing day and night worship and intercession, here are a few things to realize as we pray for the preparation of the Church in the future:

- **There are many who are interested in seeing a House of Prayer established**. If God has given you a heart for prayer, don't think that you are alone. This model is catching fire and is on the heart of God and many of His people throughout the earth. Pray that the Church worldwide catches fire for prayer and that Houses of Prayer will be started in every city in every nation. Pray for God to raise up forerunners who begin to pray for Houses of Prayer. Pray for the starting of one in your city and the strengthening of prayer in your church.

- **God is already establishing this for the end-time harvest.** There are several ways that God has already been laying a

movement of prayer on the hearts of His people. Much of the work has already been done in the unseen, hidden prayer dimension. Pray for the strengthening of the foundation of prayer in all churches, and praise God for what has already been accomplished in prayer.

- **God will put the pieces together**. As the body of Christ rises up to this challenge, let's realize that only God can do it. We only have to be obedient step-by-step, listening carefully for His strategy and direction. Pray that God's people are obedient to do their part in establishing 24/7 prayer in their city. Pray that the Church listens to His strategy in every detail.

- **This will include the whole body of Christ**. No church will own a citywide House of Prayer, but it will be the unity of the body in all its glorious diversity. We have tried to do it alone long enough. Unity needs to be our constant prayer as these prayer houses develop. People have different ideas and plans, but God's purposes must prevail. Pray for the glorious unity of the body of Christ worldwide and in the Houses of Prayer as they develop.

- **God wants to dwell in cities and regions of the earth**. He wants the atmosphere so filled with united prayer and worship that it will then lead to a great harvest of souls. Pray for God to invade the cities and towns in your nation. Pray specifically for cities by name.

- **God alone must get all the glory for what He establishes**. We are preparing the way for the King. We want to pray in His Kingdom reign. It's not about us—it's all about Him. Pray that the Church in every nation gives God the glory for what He establishes, and welcomes His Kingdom reign in their city and nation.

- **Much fervent prayer is needed**. Prayer is needed before Houses of Prayer arise and fully bloom into what God wants them to be. The enemy hates it and will try to stop it all along the way. Pray that the Church worldwide rises up in fervent, persistent, and unceasing prayer.

That smell of fresh bread was so appealing. I wanted to taste it. I was so drawn to its appealing aroma. God's praying Church will be like that. The attractiveness of its beauty, the smell of its fragrance, and the power in its prayers to heal the sick and set people free will be too good to pass up. Millions will want to come into the Kingdom when the Church becomes beautiful with the fragrance of the Holy Spirit. It will happen. Watch and see.

As I have already mentioned, God is giving grace right now for prayer, and His future Church will be a grace-empowered praying Church. It will be a sincere Church that voluntarily loves Him by choice without condition or reserve. It will be an informed Church, filled with individuals who pursue the knowledge of God and are hungry to know Him. It will be a fulfilled Church, satisfying to the hungry and powerfully changing the world through its prayers.

I don't know about you, but I am excited!

> "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isaiah 56:7). Isaiah the prophet had a lot to say about this global prayer movement. He described a time when God's people worldwide will experience unusual grace and authority in prayer. He summarized this by declaring; God will name His Church a "House of Prayer". This prophetic naming is in itself a promise of functioning in grace empowered prayer. Imagine God naming the Church a "praying church". All over the earth, it will become common to hear of intercessory worship ministries that continue non-stop, 24 hours a day.[8]

Preparing the Church for Revival

> It was praying that rent the heavens; praying that received direct answers there and then. The spirit of intercession was so mightily poured out that the whole congregation would pray simultaneously for hours! Strangers were startled to hear the young and unlettered pray with such unction and intelligence as they were swept up to the Throne of Grace by the Spirit of God. Worship and adoration was unbounded. Praise began to mingle

> with the petitions as answered prayer was demonstrated before their very eyes.[9]

Fervent prayer prepares the way for revival. Day and night intercession and worship is a big key to revival. The combination of intercession and worship was a major part of the past revivals in history. Why are extended times of prayer so important? There are so many wonderful reasons. Let me name a few:

- Prayer changes us.
- It sets us free from worldly pursuits.
- It opens the way for uninterrupted time with God.
- It gives us a burden for what is on God's heart.
- It brings us into deeper humility and repentance.
- It draws us closer to God and brings revelation.
- It builds unity.
- It teaches us the Word.
- It brings extraordinary answers to prayer.

Wow! Doesn't that excite you? It does me. The benefits are so vast. In all my studies about revival, I have seen that day and night, intense, earnest prayer was one of the major keys found in all revivals. And it was prayer and worship together that brought the power of God to earth in a mighty outpouring of His Spirit.

I remember a time when we were living in Virginia Beach, and bad weather was rapidly approaching our area in the middle of the night. Not liking heavy storms, I quickly got up and anxiously turned on the television to see what they were reporting. The weather report was bleak. With brand new weather instruments, they were able to see the movements of the wind high up in the atmosphere. The winds were circling around; I could see little circles all over our area on the weather map.

Unfortunately there was a tornado watch. I don't like tornadoes. Being born in Minnesota, I had my fair share of tornado-like weather; I know

what damage they can cause. And now we live in Kansas City—and you know the movie called "The Wizard of Oz" and how Dorothy's house was taken up by a tornado in Kansas and dropped in the Land of Oz. Well, these clouds were all circular tornadoes high up in the sky. If they touched down, there would be a lot of destruction on the ground. To make matters worse, this same storm had produced destruction along its path throughout the south of the country. And now it was coming in our direction.

Thankfully these circling tornado clouds didn't touch down that night. We had experienced God's mercy and grace. But the weather reporter said that if they had swept through our area the previous afternoon when the weather was warmer, they would have caused a lot of damage in Virginia Beach. But because the evening hours had lowered the temperature, the clouds stayed high.

This reminds me of the preparation of the church for revival. When the church prays, God begins to form something in the atmosphere. His presence is like those circling tornado clouds forming as we pray. When the atmosphere of prayer and worship permeate a region, God begins to work. He is welcomed into a city. The heat and fire of prayer bring His presence and power into the atmosphere of a city.

Unlike the destruction that tornadoes bring, God is able to bring in His glory, His righteousness, and His light. But just as tornadoes destroy as they descend onto the ground, God sweeps in like the wind and is able to destroy wickedness, defeat ungodliness, and bring His salvation to those who desperately need it. He is able to purify His Church with His holiness.

When we praise God and use His double-edged sword (the Word of God) in intercession, vengeance is inflicted on the nations. We read in Psalm 149:6-9:

> *May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the LORD.*

Vengeance is God's just retribution on those who have attacked his Kingdom. We are at war every day, and God's Kingdom is under at-

tack. The combination of worship and prayer releases God's judgment against sin and rebellion on earth. It opens the way for revival in the nations.

You and I prepare the way for revival in the Church when we enter into day and night prayer and worship.

Just as tornado clouds formulate and circle around a center, unity is created through the Spirit of God by the combination of prayer and worship. This unity creates power, and the Church becomes a mighty vessel that releases God's presence into the city. This prepares the church for revival.

God brings forth beautiful, spontaneous worship and when blended with prayer, it becomes a powerful weapon of His glory. I find this to be true as God's people become familiar with the "harp and bowl" model of prayer (combining worship and singing together with Biblical prayer). The Biblical prayers bring forth the antiphonal singing. Singer adds to singer, and a beautiful unity comes forth as the very Word and will of God are prayed through the Holy Spirit. You'll read more about harmony in song and intercession in chapter six. It's like those circular tornado clouds descending to earth, reviving the people of God and bringing His presence into the city.

I have been in numerous prayer and worship meetings. Each one is unique and powerful, testifying to the creativity of God's Spirit. Read this exciting testimony taken from the Welsh revival of 1904. Notice how powerfully harmonious worship and praise is with the Spirit of God leading.

> The fact is, unless heard, it is unimaginable and when heard indescribable. There was no hymnbook. No one gave out a hymn. Just anyone would start the singing, and very rarely did it happen that the hymn started was out of harmony with the mood at the moment. Once started, as if moved by a simultaneous impulse, the hymn was caught up by the whole congregation almost as if what was about to be sung had been announced and all were responding to the baton of an invisible human leader. I have seen nothing like it. Such was the perfect blending of the mood and purpose that it bore eloquent testimony to a unity created only by the Spirit of God. Another witness testi-

> fied: "The praying and singing were both wonderful. There was no need for an organ. The assembly was its own organ as a thousand sorrowing or rejoicing hearts found expression in the Psalmody of their native hills."[10]

Not only is there a beautiful unity through the spontaneous worship created by the Spirit. In the same way, there is a beautiful unity when worship and prayer with the Word of God are combined. There is great strength in praying the Word of God, as we shall see in the next chapter. It heightens our awareness of the mind and heart of God. It adds tremendous strength and authority to our prays in an environment of worship together with praying the Word.

How does 24/7 prayer and worship prepare the way for revival? Why is the combination of prayer and worship in prayer so important?

Why Prayer and Worship is Key to Revival

> The release of a heavenly model of worship and intercession, with music and prayers woven together in a tapestry of ministry to the Lord, is key to the release of revival upon the earth. The Lord in His grace has revealed to us in the Word how He enjoys receiving ministry from us, and we neglect this revelation to our own loss… What we are beginning to understand is that worship is the essential warfare of the saints, for it releases the presence and power of God. From Psalm 22:3 we know that the praises of the people of God make up the throne on which He establishes His rule and authority, and so as we minister to Him we are confident that His power is released in the earth.[11]

Let's look at the reasons why the combination of prayer and worship in extended times of prayer are key for revival. Never has there been a revival without extended times of intensive prayer, nor will we ever see the final world revival ushering in the second coming of Christ without it. Here are some exciting reasons:

- **It brings us into the reality of heaven.** We must realize that worship and prayer are combined together in heaven around the throne of God. We are in the process of bringing heaven to earth in our cities and nations. We are copying what heaven is

doing by combining the interaction of the harp (worship) with the bowls of incense (prayers). See Revelation 5:8.

- **It unlocks our hearts.** The atmosphere of worship and praise opens our hearts in a greater dimension to fervent intercession, and a greater passion for Christ and His ways. It also unlocks our hearts to a greater gratitude for all God has done. I cannot help but move to a higher level in my intercession when praise and worship are combined. I find this true when I'm praying alone as well as in prayer meetings.

- **It increases our faith.** I have seen and experienced how the singers fuel the intercessors, and the intercessors fuel the singers, until all seem to move into a higher realm of faith. The Word of God is prayed with greater certainty, with deeper passion, and with an unquenchable faith.

- **It attracts us to enjoyable prayer.** There is no doubt about it. God wants us to enjoy prayer. There is no way we can move into day and night prayer without an enjoyment of it. It is much too hard and strenuous a work. We need our hearts to say, "Yes, I want to do this! Yes, our city can get into this because God is making it enjoyable."

- **It increases our perseverance in prayer.** Many times I have heard people say that the time goes by so quickly. There seems to be an ability and grace to pray for longer periods of time when prayer and worship are combined. Many who find it hard to pray for any length of time suddenly are able to spend hours in the prayer room.

- **It brings forth an anointing for spiritual warfare.** It breaks the hold of the enemy in cities. It opens the way for a freedom to proclaim the Gospel. The Kingdom of God invades the territory. The combination of prayer and worship releases God's justice. Praise, worship, and prayer is a powerful combination and a mighty force against the kingdom of darkness. We come into agreement with God's heart and things change.

God is preparing His Church around the world for revival. He is preparing us individually as well as corporately.

> There is an irrefutable law in history that revival (justice) is released in a measure whenever night and day worship and intercession are offered. Wherever night and day prayer has emerged in history there is always a Divine breakout of speedy justice. It cannot be stopped.[12]

Let's pray that the Church worldwide would grow in prayer and worship. Psalm 132 is a psalm crying out for revival. The psalmist reminds God of King David's devotion and dedication in pursuing righteousness. David had vowed to God that he would find a place for God, a dwelling place. His heart was set in seeking Him. He would not let go until God had a dwelling place on earth.

Revival is finding God that resting place. It will be geographic places where God's Spirit is released in power. It will be a resting place where people can live in agreement with and in obedience to the Holy Spirit. When the Church is obediently following God, praying fervently, and living holy and righteous lives, then God's reviving power will be manifested in that city. The power of God will be experienced in His people both individually and corporately.

God is giving a special grace and an increase in prayer at this time in preparation for this end-time revival.

Some of us are just beginning to get started. Don't be overwhelmed. A momentum is building and a spirit of prayer and worship is being released across the earth. My suggestion to you is to start small. Music CDs that demonstrate prayer with worship can be found in many Christian bookstores. Purchase a few of these music CDs for members of your prayer and worship teams in your church, and begin to listen to them over and over again. You can purchase excellent worship with intercession music CDs through the IHOPKC online bookstore as well as watch the live 24/7 webstream at www.ihopkc.org.

We did this in our church. Everyone was listening to the music CD called *Apostolic Prayers*. They're a great example of "harp and bowl" worship and prayer sessions and a powerful way to pray. I use worship CDs regularly in the nations where I go to minister. We use them in the atmosphere of our own home. Houses of Prayer around the world like to play the live web stream of 24/7 prayer on large screens in their prayer rooms whenever they can't have live worship.

This will bring you into the atmosphere of what prayer combined with worship is like. It will create a hunger in your soul and an excitement in your heart for praying the Word of God**.** Worship together with prayer will begin to touch your church with the atmosphere of heaven, and will prepare you and your city for a mighty revival.

> Intercession is agreement with what God promises to do. Intercession is expressed by declaring what He will do. In heaven the worship and intercession flow as one river. When we tell God who He is then our faith expands with the revelation of the transcendent God of power and beauty. Then when we agree with what He will do in intercession, we do it in great faith.[13]

Praying Church Life Application
How to Help the Church Arise in Prayer

The Church will arise in power through Houses of Prayer. Review this chapter, and think about your own church and the Church worldwide. Answer the following questions thoughtfully:

- In what ways have you experienced the combination of prayer together with worship? Think about the prayer meetings you have been involved in. Have you experienced any of the following? Explain

  - The ability to pray longer and with greater ease.
  - An unlocking of your heart to a greater reality of heaven.
  - An increase in faith and perseverance.
  - An increase in enjoyable prayer.
  - A greater anointing in prayer, especially in spiritual warfare praying.

- Study Psalm 73. Asaph felt as if it was useless to live a good life (Isaiah 73:1-16). In the sanctuary of God (House of Prayer) he gained a refreshed vision of the reality of God's love and justice (Psalm 73:17-28). In what way can you relate to how he felt both before and after verse 17?

- Look at the benefits of Houses of Prayer for the Church from this chapter. Which ones are particularly meaningful as you look at the needs and characteristics of the churches in your city and your own church? In what way does prayer and worship prepare the way for revival?

- Do you see an awareness of the need for a House of Prayer in your city? In what ways is the Church in your city in transition? Explain your answers, and then pray the following prayer requests for the Church to arise in your city and all throughout the world:

  - Locations. Because the enemy fights unity in prayer so strongly, there are sometimes difficulties in getting a neutral

location and the right facilities for Houses of Prayer. Pray for God's perfect locations in your city and worldwide.

- Countries. Pray for Houses of Prayer in every city in every country. Praise God for the many countries that now have Houses of Prayer. See www.24-7prayer.com for encouragement.
- Signs, wonders, and healings. Many will come to know the Lord in the last days because of signs, wonders, and miraculous healings. Pray for physical and emotional healings inside and outside the Church through Houses of Prayer.

You may want to include the prayer requests under the section in this chapter called "Prepare by Praying for God's Future Church."

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Get together with a group, and go through the above exercise by carefully answering each question. Especially spend time discussing Psalm 73. You may want to read it together. Close in prayer by asking God to lead you in a time of prayer for the Church in your city as well as worldwide.

Then with singers, instruments, and intercessors, take it into the prayer room. With Bible in hand, pray for the Church in your city, nation, and world for at least an hour using these prayer requests and the ones in the section of this chapter called "Prepare by Praying for God's Future Church". Use Scripture in your prayers and singing.

After finishing, leave the prayer room and discuss the first question together. With worship and prayer combined, how did you experience an unlocking of your heart with greater enjoyment in prayer, an increase in faith and perseverance, and greater anointing and freedom to pray? Close in prayer.

Our Prayer for the Church

Lord, we pray for the Church in our city and around the world [Name your city.] Help us to seek You and dwell in Your House. Teach us to gaze upon Your beauty (Psalm 27:4). Prepare us for

revival. We know that prayer and worship prepares the way. May the praise of God be in our mouth and a double-edged sword in our hands (Psalm 149:6). Teach our church to worship and pray. Bring the Church in our city into enjoyable and anointed prayer. Unlock the hearts of Your people into the beauty of prayer. Teach us perseverance, and give us greater faith in prayer. Cause us to arise in prayer and passionately pursue You. Help us to know our identity and give You our devotion and praise. Unite our churches in prayer, and break down every barrier. We want to focus on the lost and see Your Kingdom come on earth.

Help Your Church to transition into the end times. Bring Your Church worldwide into the reality of heaven. Raise up forerunners in prayer, and strengthen the foundation of prayer in Your Church. Help us all to be obedient step-by-step, and listen to Your strategy and direction in every detail. Help us to pray Your purposes and plans in our city. We ask You to fill the atmosphere of our city with praise and worship. Invade our city with the atmosphere of Your presence. Thank You that Your Church will become a grace-empowered praying Church. You are forming Her into a beautiful Bride. We give You glory and praise. In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come (Ephesians 1:18-21).

CHAPTER FOUR

Houses of Prayer and Wisdom

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the glorious Father,
may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation,
so that you may know him better.
Ephesians 1:17

A FATHER WAS TRAVELING with one of his sons to a city in another country. The journey was long—it would take several days—and they were going on this journey all alone. The son had a good relationship with his father. They were close. He always spent quality time with him alone, as well as with his other brothers and sisters. In his hometown he and his family members would get together daily and spend time talking with their father.

They went through forests and mountains during their journey together. The son loved to explore as they went. When they would enter a valley, the boy would want to run far to the other side. When they passed a mountain, the boy would ask his father if he could climb it. He was incredibly adventurous, and as they traveled longer on their journey, he would get bolder and want to do greater things.

One day he wanted to go farther than he had ever gone before. He wanted to venture off the road a greater distance than he had ever attempted in the past. The father agreed with his request. But as the boy began, he became fearful and said, "Father, how will I know if I've gone too far?" The loving father looked at his dearly beloved son and

said, "I'll call your name every few minutes, and you answer my call. If you get to a place and you can't hear my voice, you'll know that you have wandered too far."

In a similar way, day and night prayer keeps us on the right path where we can easily hear God's voice. His voice is the voice of wisdom and strength. We are entering days of turbulence where many voices are calling for our attention. As I have already mentioned, evil is increasing. We are often like this boy, venturing on many unsure paths and attempting to find our way through unknown mountains and valleys.

The world is like a jewelry store where the thieves have switched the price tags. Some things are priced so high, but they are worthless. Other things are so valuable, but they are moved to the very back of the shelf and are priced as cheap.

We need the stability of Houses of Prayer in our cities to keep us walking in the wisdom and guidance of God so that we may clearly discern what is worthwhile. Like this boy, as we venture out by faith we can walk in the wisdom of God. We can call and listen, hearing his voice clearly because of the strength of the prayers in our personal lives and in our city. God will impart to us daily the Spirit of wisdom and revelation as we seek him in our city and in our personal lives. We will then treasure the wisdom of God as we practice it in our daily lives.

In this chapter we will get very practical about the prayer room and how to pray. You may want to use it to conduct a prayer workshop for people who want tips on how to start. See www.intercessorsarise.org for helpful resources, teachings, and my other books on prayer that are designed for teaching others and for practical application. You may want to provide simple prayer guidelines on how to pray constructively.

In the following pages, discover some practical tips in starting a House of Prayer in your city and learn how to increase prayer in your church. Find helpful ways to pray that keep your prayer meeting on the straight path. Discover guidelines for Houses of Prayer to enable the Church in your city to walk in paths of wisdom. Gain practical wisdom to apply while in the prayer room.

Treasures of Wisdom Released

> It's very valid to pray for spiritual passion, for consuming zeal, for a release of insatiable hunger in your heart, for holy thoughts and godly desires. It's valid to pray that you might see and feel what the Father sees and feels when He beholds His dear Son. It's valid to cry out for intimacy with the person who feeds you from His own hand, the person who guards your soul, the person who gives you wisdom and revelation, the person from whose mouth comes knowledge and understanding.[1]

As we near the end of the age, there is the increasing necessity to know God's wisdom in our personal lives and in the corporate body of Christ. We cannot afford to live undisciplined, prayerless lives. It's time to pray for a spiritual passion and zeal to consume the people of God. We need to cry out to God for a new level of His wisdom.

Day and night prayer and worship releases the wisdom and the purposes of God. He will give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation when we pray for it (Ephesians 1:17-19). This will enable us to live out God's will in a practical way. He will direct us to do the most important things at the right time. This will bring a greater increase of fruitfulness and effectiveness as we move out of the prayer room armed with the wisdom and authority of God.

I believe that every time I enter the prayer room to seek God, I receive new revelation for the day. My burdens and thoughts seem to transfer into God's way of thinking. What seems perplexing or confusing in life turns into a new dimension of understanding when in God's presence. God's wisdom is worth more than gold. It's something you have to dig for, but every time you enter His presence, you discover new nuggets of truth that seem to change everything around you. And God's wisdom is so desperately needed in today's world. Even the secular environment puts a high value on wisdom.

Henry Ford, who specialized in the auto industry, asked electrical genius Charlie Steinmetz to build the generators for his factory. One day all the generators suddenly stopped working without explanation, and the repairmen could not discover the problem. Henry Ford called Steinmetz to come and fix the problem. Steinmetz tinkered with the machines for a few hours, threw on the switch, and the generators im-

mediately came to life! Later Ford got a bill for $10,000. In those days that was really a lot of money. He was extremely upset and asked Steinmetz why he got such a high bill. Steinmetz's reply was, "For tinkering with the generator's - $10. For knowing where to tinker - $9,990." Ford paid the bill.[2]

When we spend time in the House of Prayer, God shows us His wisdom that can radically impact our society. When the world around us stops working, we will know where to tinker to find the power of God. Through prayer, we will see His wisdom.

Practical Wisdom in the Prayer Room

The wonderful thing about God's presence in the prayer room is that He seems to ambush you, and you don't want to leave. I have seen the prayer room change people in prayer dramatically over a short period of time. What happens is quite supernatural.

One key as we start praying in the prayer room is simplicity. The prayer room is for beginners as well as the experienced. Everyone can do it. Encourage people to try different ways of prayer—reading a Psalm, praying the Scriptures, writing a song or letter to God, standing, kneeling, lying down, reading a devotional on prayer, singing, praying out loud, silent prayer, soaking prayer, etc.

Here are some helpful hints to keep in mind. Some of them I've already written about, but because they are so important I'll mention them again.

- **Pray the promises of Scripture.** Claim God's promises in Scripture over your city, church, and family. God's Word will not return void (Isaiah 55:11). When you pray God's promises over your family, neighborhood, or nation, you are planting seeds of God's Word that will eventually grow and produce a harvest. Because praying the Word of God is so important in your House of Prayer, I've dedicated the next chapter to teaching you how.

- **Pray for revival in your church, city, and nation.** It is wise to bathe your area in prayer for revival. This releases God's Spirit in the city. Spiritual breakthroughs usually come after

Houses of Prayer are established. I've emphasized this in the last chapter.

- **Pray for things that are familiar with others in your geographical area.** Pray for the needs in your area that are common to those in the prayer meeting. People can best agree in prayer over common concerns in the city.

- **Don't pray long prayers.** Realize that three to five minute prayers are long enough. In a corporate prayer meeting, you want many to be involved. When one person dominates the prayer room, others who desire to pray can feel frustrated. Here at the International House of Prayer we often pray ten to fifteen second prayers called "rapid fire" prayers.

- **Don't inform God or others of the details of specific circumstances.** God knows the circumstances, and others do not need to be informed. Too much time is often taken in sharing a prayer request rather than praying it.

- **Don't teach or preach to others in your prayers.** Always remember that you are praying to God and not others. Concentrate on Him, and pray to Him directly.

Realize that God uses all kinds of prayers. Variety is the key. Let people pray the way they want. There will be times of silence and times of music, times of intercession and times of thanksgiving, times of meditation and times of reading and praying the Scriptures. Some people are loud and some are quiet. Some kneel and some pace the floor. Some like to be alone in the prayer room and some like to pray in groups. The diversity of prayers and people is amazing. It's different from hour to hour, and that's what makes it so fresh and alive.

Did you know that praying Biblical prayers for wisdom will have a dramatic effect in your city?

God wants to enlighten the eyes of our heart with a spirit of wisdom and revelation (Ephesians 1:17). To tap into the revelatory power of God, we need to experience the wisdom of the Holy Spirit on the inside. He lives within us and is always with us. He is the one who will open our spiritual eyes. When we pray for a spirit of wisdom and reve-

lation, the Holy Spirit will give it to us. Divine information is released in our heart, and this changes us. He imparts His power to us.

With this in mind—having the very presence, wisdom, and power of the Holy Spirit living in you—permeate your area with prayers for the treasures of God to be released in wisdom and understanding. The following Scriptures will help you. They are so powerful. Begin to pray them over your city and over the body of Christ.

- **Pray that the wisdom of the treasures and mystery of Christ will be released in your city.**

  My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:2-3).

- **Pray that the wisdom of the Spirit is released in your life.**

  Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God (Psalm 43:3-4).

- **Pray that the wisdom of God's purposes will be released in the corporate Church.**

  Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles, the boundless riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord (Ephesians 3:8-11).

- **Pray that the wisdom of God will be released in ministries and churches in your city.**

  For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with

the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:9-10).

- **Pray that the wisdom needed for a House of Prayer will be released in your life and others in your city.**

  Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long (Psalm 25:4-5).

Realize that when Houses of Prayer are started in your city, God will release His Spirit of wisdom in increasing measure. Pray these Biblical prayers for wisdom individually, in your church prayer meetings, in your citywide prayer meetings, and in any Houses of Prayer in your city and nation.

Begin where you are presently. If you do not have a House of Prayer in your city, pray these prayers over your region so that God can prepare the area for what He wants to do. Maybe you feel that your own church really needs to grow in prayer. Pray these prayers for your church.

When you pray for wisdom, you are coming into agreement with God's Spirit and His Word. This releases God's favor on your circumstances. God begins to give you greater hope, and hope brings stability and a greater ability to focus on His purposes for your life and city. Hope gives you certainty of God's way. Your faith will increase, bringing confidence (Hebrews 3:6; 10:23; 11:1). But you need to ask the Holy Spirit what He wants in every single decision you make. Ask for His will regardless of the cost. All throughout the process of starting a House of Prayer ask the Holy Spirit:

- What are you saying and doing?
- What do you want us to do?
- Give us Your wisdom in building Your House of Prayer.

Don't let the devil discourage you along the way, but KNOW that God is more interested in a House of Prayer than you are. Imagine that! It's

His plan and desire. He initiates it. He will bring it about in His timing—so do not grow weary. Pray that the Spirit of prayer would fall on the Church regionally and worldwide. We read in Zechariah 12:10a:

> *And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication.*

Know that God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge are available to the Church in your city as well as to you personally. Think about that long and hard. Don't focus on the immensity of the task or look at the outward appearance. Houses of Prayer start slowly. Instead focus on the wisdom and power of God.

> Knowing God and having Him reside within you is a treasure of infinite value. Jesus likened this value to that of a perfect pearl. The collector would readily sell everything he had in order to possess this one matchless pearl (Matthew 13:45-46). Your relationship with God places an immeasurable value on your life. The treasure of God's wisdom and knowledge are available to you through Christ (Colossians 2:2-3). His love now fills you. His incomprehensible peace surrounds your heart and mind (Philippians 4:7).
>
> When Jesus dwells in your life, everything available to Christ dwells within you (Ephesians 3:19). Don't focus on outward appearances and physical strength, for these deteriorate. Rather, allow the Holy Spirit to convince you of the infinite treasure that is within you because of God's presence.[3]

Developing a Dynamic Prayer Life in the Prayer Room

> To the average Christian the command "pray without ceasing" is simply a needless and impossible life of perfection. Who can do it? We can get to heaven without it. To the true believer, on the contrary, it holds out the promise of the highest happiness, of a life crowned by all the blessings that can be brought down on souls through his intercession. And as he perseveres, it becomes

> increasingly his highest aim upon earth, his highest joy, his highest experience of the wonderful fellowship with the holy God.[4]

Did you know that God passionately desires that we partner with Him in prayer?

We have a dynamic role in determining the measure of the quality of our life, because God opens doors of blessing when we pray. But we have to rise up in prayer and partner with Him or we will not see these blessings. It is wise to develop a dynamic prayer life. God seeks for those who will stand in the gap and pray (Ezekiel 22:30). The prayer room is an excellent place to develop a dynamic prayer life both personally and corporately. I have seen it happen many times. Individuals seem to leap forward in prayer in an incredible way when they catch the vision of 24/7 prayer.

Why does God love our prayers?

It seems to be a mystery, doesn't it? Prayer and intercession draws us into intimacy and at the same time, humbles and transforms us. When we bring our needs to God in prayer, we interact with God's heart. He loves when we verbalize our prayers. He wants us to ask in order to receive (James 4:2). He even withholds blessing if we do not ask. God will answer and be gracious to us if we pray and ask (Isaiah 30:18-19).

When we pray we are in governmental partnership with God, and we are changed on the inside as His Word abides in us. We are filled with His heart, and our effectiveness in prayer increases. We then decree His decrees with power from on high (Job 22:27-28). Wrong things are made right, the sick are healed, those bound in sin are freed, and revival is released in geographical areas. It's marvelous!

God initiates prayer by declaring His will in His Word. We respond by praying His Word. Then He answers us by releasing His blessing because of our prayers. Our prayers are actually very powerful even during those days when we feel they are very weak. Prayer and intercession cause us to internalize God's Word because when we speak His ideas back to Him, our minds are illuminated and our hearts are touched. His Words impart life, as we will see in the next chapter (John 6:63). His Word builds us up and delivers us (1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12; Acts 20:32; James 1:21). God's mind then dominates and saturates ours, renewing us as we pursue Him in prayer.

I love to hear stories about Charles Finney because Norm comes from New York. Charles Finney was a lawyer from New York in the 1800's whom the Lord used greatly to bring about revival. He soon quit his law practice and went into times of prayer and fasting. Over 100,000 were considered converted during his meetings with 80% continuing on with the Lord. That was a large number of people in those days.

What was the main secret of his spiritual success?

He had two faithful intercessors, Daniel Nash and Abel Clary, who believed in fervent prayer. They would go ahead of Finney to the cities where he was going to preach, and they would cry out to God and weep in prayer for those cities. Sometimes they would writhe and groan in agony over souls. God honored their prevailing prayers and sent revival.[5]

These amazing results were because of prayer!

In the parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18:1-8, Jesus exhorts us to cry night and day. We must learn to be steadfast in prayer with great endurance. Satan's warfare against us is to undermine our faith by tempting us to lose heart and confidence in prayer. The Bible promises us that we will reap if we do not grow weary (Galatians 6:7-9).

If we look at Jesus' disciples, their request was not to have a big ministry or great fame. They asked Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1). They saw that everything that happened in Jesus' ministry was because of His prayer life. Throughout the Bible we see that those who God used greatly were men and women of prayer. E. M. Bounds in his book, *E. M. Bounds on Prayer,* says:

> Christ, who in this as well as in other things is our example, spent many whole nights in prayer. His custom was to pray much. He had His habitual place to pray. Many long seasons of praying made up His history and character. Paul prayed day and night. Daniel's three daily prayers took time away from other important interests. David's morning, noon, and night praying was doubtless on many occasions very long and involved. While we have no specific account of the time these Bible saints spent in prayer, the indications are that they devoted much time to prayer, and on some occasions long seasons of praying were their custom. [6]

Action Plan for Your Prayer Time

It's good to have an action plan in the prayer room during the quieter times when there is no active verbal intercession. This will help you stay focused and engaged. A prayer action plan will keep your mind from wandering. Realize that you are speaking to a real person who loves you. Be attentive, and focus your mind on the Father who sits on His throne (Revelation 4). When there is verbal intercession in the prayer room, listen and pray with them. Let's look at some ways we can develop a dynamic prayer life in the prayer room.[7]

- **Have a personal Bible plan.** Daily read several chapters in the Bible or whole books of the Bible. There are several Bible plans. Find one that is helpful for you.

- **Pray the Bible.** Pray the apostolic prayers and other Biblical prayers. Pray phrases of what others are praying from the Bible in the prayer room.

- **Have a prayer list for others.** Include specific places (cities, nations) and people (friends, ministries, unsaved, governmental authorities, etc.).

- **Pray for strategic social issues.** Pray about current disasters and social crises. Pray regarding the issues of abortion and homosexuality, etc.

- **Have a personal prayer list.** Pray for your personal circumstances such as your physical, financial, and relational situations.

  - Pray for your own heart (intimacy, fear of God, purity, speech, a spirit of prayer).

  - Pray for your mind (your understanding of God's purposes, a spirit of revelation of God's emotions, will for your life, and end-time purposes).

  - Pray for your ministry (anointed hands and words, contending for God's purposes, authority and conviction in your words, insight into the secrets of God's heart, fruitfulness).

- **Pray for wisdom.** Mike Bickle encourages us to pray for the following:

  - Revelation of God's personality and His Word with wisdom to walk out the practicality of love and humility (Eph. 1:17).

  - Knowledge of God's personal love for me (Ephesians 3:17-19; 1 John 3:1).

  - Revelation of God's will for my life (Colossians 1:9).

  - Revelation of God's end-time purposes (Daniel 11:35; 12:10).

  - Personal revelation of eternity (Psalm 39:4-6; 90:12), the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21), the Judgment Seat (1 Cor. 3:11-15), the resurrected body (1 Corinthians 15) and hell (Revelation 20:11-15).

Houses of Prayer will help us develop dynamic prayer lives.

The prayer room strengthens our personal and corporate prayer life. When we draw near to God in the House of Prayer, he will draw near to us (James 4:8). In the prayer room we get to know God's love for us in a deeper way. We grow in confidence that God loves us. We discover His heart for us. God's light drives out darkness and energizes our spirits (Luke 11:36). Our spiritual capacity is enlarged in the prayer room. We experience the supernatural impact of God's light in our lives. We then turn away from sin, and we come to the realization of Song of Solomon 7:10:

> *I belong to my beloved, and His desire is for me.*

In the prayer room we delight in God and His Words, and He delivers us (Romans 7:22-25). He washes us with His Word. The devil can't get us with his accusations and condemnations (Revelation 12:10) as we spend time in the prayer room.

I don't know about you, but this is very convincing to me. The prayer room seems to be the place where we can learn to live in victory and wisdom. Let's pray and ask God for His light to enter our hearts (Psalm 43:3). Let's pray for His Word to grip our minds (Psalm 119:18, 105, 130; Colossians 3:1-3) and help us to make quality decisions to walk in righteousness daily (Psalm 24:3-6; 119:11, 32). May His Word

empower us to obey His commands and daily set our hearts on wholehearted obedience.

God's end-time strategy is day and night prayer. He is calling us to believe and develop a radical prayer life. It will be costly and sacrificial, but it will be well worth the effort (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 1 John 3:16-18). We are celebrating the life of Jesus in prayer. We are standing for justice and freedom for mankind. This end-time prayer movement will be full of the Spirit and the Word of God. Our prayers will not be lifeless, but they will have power to change nations and cities. As you come to Him in prayer:

- Picture what God wants to do in and through your life.
- Picture with the eyes of faith what He wants to do in your city.
- Picture the answer in your mind, and pray towards that vision.

Your prayers will influence those around you in a powerful way. Developing a dynamic prayer life is the wisest thing we can do with our life. Nothing will happen without it.

> They may start from different points, and travel by different roads, but they converge to one point: they are one in prayer. To them, God is the center of attraction, and prayer is the path that leads to God. These men do not pray occasionally—not a little or at odd times. But they pray in such a way that their prayers enter into and shape their very characters. They pray so as to affect their own lives and the lives of others, and to cause the history of the church to influence the current of the times. They spend much time in prayer, not because they watch the shadow of the dial or the hands on the clock, but because it is to them so momentous and engaging a business that they can scarcely quit.[8]

Guidelines for Houses of Prayer

> Of what infinite importance is the place the intercessor holds in the Kingdom of God! Is it not indeed a matter of wonder that God should give men such power? Yet there are so few who know what it is to take hold of His strength and pray down His

> blessing on the world… God rules the world and His church through the prayers of His people. That God should have made the expansion of His Kingdom to such a large extent dependent on the faithfulness of His people in prayer is a stupendous mystery and yet an absolute certainty. God calls for intercessors; in His grace He has made His work dependent on them. He waits for them.[9]

Starting and maintaining a House of Prayer is not a simple task, yet it is God's desire and of infinite importance. His work depends on it, but it takes His wisdom and partnering with His Spirit to do it in the right way. You want to do everything in obedience and under the direction of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 127:1; John 3:8). You want to always seek to do what you see the Father doing. It is a lot of hard work for everyone involved.

This is why teamwork is so important—teamwork with the Holy Spirit and with others. Starting and maintaining a House of Prayer is a relational ministry involving not only relating to God, but also relating to others and praying in unity (John 15:14-15; Luke 10:1-22; 1 John 4:7-12). You want to include others who may even be different than you—different cultures, denominational backgrounds, ages, and genders. You want to build unity but enjoy diversity (Colossians 3:11; Ephesians 4:3-6).

24/7 Houses of Prayer require careful planning and clear guidance.

It's easier to maintain a House of Prayer for a day or a week, but to have it 365 days a year is another story! You need dedicated people to keep it going when it's long term.

We noticed that many joined us in the exciting stage at the beginning of our first one-month House of Prayer in Spain. But the second one was harder because the excitement had worn off, and some of the excitement seekers left. God had brought the House of Prayer to a different stage, and a new level of commitment was needed. But when we are partnering with the Holy Spirit, none of these things need to discourage us. After all, let's always remember that God's heart is for day and night prayer.

As you think about starting a House of Prayer in your church or city, fervently pray about every aspect of it. Ask yourselves the following questions:

- **How long should we continue?** This is a very important question to answer. Do you want to have a one-week House of Prayer and later work up to a longer one? Do you want to have a one-month House of Prayer and include other churches in your city? Do you want to pray a few consistent hours a week all year and then increase your hours as you grow? Or do you want to have a short 24/7 in your own church to spread the vision for prayer?

- **When should we start, and who should be involved?** This is important to determine in advance. You should prayerfully ask God when you should start and who should be involved. Is it to increase prayer in your church or to involve your entire city with other churches and other denominations?

- **Where should our prayer room be located, and what should be in it?** Prayerfully choosing the location of the prayer room is important. If it is citywide, the location should be neutral. This is because it belongs to the city and not one individual church. But realize that God is using a variety of places. He loves creativity and variety. What you put in the prayer room and how you decorate it is also extremely important. You are creating an atmosphere for prayer.

A fixed location is a great blessing because there is a sense of God's presence in a place that is designated for prayer. So often I have heard individuals say that they could feel God's presence in the prayer room. Many have said, "I can pray easier without distractions in a prayer room." For some special reason, individuals are able to leave their daily life behind when they come into a place that is used only for prayer. It's almost as if you can immediately take a giant step forward into intimacy with God in the prayer room.

A designated prayer room gives a sense of community and accountability with others who want to pray. When I used to go into the prayer room in Virginia Beach and pray for our nation with other women who have that same burden, I felt so united and linked in purpose. There was a sense of community. The burden became lighter, and we all left with a sense of victory. And when you knew that others were going to be there at 12:00 noon on Thursdays, you felt more accountable to show up to pray.

Prayer rooms are so good because Christians are looking for a place that is holy—and in an unholy world—it's like a breath of fresh, clean air.

You are entering holy ground. Often we took off our shoes because of a sense of the holiness of God. The creative environment of most prayer rooms point people Godward in a time when we desperately need to see things from God's point-of-view instead of men's.

Now that I am living at the International House of Prayer in Kansas City (IHOPKC), I always hear visitors say how powerfully they sense the presence of God in the global prayer room. With a few hundred people united in worship and prayer at any given hour, you can sense the power and majesty of God on a daily and hourly basis. It's beautiful!

Creative Approaches

> *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in every one, it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good* (1 Corinthians 12:4-7).

There are so many creative approaches to 24/7 prayer all around the world. The same Spirit works so many different and creative approaches to Houses of Prayer. Some examples of various places are homes, basements, shacks, chapels, church buildings, offices, shopping centers, prisons, and dedicated prayer rooms.

Ask God to show you not only the right place, but the right timing. Plan carefully. Ask yourself, "Is this the best time when people will be in town?" Look at the big picture in your city. Are you building up to something bigger evangelistically in your community or church?

We had a month-long House of Prayer in our city right before the 400th anniversary of our nation and before a big evangelistic Graham Celebration. We chose this time very carefully, and it fit perfectly into what was happening—not only in our city—but also in our nation.

Maybe you are thinking about a continuous 24/7 House of Prayer in your city and want to start by creating a short season of prayer and

then doing longer ones later. Remember that the local church is the primary cornerstone of the House of Prayer. Some churches and cities like to look at the seasonal approach to prayer. It's better to quit when you're ahead than to drag it on too long. You want to leave people hungry and eager for the next time.

Not only are there a variety of places, there are also a lot of different approaches to 24/7 prayer. Some like to sign up for one-hour slots or sets and fill in 24 hours. Some like two-hour sets. Think about how long individuals should be in the prayer room at one time in your House of Prayer.

Here at the International House of Prayer (IHOPKC) the staff is encouraged to spend two hours at a time in the prayer room. The NightWatch spend every night in the prayer room from midnight to 6:00 A.M. and love it. Perhaps one to four hours at a time should be the limit in the prayer room, though as you can see with the NightWatch, this isn't a fixed rule.

Some churches like to cover a week of 24/7 prayer, or one day a week for a few months that can later grow into more days a month systematically. Churches can then come together with other churches that are doing the same thing. They can each take one day a week for an entire year. This becomes a 24/7, 365-day prayer watch that goes all year.

Young people are starting Houses of Prayer on college and university campuses and even children are mobilizing into prayer watches. People all over the world are becoming willing candidates for full-time prayer for various periods of time. God is presently raising up intercessory missionaries who make prayer their full-time occupation.

Even the names vary for Houses of Prayer. They can be called prayer rooms, 24/7 watches, prayer chains, boiler rooms, prayer towers, power houses, and prayer mountains, to name a few. And the focuses might vary from praise and worship, intercession and warfare, praying the Word of God, silent meditation and soaking prayer, praying for the nations, the needs of the community, the national needs, the local church, or any combination of these.

There is extreme creativity and uniqueness to each House of Prayer. Let's not institutionalize what God is doing according to what we think is the right and wrong way of doing it. His House of Prayer is extraor-

dinary. He is doing something that is fresh and alive, full of variety and creativity.

Counting the Cost

Establishing a House of Prayer in every city worldwide is now becoming a real possibility. It's beginning to happen in various parts of the world. This involves local churches, individuals, prayer groups, and youth groups that unite for day and night prayer on a citywide level. But we must realize that a longer prayer time—for example one month instead of one week—takes a lot more people and planning. It requires working with all your heart for the Lord and for His glory.

You may only need thirty people for a week-long House of Prayer, but you need many more for a month-long House of Prayer, or for a continuous 24/7 in your city. You also must have enough dedicated intercessors. For year long Houses of Prayer, you must plan well and provide adequate motivation and guidance.

Keep in mind that you must continually recruit new intercessors because people do drop out and move away. Try to keep the intercessors encouraged and provide training in prayer for all involved. It's easy to get under attack or discouraged when involved in 24/7 prayer, and that's why we emphasized a lot about laying a solid foundation in chapter one. It takes steadfast and persistent prayer. Start with what you can handle. Ask yourself or your team:

- How strong is the prayer community in our area?
- Are the people used to prayer, or is it new to them?
- Are they mature Christians?

Don't be overly ambitious if the individual community is not used to praying. Start smaller and work your way up over time. A week may be a good idea in starting. Ask God for the right pace for your community. If you are starting a long-term House of Prayer, start with only a few hours a week. Remember that God is delighted with any increase in prayer, big and small. A successful week of prayer builds momentum for more prayer and delights God's heart.

Look at the individuals in your community. Some want to pray an hour a day while others will pray once or twice a week. Some people will

come once in a while. Some churches will want to take one-hour slots (sets) while others will want two. Then you will find churches that won't want to get involved at all, at least initially. Some Houses of Prayer will ask churches to pray one day a week or one day a month. It varies everywhere. Some will be more organized and disciplined than others. So if yours is different than in another city, that's ok.

Rejoice in God's plan for prayer in your city, and do it with all your heart and strength (Colossians 3:23).

In Gibraltar, the churches started with a one-week House of Prayer. Then they did it again successfully. They want a long-term House of Prayer and several are praying for it. This is exciting because the population of Christians in Gibraltar is very small. They chose a neutral location and picked a conference center called Europa Point, situated at the very uppermost tip of the rock of Gibraltar, overlooking Spain and Morocco. We were recently there praying with several of them at Europa Point. What a great place to pray.

What to Prayerfully Consider

> Church of Christ, awake, awake! Listen to the call, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Take no rest, and give God no rest… God's spirit will reveal to us the power of a life of intercession as a divine reality, an essential, an indispensable element of the great redemption and therefore also of the true Christian life. May God help us to know and to fulfill our calling!"[10]

Day and night prayer is God's desire, and He will enable us to do it. As you grow in establishing a House of Prayer, realize that many dedicated intercessors and worshippers are needed. You need churches that have a vision for prayer. The good news is that God is awakening His Church to pray. Prayerfully consider the following when starting a House of Prayer in your city or increasing the prayer meetings and prayer focus in your church:

- **A small, consistent start.** It is better to start small and be consistent than to try to plan a big 24/7 all year and then quit. As I already mentioned, more personnel are needed for a 365-day House of Prayer. It's important not to despise small beginnings. Good things usually start small and appear humble. Re-

member Jesus was born in a manger. Speak blessing over your small prayer meetings. God will enlarge them when He wants to, and He can explode grace on your little prayer meetings in an incredible way. Stay steady and consistent.

- **A faithful team.** Many different individuals with various gifts are needed in a House of Prayer. How large a team you need depends on the size and length of your 24/7 House of Prayer. For longer ones you may need a general coordinator, a daily coordinator, an administrative team and office, a way to collect prayer material and make it available to intercessors, a team to clean and decorate the prayer room, someone to work out the prayer times, etc. You'd be surprised at all the little tasks that need to be done. Delegate the responsibilities carefully.

- **Dedicated intercessors and worshippers.** Pray that God will raise up intercessors to pray as well as worship leaders, singers, and others. Those with a lifestyle of devotion will be the bedrock that will sustain the House of Prayer along the journey. You need to pray that God will lead you to these people. Build deep, not just wide.

- **Careful planning and clear guidance.** You must think about the ongoing process of recruiting new intercessors and maintaining the House of Prayer. Ask God continually for guidance, and wait for His Spirit to lead. As the House of Prayer grows, you will need more individuals to help meet the growing practical and spiritual needs. Pray for gifted individuals, especially ones who are strong in administrative or organizing gifts.

- **Training and motivating intercessors.** It is easy for intercessors to get discouraged over time so provide ongoing encouragement through seminars, training, and finding ways to minister to them. Teach people how to pray. Help them to focus on the needs of their church, community, or city rather than their own personal needs.

  I've written several books designed for training in prayer with an application at the end of each chapter to be applied personally or in small groups. You may want to use these or other resources on prayer for training and motivation for your House

of Prayer. Keep communicating and feeding people with prayer information. Find resources at the end of this book to help you.

God will give you His creative wisdom as you build the House of Prayer in your city. Perhaps your testimony will exceed your wildest expectations just as this one did:

> Our 24-7 week exceeded all expectations. More than 200 people used the prayer room, and more than 20 churches got involved. 24-7 has been one of the most productive (yes, prayer is productive!) weeks I have ever known. People were saved. The lukewarm were ignited. Unity made huge steps forward. Through 24-7, a radical vision was imparted way beyond anything our puny little talks could have accomplished. The week has also multiplied itself into three other locations.[11]

Wisdom in Prayer Life Application
How to Practice Wisdom in the Prayer Room

We've looked at how treasures of wisdom are released in Houses of Prayer. We've discovered how to develop a dynamic prayer life in the prayer room, and learned important guidelines in starting a House of Prayer. Carefully review this chapter before answering the following:

- What practical wisdom will you apply in the prayer room? Write a paragraph that specifically relates to you and is something you can look back on as a reminder.

- Spend time daily this week praying the following Scriptures over your city: Psalm 25:4-5; 43:3-4; Ephesians 3:8b-11; Colossians 1:9-10; and 2:2-3. Write down any insight and wisdom you have received from God through praying these verses for your city.

- How do you plan to develop a dynamic prayer life in the prayer room? As you review this chapter, what will be your personal action plan? Take some time and write down your action plan specifically. Look at the prayer wisdom given in this chapter, and adapt it to your action plan. For example, a personal Bible plan, praying the apostolic prayers, making a prayer list, praying for wisdom, social issues, etc.

- Picture with the eyes of faith what God wants to do in your life, your ministry, and in your city. Write a prayer bringing this picture before God.

- Study carefully the guidelines in starting a House of Prayer. Write down any ideas and concerns as you look at when and where you should have it, length of time, creative approaches, who should be involved, what you can handle, etc. Share this with other like-minded people.

- Evaluate and assess your city and Christian community. Pray with other like-minded people regarding the following: a consistent start, a faithful team, dedicated intercessors and worshippers, careful planning and clear guidance, and the training

and motivating of intercessors. What areas do you need to work on the most?

Taking it into the Prayer Room

After having completed the above application assignment alone, get with a group and go through the points together. Discuss practical wisdom that you can apply in the prayer room, your personal action plans that you will apply individually, and guidelines in starting a House of Prayer. Evaluate and assess your city and Christian community.

Then with the Bible and some musical instruments such as a guitar or keyboard, take it into the prayer room. Begin with praise and thanksgiving before praying through some of the Scriptures for your city (Psalm 25:4-5; 43:3-4; Ephesians 3:8b-11; Colossians 1:9-10; 2:2-3). Pray through the evaluation and assessment of your city that you made together with others, bringing to the Lord areas that are weak in your community. Pray for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation using your memory verses (Ephesians 1:17-19a).

Ask the Lord to help you apply the guidelines in starting a House of Prayer in your city. Pray specifically through several of the guidelines and points of wisdom in this chapter. Pray that God helps each one of you to apply your prayer action plan. Pray that He helps each of you to develop a dynamic prayer life in the prayer room. Thank Him for what He will do in your city. End with praying the following prayer.

Our Prayer for Wisdom in Developing a House of Prayer

Dear Lord, we pray for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation that we may know You better. Open the eyes of our hearts and enlighten us to know the hope to which You have called us (Ephesians 1:17-19a). Help us to start a House of Prayer in our city, and increase prayer in our churches. Give us dynamic prayer lives. We ask for you to give us practical wisdom when we pray with others. Give us Your creativity and a faithful team. Raise up dedicated intercessors and worshippers, and help us to plan carefully. Show us how to train and motivate people to pray.

Help us to be considerate of others in the prayer room, and teach us to love the diversity of your Church. Help us to be open to all types of prayers. Teach us to enjoy times of silence and times of music, times of intercession and times of thanksgiving, times of meditation and times of reading and praying Your Word. "Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in You all day long" (Psalm 25:4-5). "Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God." (Psalm 43:3-4).

Lord, encourage our hearts and unite us in love, so that we may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that we may know the mystery of You, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:2-3). Release the wisdom of Your Spirit in our lives and in our city. Teach us how to pray in the prayer room both corporately and individually. Reveal Your will for our lives and Your love for us. Let your light enter our hearts, let Your Word grip our minds (Psalm 119:18, 105, 130; Colossians 3:1-3), and help us to make quality decisions to walk in righteousness (Psalm 24:3-6, 119:11, 32). We give you all the glory and praise. We thank You for the wisdom You will give us as we begin. In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power to us who believe (Ephesians 1:17-19a).

CHAPTER FIVE

Houses of Prayer and the Bible

For the word of God is alive and active.
Sharper than any double-edged sword,
it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit,
joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts
and attitudes of the heart.
Hebrews 4:12

I LOOKED OUT MY HOTEL WINDOW at the billowing dark clouds that were escaping through the long round smoke stack coming from the ominous chemical plant only a few miles from where we were praying. At times the wind would blow in the opposite direction, but when it came towards our 24/7 prayer room and hotel, you could smell the horrible fumes of those chemicals. The whole plant looked like a large steel city of buildings all containing chemicals that would shoot out fumes that seemed dangerous and destructive. People told us that the cancer rate in this area of southern Spain was three times higher than other places.

Having had encountered cancer myself, I wanted to stay as far away from this chemical plant as possible.

Surprisingly enough, the location where we had our 24/7 House of Prayer, a quaint old hotel with much green vegetation and a peaceful surrounding, seemed so opposite and such a sharp contrast to this dangerous chemical plant. As I thought about the dangerous atmosphere around that plant and the atmosphere around the Word of God, it made me think more clearly and with great respect at the power of the

Word of God. The Bible is living and active. It's alive! It has supernatural power to transform. The Word of God changes the atmosphere of the land when we combine it with proclamation and singing. It destroys the works of the devil. It breathes in the beautiful aroma of Christ where the destructive forces of darkness had dwelt.

That chemical plant reminds me of the powers of darkness. Over time it brings forth death and bondage, shooting black billowing clouds of darkness in cities and homes.

But praying the Word of God brings freedom and life. The Word of God brings breakthrough and healing. It brings discernment between light and darkness. Praying the Word of God can overcome the billowing clouds of pollution that the enemy tries to bring into our lives. You may wonder: "How can I learn to use the Word of God in my prayers? How can I keep the enemy from invading my life through the polluting force of sin?"

In this chapter discover the benefits of praying the Bible. Learn how to pray it for spiritual breakthrough. Discover the power of the life-giving Word of God. This chapter would be ideal in introducing the apostolic prayers of Paul and the importance of praying the Word into your House of Prayer. As the verse at the beginning of this chapter says, the Word of God is living and active. Let's use it daily in our Houses of Prayer and in our personal prayer lives.

Praying the Bible

> The life of a Christian is all about passion… Nothing is more powerful than when the Holy Spirit reveals the Son of God through the words of Scripture. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, every heart began to burn when God revealed Himself. When He unveils Himself and we have understanding of what He is saying, passion is the result. Seeing the face of God, and then gazing at it, has to begin sometime and someplace. It begins by bringing our whole person before the consuming fire who is God, reciting His words—the Bible—out loud to Him and then letting the Holy Spirit reveal Christ to us. That is why we pray the Bible.[1]

As we build the foundations, it is vital for us to realize the importance of the Word of God in prayer. Perhaps we should begin with the Biblical foundation for day and night prayer. We must be convinced that it's the passion of God's heart. Day and night prayer is Biblical.

God wants us to be watchmen in prayer. He has appointed us to this position. He calls us to watch and pray in His Word. He Himself watches over us day and night (Psalm 121). The fire on the altar was kept burning continuously in the Old Testament (Leviticus 6:12-13). This symbolized continual worship and intercession. The angels and elders worship God night and day in Revelations 4-5. The Apostle Paul speaks of day and night prayer in his writings and through his example. Doesn't this convince you of how important day and night prayer is to God? But just to emphasize this further, here are a few more Biblical examples:

The Biblical Call to Day and Night Prayer

- Isaiah 62:6-7 - *I have posted watchmen on your walls, 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.*

- Luke 18:7-8a - *And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.*

- Nehemiah 1:5-6a - *Then I said, "LORD, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel."*

- Lamentations 2:18-19 - *The hearts of the people cry out to the Lord. You walls of Daughter Zion, let your tears flow like a river day and night; give yourself no relief, your eyes no rest. Arise, cry out in the night, as the watches of the night begin; pour out your heart like water in the presence of the lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint from hunger at every street corner.*

- 1 Thessalonians 3:10 - *Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.*

Let's begin to look at the importance of the Word of God in 24/7 prayer. The mystery of intercession is actually profoundly simple. We tell God what he says in His Word. Everyone can pray like this—young and old, beginners and the experienced. God knows everything. We don't have to come up with some intelligent method of praying, but He is deeply touched when we pray the truths in His heart back to Him.

God loves it when we agree with Him through His Word. We read His Word and let the Holy Spirit speaks to us through it. Then we pray it back to Him as the Holy Spirit leads us. His Words are Spirit and Truth (John 4:23-24; 6:63). When we speak God's Word, it marks us on the inside, changes us, and builds us up. We unite with God's heart in a most amazing way.

Our own hearts are transformed as we pray God's Word.

God will actually withhold His blessing until we stand in faith, agree with His heart, and pray it back to Him (James 4:2). We can change whole cities when we agree with God's heart and pray. Power and revival is released when we pray His Word over a city. God runs the universe through prayer. Praying God's Word gives us sustaining power. The revelation we get from Him through His Word strengthens our emotions.

Haven't you noticed when you're discouraged or down, how different you feel after God speaks to your heart through His Word? It's as if a light goes on that dispels the darkness. God upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrew 1:3). When we read His Word we can have a living, active dialogue with Him in our heart (Hebrews 4:12). But we must receive it with obedience, faith, and devotion. When we abide in it (John 15:7), everything else seems to falls into place.

Everyone who is interested in taking part in a House of Prayer should begin to pray the Word of God in his/her own personal times with God. Remember that a House of Prayer often involves praying the Word along with worship. Bible prayers are easy to find. There are many types of prayers in the Bible. For example, there are the Psalms, the prayers of Wisdom such as the book of Proverbs, the Song of

Songs, the prayers of the Prophets, the prayers of Jesus, the apostolic prayers, and the hymns of Revelation.

Praying the Bible can and will have a dramatic effect in our prayer lives and prayer meetings. It is definitely a key to the success of day and night prayer and worship. It's advantageous in our walk with God. There are so many reasons why it takes us to such a higher level in our relationship with Him. God is able to bring our prayer lives into an entirely new focus. Let's look at the benefits of praying the Bible:

- **You receive an authority from God that you don't have in yourself.** You have more boldness in your prayers because you know that you are praying God's Word.

- **Your faith increases.** Faith comes by the Word of God. Your faith rises to a new place in authoritative strength where you haven't been before. Through faith in God's Word you are able to picture the answer to your prayers. You believe God will answer. See Romans 10:17.

- **You are led to places in God that you would have never discovered before.** You begin to see things in an entirely new dimension. You are brought outside your realm of understanding and into the very thoughts of God. See Isaiah 55:9.

- **You learn the language of repentance.** We find words in Scripture that help to express repentance without condemnation such as Psalm 51.

- **You align yourself spiritually with God.** You see things from a Biblical standpoint and not the vantage point of the world. The "spirit" man within you is better able to receive from God as you pray His Word back to Him. You understand Him better as you pray His Word. You learn about His character, power, and ability to do everything.

- **You become more passionate.** The Holy Spirit reveals the Son of God through the Words of the Bible in a way that creates more passion for Jesus. The Holy Spirit's activity in your heart through the Word produces passionate faith that releases the power of God.

- **You pray the will of God.** When you pray God's will, then you see answers to your prayers. You know that He hears you and that you have what you asked of Him. See 1 John 5:14-15.

- **You become more obedient.** You become fixed on God with a greater determination to please Jesus in all that you do and say. You learn about His priorities and are better able to adapt your life to what He wants. You submit to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in every area of your life.

- **You become a better student of the Bible.** I find that praying Scripture helps me to grow in my Biblical knowledge, and I actually become a better student of the Bible.

In my country in the past most Americans respected the Bible. According to the Gallup pole, this has greatly dropped over the last several years. In 1963, 65% of the people believed the Bible literally, and today the number is only 32%. At one time most Americans were familiar with Bible doctrine. But this is not true today. *Newsweek* tells of a small child who saw a crucifix and asked, "Mommy, what is that man doing?" At one time most Americans accepted absolute moral standards. They knew that some things were right, and some things were wrong. Today 70% reject moral standards.[2]

We are in a serious battle throughout the world over the authority of the Bible. We read in 2 Timothy 3:16-17:

> *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

This is one reason why we must uphold it as absolute, authoritative truth in our prayers. As we do this, we combat the lies of the enemy and spiritually strengthen our ability to abide in God's Word in our prayer meetings and to all we meet. We choose to obey God's Word as we pray it. We feed our hearts on it. We learn to talk to God about His Word and then we listen. We internalize it, and we say it back to Him.

As we pray the Bible, it brings joy to the heart of God. Feeding our mind on Scripture and praying it helps determine our thoughts. When we speak the Word of God, it impacts our mind to follow what we

speak. If we get our words right, then our thoughts, emotions, and behavior will follow the right path (James 3:2).

Praying God's Word fights the fleshly battles of life using His spiritual weapons. This gives us authority in the supernatural realm to pull down strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). We no longer are in agreement with darkness but agree with the light of God's Word.

Praying God's Word refreshes us internally and enables us to live radically for Him long-term. Let's learn to cultivate a spirit of radical devotion to God's Word as our everyday lifestyle. David wrote many of the Psalms in the Bible. He saw himself and others through the eyes of God as he prayed. He understood the love of God even when facing difficulty because His attitude was right. Praying God's Word is a positive way to live.

> When you pray the Bible, you will understand how God views you and how He views others. In a culture distorted by negative media images, we all need to be founded on what God thinks of us. David's self-image came through prayer. He saw himself as God's anointed, as the apple of God's eye. David knew that God loved him, and that he was favored when the wicked were not. Therefore, we need to pray the Bible until we receive the same attitude that David did.[3]

Pray the Bible Out Loud for Spiritual Breakthrough

> The Bible is actually a whole book of spiritual words! The Bible will teach you the language of God so that you can effectively communicate to Him. When you speak from the Bible in your prayers, you will be led to an entirely different place in prayer—one you might've not thought was humanly possible, simply because the language of the Bible is so absolutely different than our own.[4]

God loves to hear your voice praying His Word back to Him. Did you know that praying the Bible out loud brings spiritual breakthrough?

God's spoken Word is much more powerful than any of us realize. We cannot live without it, for it is there where our prayers unite with God's heart bringing tremendous rewards of breakthrough.

As we already saw, there is a great decline in the belief that you can know absolute truth and right from wrong. This is one of the reasons we must emphasize the Bible in our prayer meetings and everywhere we go. The Bible is absolute truth. We pray from the foundation of absolute truth. We believe it, and as we pray God's Word out loud, our faith grows.

A few years ago we spent several months in the nation of Australia. During that time we were fascinated with learning about the kangaroos that live there. I remember eagerly looking at the cute mother kangaroo with a tiny baby peaking out of her pouch. They looked like harmless creatures, but we found out that they could be quite dangerous.

A kangaroo's main weapon is its feet. When he is angry or out to kill, he has the ability to hop so fast that he can kill another animal or person just by the kick of his foot.

He can destroy His enemy by this powerful, forceful kick.

In a similar way we have a powerful weapon—the Word of God. We can kick the enemy and defeat him by speaking the Word of God. Praying the Bible out loud is powerful for spiritual breakthrough. Praying God's Word with our lips is a dangerous weapon to Satan. He knows the power of the Word of God.

When we went to Australia, at first we were very ignorant about the kangaroo. But they understood and knew the powerful weapon they had with their feet. They could destroy their enemy with one swift kick of the foot.

Many Christians do not realize that praying the Word out loud breaks through the enemy's defenses. It can bring destruction to his plans and bring victory to God's purposes. Let's not be ignorant of the power we have in the Bible. Let's learn to use the Word of God and speak it out loud for spiritual breakthrough. When we do, the spiritual atmosphere of entire cities can change. We can make a huge impact in our neighborhoods through praying or singing God's Word out loud and over it. The government of God is released through our prayers.

Praying God's Promises Out Loud

The Word of God contains many promises about the circumstances and situations we face. Reading, proclaiming, declaring, and meditating on these promises found throughout Scripture will increase your faith. Faith comes from hearing the Word (Romans 10:17). We actually pray the Holy Spirit's inspired words back to God. He is faithful to His Word. His promises are consistent with His character. You will be able to pray with wisdom and authority as you pray God's promises. Here are some from the New Testament, but I have heard that there are as many promises in Scriptures as there are days in the year!

- **Luke 3:16 -** Promise to baptize us with the fullness of the Holy Spirit and God's fire.

- **Luke 24:49 -** Father's promise to cloth the church with power from on high. See also Luke 11:13.

- **Acts 1:8 -** Promise to receive power through encounters with the Holy Spirit and to be witnesses, even to the ends of the earth.

- **Acts 2:17-21 -** Promise to pour out the Spirit that all may prophesy and see visions in the last days.

- **John 14:12 -** Promise that those who have faith in Jesus will do even greater works than those of Jesus because He goes to the Father.

- **John 14:13-14 -** Promise of answered prayer when asked in Jesus' name so that He may bring glory to the Father.

- **John 14:27 -** Promise of peace and encouragement so as not to be afraid or troubled.

- **Matthew 10:1, 8 -** Promise of having authority to heal the sick and cast out demons. See also Mark 16:17; Luke 10:19; and 1 John 3:8.

- **Ephesians 6:11-18 -** Promise for the ability to stand against the devil's schemes and his flaming arrows.

As we pray God's promises out loud, we begin to understand God's plans and agenda. Our desires fall in line with His. In his book, *Bridal Intercession*, Gary Wiens stresses how praying the Biblical prayers help us come into agreement with the Spirit of God and other believers. He says:

> As a result of praying these biblical prayers, we find it increasingly easy to come in agreement with the Spirit of God concerning His nature and His agenda. We begin to desire what He desires, confident in His ability to bring it all to pass. Also, as we pray the prayers of the Scriptures, we find it easy to come to unity and agreement with other believers. We are not praying for our own agenda or the success of our own programs. We are not praying for our political convictions to be established as the norm. Rather, we are focused on the establishment of His rule and reign, and that is an agenda with which all believers are in agreement.[5]

Praying the Apostolic Prayers of Paul

The prayers of Paul are some of the richest prayers in the Bible. They are always directed toward God. They are always positive. He thoroughly understood the law, grace, the church, and holy living.

In the apostolic prayers, Paul focuses on gifts, fruits, and wisdom. He prays for the release of the ministry gifts of the Holy Spirit so that revival breaks out. He prays for the fruits of Godly character in the lives of those in the Church. He prays for wisdom in the Church in order that believers are able to search out the mysteries and knowledge of God so that we may know Him better. He prays these prayers for the glory of God so that His Kingdom may come and His will be done in our churches, cities, and nations.

Paul reveals to us in his prayers, the power of intercession and the high focus we should have in prayer for the spirit of revelation. He prayed that the Church would come to a more full experience of the knowledge of God in active intimacy (Ephesians 1:17-19) as they walked out these spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3-14). He wanted the Church to encounter God deeply. We need our eyes enlightened. We need divine encounters with God. Look at what happen when we pray these apostolic prayers regularly:

- **Our hearts are supernaturally influenced by God.** This helps us have a sustained lifestyle of pursuing God's glory. We need the Spirit to do this, to enable our human capacity to receive more of God (1 Corinthians 2:12-14). We need to have our hearts fully alive!

- **We receive divine revelation to enlighten the eyes of our understanding.** We begin to see God unveiled experientially in our understanding (John 17:3; Ephesians 1:18).

- **We receive confidence and hope in our individual calling from God.** These divine assignments encompass all of time and eternity. We cannot walk firmly in our assignment in this age unless we are anchored in eternity (Ephesians 1:17-18; 2:10; Colossians 1:9-10).

- **We receive understanding of our spiritual identity.** We discover the glory and wealth of being God's inheritance. We understand that we are the focus of God's affection (John 15:9; 17:23).

- **We are empowered to live our life in God (Eph. 1:17-19).** He gives us His resurrection strength (Ephesians 1:20-21). We have the authority of Jesus as we resist sin and satanic opposition. All God's power works through and for the good of His Church because all things are subject to Christ (Ephesians 1:20-21; Colossians 1:16; Philippians 2:6-11).

Praying these apostolic prayers of Paul's are powerful. He had a brilliant mind but was deceived and, out of his extreme zeal, had been persecuting the Church. But suddenly, Paul had a supernatural encounter with God that changed everything. His prayers are anointed with the power of God. His prayers are model prayers.

Pray them on a regular basis. You can read them on pages 129-131. Have several copies in your prayer room. Certain phrases in each prayer are highlighted to help your intercessors isolate a phrase for the antiphonal singers. This is what we do here daily at IHOP in Kansas City.

We must seek to obey God as we fill our hearts with His Word and ask for revelation. The apostolic prayers will undoubtedly bring you up to a

new level in prayer and intercession. They will help you see how God views the Church and each one of us. Begin by praying them in your own personal life, and then integrate them in your own prayer meetings.

These are only a few examples of how you can pray the Word of God. Praying the Psalms is another wonderful way to praise and worship God through His Word. The Psalms contain many different types of prayer such as adoration, supplication, worship, praise, confession, and intercession. You may want to sing the Word. As you read a chapter in the Bible, you may want to turn every verse into a personal prayer for spiritual growth, physical or emotional healing, or some other concern in your life or the life of another. You may want to rephrase the Word as you pray it back to God.

There are so many creative ways to pray the Word. The knowledge of this great treasure we have should cause each one of us to rejoice. It is far more valuable than silver or gold. God's Word is life-giving. Let's use it daily in our prayers. Let's learn to pray it out loud for spiritual breakthrough.

I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.
I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.
I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.
Psalm 119:14-16

The New Testament Apostolic Prayers of Paul[6]

Prayer for revelation of Jesus' beauty that we might walk in our calling and destiny by God's power.

"… the Father of glory, may give to you the SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the HOPE OF HIS CALLING, what are the riches of the GLORY OF HIS INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS, and what is the exceeding GREATNESS OF HIS POWER TOWARD US" (Ephesians 1:17-19).

Prayer for the release of supernatural strength in the heart so we experience God's emotions and love.

"… that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH MIGHT THROUGH HIS SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN, that CHRIST MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, MAY BE ABLE TO COMPREHEND with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—TO KNOW the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be FILLED with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:16-19).

Prayer for God's love to abound in our heart resulting in discernment and righteousness.

"And this I pray, that YOUR LOVE MAY ABOUND still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may APPROVE THE THINGS THAT ARE EXCELLENT, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being FILLED WITH THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Philippians 1:9-11).

Prayer to know God's will, to be fruitful in ministry and strengthened by intimacy with God.

"We… do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may have a WALK WORTHY OF THE LORD, fully pleasing Him, BEING FRUITFUL in every good work and increasing in the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD; STRENGTHENED WITH ALL MIGHT, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light" (Colossians 1:9-12).

Prayer for unity in the Church across a city or region.

"Now may the God of patience and comfort GRANT YOU TO BE LIKE-MINDED toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, THAT YOU MAY WITH ONE MIND AND ONE MOUTH glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus" (Romans 15:5-7).

Prayer to be filled with supernatural joy, peace, and hope.

"Now may the God of hope FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING, THAT YOU MAY ABOUND IN HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

Prayer for Israel to be saved through Jesus.

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for ISRAEL is that they MAY BE SAVED" (Romans 10:1).

Prayer for the release of apostolic ministry and to abound in love and holiness.

"We rejoice for your sake before our God, night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and PERFECT WHAT IS LACKING in your faith. Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you INCREASE AND ABOUND IN LOVE to one another and to all… so that He may ESTABLISH YOUR HEARTS BLAMELESS IN HOLINESS before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints" (1 Thessalonians 3:9-13).

Prayer for the release of the Holy Spirit's power unto mature holiness.

"Now may the GOD OF PEACE HIMSELF SANCTIFY YOU COMPLETELY; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

Prayer to be equipped and prepared to receive the fullness of God's destiny for the Church.

"Therefore we also pray always for you THAT OUR GOD WOULD COUNT YOU WORTHY OF THIS CALLING, AND FULFILL ALL THE GOOD PLEASURE OF HIS GOODNESS AND THE WORK OF FAITH WITH POWER, that the name of our Lord Jesus CHRIST MAY BE GLORIFIED IN YOU, and YOU IN HIM, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12).

Prayer for the Word to increase by the release of God's power to win unbelievers to Jesus.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, THAT THE WORD OF THE LORD MAY RUN SWIFTLY AND BE GLORIFIED, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you. NOW MAY THE LORD DIRECT YOUR HEARTS INTO THE LOVE OF GOD AND INTO THE PATIENCE OF CHRIST" (2 Thessalonians 3:1-5).

Prayer that God would open a door of evangelism through releasing His power on the Word.

"Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, THAT GOD WOULD OPEN TO US A DOOR FOR THE WORD, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak" (Colossians 4:2-4).

Prayer to be enriched with the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit leading unto righteousness.

"I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, THAT YOU WERE ENRICHED IN EVERYTHING by Him in all utterance and all KNOWLEDGE, even as the testimony of Christ was CONFIRMED in you, so THAT YOU COME SHORT IN NO GIFT, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also CONFIRM you to the end, THAT YOU MAY BE BLAMELESS in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:4-8).

(All verses are in the NKJV.)

The Life-Giving Word of God

> Another benefit of praying the Bible is that it makes you enter the throne of grace with new boldness, because you know that you are praying according to God's will (1 John 5:14-15). Instead of hoping to receive answers to our prayers, we can be assured—based on the promises of God—that prayers prayed according to will in the Bible will be answered. Your faith will be strengthened, your wisdom will become spiritual wisdom and your knowledge of God will increase.[7]

Wouldn't you agree that most people would like an abundant, fulfilling life? We are naturally attracted to that which gives life, but few people realize that there is tremendous life in the Word of God. If they believed it, they would read, study, and devour it. The primary way that God speaks to us is through His Word. He brings revelation as we pray it. Praying the Word of God, together with singing, is a powerful combination. Power is released on the earth as God's Word is sung passionately into the atmosphere.

When we pray God's Word, divine information is internalized. It transforms us as we speak it back to God. We become bold and are filled with faith as we pray it. We are praying God's ideas back to His heart; we are coming into agreement with His thoughts and ways. This impacts us deeply, and touches our environment with the power and life of God.

There are four Greek words that describe the function of the Word of God. It is amazing how a group of people can all read the same passage in the Bible and receive something different. These four Greek words and their definition are:

- **Graphe.** The written, historical Word of God. This is where you understand the Bible as if you are reading a novel.

- **Logos.** The meaning of the principles of the Bible. This is where you understand the good life principles that you are to follow.

- **Rhema.** The revelation of the Word of God. This is where the Holy Spirit illuminates the "graphe" or "logos" to you.

- **Zoe.** The Word of God dwelling within. This is where the Word of God becomes a creative, living part of who you are. The "rhema" becomes life-giving revelation.

In our Houses of Prayer we want the Word of God to become "zoe" life. We want it to be life-giving revelation. And this is what is happening as we pray and sing the Word. God's Word becomes the living, creative part of those who are present in the prayer room. The Word of God must be at the very center of the prayer movement. It is God's strategy for prayer in the end times.

Praying the Word will keep us strong as the days become more difficult. It will keep us in peace when the world around us is in turmoil. It will keep us joyful when the world is living in fear and gloom. The Word is alive and active. It is sharp and it penetrates into our thoughts and hearts (Hebrews 4:12). We need God's Word written on our hearts and flowing through our prayers.

God's Word can bring "zoe" life in a most amazing way!

In Baghdad, Iraq, a 22-year-old Army Private First Class soldier named Brendan Schweigart was on a critical mission wearing a bullet proof shield for protection. You can only imagine the tension in that situation. Before going out to battle, he carefully tucked his Bible in his pocket beneath his bulletproof shield. While on a dangerous mission, he was shot with a high-powered rifle. The Bible saved his life when it shielded the bullet from his heart. He told his mother that he always carried his Bible into battle. Brendan received a Purple Heart and was soon released from the hospital. The bullet was still in the pages of his Bible, a miraculous reminder of the amazing power and protection of the Word of God.[8]

God's Word will protect our lives when in spiritual battle. It can bring forth life in the darkest of situations. It can save us from those fiery darts from the enemy. I wonder how many of us carry our Bibles into battle like Army Private Brendan?

A Personal Exercise to Bring Forth Zoe Revelation

The Word of God is a great help in prayer. If it is lodged and written in our hearts, it will form an out-flowing current of pray-

> er, full and irresistible. Promises, stored in the heart, are to be the fuel from which prayer receives life and warmth. Just as coal, which has been stored in the earth, gives us comfort on stormy days and wintry nights, the Word of God stored in our hearts is the food by which prayer is nourished and made strong. Prayer, like man, cannot live by bread alone, "but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."[9]

Try this personal exercise to help bring the Word of God to life in your own heart. Take a portion of Scripture and read it out loud. Then write the Scripture out and outline the main points. Well-known author and prophetic intercessor, Chuck Pierce, suggests the following:

> Then ask God to activate the spirit of wisdom and revelation in you regarding that passage. Ask Him to show you things that go beyond your brain; things that you do not currently distinguish or recognize. Ask Him to show you things that you have not seen before. Write down any and all impressions you receive as you are meditating on the Scripture. You may want to do this on more than one occasion. As you allow yourself to receive these impressions, and trust the impressions enough to write them down, allow faith that God is speaking to you to arise within you. When it begins to become alive, and you start seeing rhema revelation that you have not seen before, then ask God how that applies to you and your situation. Ask Him to establish the rhema within you, so that it becomes ongoing, sustained zoe life.[10]

This exercise can be done in a group setting as well. I have personally seen how praying, listening, and singing the Word of God over and over brings it into "zoe", life-giving revelation. This is where God wants us to live on a daily basis. CDs that pray the Word of God with worship can help bring "zoe" revelation. Let the Bible become a conversation piece where you talk to God and to others using His Word. Make sure that the Word of God is central in your House of Prayer.

Prayers from the Book of Revelation

> When you pray the hymns of the Revelation, you pray with all of heaven, going before God as He sits on His throne and joining with Him in worship. You will hear and say some of the same

> words the angels and elders say to God. Try praying these hymns and get to know some of what is going on in heaven, what will happen when heaven comes here, and how all of heaven and earth talk to the One on the throne and to the Lamb.[11]

We need to realize that the book of Revelation is a prayer manual in the end times. There are seventy to eighty direct or indirect references to prayer in the book of Revelation. Some of these references are hymns, declarations, worship, supplications, altars, incense, and others. These prayers reveal the end-time events and Jesus as the conquering King of kings. They also reveal intercession as the governmental center of the Kingdom of God. The prayer movement will have a vital role in God's plan to release the Kingdom of God on earth.

Take some time this week to pray some of the hymns in the book of Revelation listed here. Ask God to show you things you have not seen before. Ask Him to speak to your heart and bring you into "zoe", life-giving revelation. Ask Him to cause the Word of God to burn within you as you journey through life. We need to be like the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders in Revelation 4:8b-11 who continually marveled at the awesome holiness and glory of God:

> *Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."*

- Revelation 1:4-7 - A prayer to anticipate the second coming of Christ.
- Revelation 2:7-8, 11-12, 17-18, 26-29; 3:5-7, 12, 21-22 - A prayer for overcomers.
- Revelation 5:8-14 - A prayer to the Lamb.
- Revelation 6:9-11 - A prayer for the persecuted.

- Revelation 7:9-17 - A praise of the end-time harvest.
- Revelation 11:15-18 - A prayer in expectation of the future reign of Christ.
- Revelation 19:1-8 - The wedding song.
- Revelation 22:12-17, 20 - A prayer asking Jesus to come.

Praying God's Word and studying it is like a rich treasure. Approach your study of it with a spirit of love and devotion towards God. Help others in your House of Prayer to realize its life-giving power in your prayer meetings. Don't just look at it as an intellectual pursuit. Often when we get a letter from our friends, we react in a certain way. We reread it to see what they have to say with the interest of a friend and loved one. But frequently we treat the Bible like a textbook, looking to gain intellectual knowledge. God wants your affection and love as you read and pray it.

Respond to Him as you read. Say, "Thank You" for His promises, and ask Him for strength to follow His commands. Pray for understanding when you encounter a difficult passage, and ask for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him (Ephesians 1:17-18). Pray for increased understanding and that He will guide you into all truth (John 16:13).

Believe that God will transform your House of Prayer as you study, commune, and pray His Word. Develop a loving dialogue with a commitment to obey, and watch how your lives change over time. You are digging deep for gold, and you will not be disappointed. His Word in your heart, and proclaimed through your lips, is like a burning fire that will touch and transform not only your own lives, but all those you come into contact with. Remember that agreement with God in His Word changes us, it changes the spiritual atmosphere of our cities, and it releases His power in the world.

Cherish it, love it, pray it, and appreciate it as you walk this journey of life and as you build the House of Prayer in your city.

> Seeking the face of God, and then gazing at it, has to begin sometime and someplace. It begins by bringing our whole person before the consuming fire who is God, reciting His words—

the Bible—out loud to Him and then letting the Holy Spirit reveal Christ to us. This is why we pray the Bible. May it be that as you engage in this practice that your prayer times will have the same result as the disciples'—whose hearts burnt within as God talked with them along their journey of life. Yes, may your heart burn and your light shine.[12]

Praying the Bible Life Application
How to Pray the Word of God

In this chapter, we learned about praying the Bible, praying it out loud for spiritual breakthrough, and the life-giving Word of God. We also studied the New Testament apostolic prayers of Paul. Now prayerfully do the following:

- Study carefully and meditate on the benefits of praying the Bible from this chapter - Write down any insight the Lord may give you as you study.

- Choose two of the apostolic prayers of Paul, and pray them out loud each day this week - Choose from Ephesians 1:17-19; 3:16-19; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-12; 4:2-4; Romans 10:1; 15:5-7, 13; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-12; 5:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; 3:1-5; or 1 Corinthians 1:4-8.

- Choose two of the hymns from the book of Revelations, and pray them out loud each day this week - Choose from Revelation 1:4-7; 2:7-8, 11-12, 17-18, 26-29; 3:5-7, 12, 21-22; 4:8-11; 5:8-14; 6:9-11; 7:9-17; 19:1-8; or 22:12-17, 20.

- Choose two of the New Testament promises and decrees, and pray them out loud each day this week - Choose from Luke 3:16; 11:13; 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:17-21; John 1:50-51; 14:12; or Matthew 10:1, 8.

You also may want to do the personal exercise designed to bring forth "zoe" revelation as shown in this chapter. For the other weeks during this month, choose other apostolic prayers, hymns from the book of Revelation, and New Testament promises and decrees to pray during your time with the Lord. This is an excellent assignment to help you practice praying the Word of God out loud.

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Get together with a group, and go through the above assignment together. Begin by carefully studying the benefits of praying the Bible as shown in this chapter. Print out the apostolic prayers of Paul for each

person. You may also want to print out all the verses mentioned on the previous page, and give them to each person. Give a few minutes for individuals to read them.

Then after your discussion or on another occasion, take the apostolic prayers and your Bible into the prayer room. Begin your prayer time by praying the apostolic prayers of Paul. Especially pray Ephesians 1:17-19, the verses you memorized. Pray as the Holy Spirit leads you, giving plenty of time for each one to participate. At the end discuss your impressions as you prayed. How did God speak to you?

Our Prayer for Praying God's Word

Lord, teach us to pray your Word. Teach us to make it central in our House of Prayer. Your Word is alive and active—It's sharper than any double-edged sword—It judges the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts (Hebrews 4:12). We long to align ourselves spiritually with You and Your Word. We want to pray your Word with Your authority, and with greater faith and obedience in our lives. Lord, we want to be passionate about the things you are passionate about. We want to be students of Your Word. Teach us to pray Paul's apostolic prayers with power and faith. Teach us to pray the hymns from the book of Revelation with reverence and awe. Teach us to pray Your Word out loud in such a way that we see mighty spiritual breakthroughs in our House of Prayer. Help us declare the prophetic promises and decrees from Your Word.

We want to experience the "zoe", life-giving power of Your Word on a daily basis. Show us truth in Your Word, and bring it to life through our prayers. Let us be ones who have learned to pray Your Word out loud, continually experiencing life-giving, "zoe" revelation through our prayers. Thank you so much for Your Word. It is precious to us. We rejoice in following Your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. We meditate on Your precepts and consider Your ways. We delight in Your decrees. We will not neglect Your Word. Open our eyes that we may see wonderful things in Your law. We run in the path of Your commands, for You have set our hearts free (Psalm 119:14-16, 18, 32) In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe (Ephesians 1:17-19a).

CHAPTER SIX

Houses of Prayer and Unity

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ,
if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit,
if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete
by being like-minded, having the same love,
being one in spirit and purpose.
Philippians 2:1-2

THEY STOOD CAREFULLY shoulder-to-shoulder, sword touching sword. They didn't dare move from their position because they knew that their very survival depended on it.

The battle opened with the Romans bombarding their opponents with arrows, ballista and catapult fire, and then sending them into tight formation to engage in close battle with cavalry attacking the men from both sides. Imagine this in your mind. Think about how carefully these men stood in order to close up every possible attack from the enemy.

It took commitment—it took courage—it took unity.

In ancient Roman warfare, the "testudo" or tortoise formation was a position used by the Roman legions during battle. In this battle formation, the men would close up all the gaps between each other and grab their shields at the sides rather than behind. The first row of men would place their shields in front of them to cover the formation's front. Everybody in the middle would place their shields over their head to protect themselves from above. They balanced their shields on their helmets and overlapped them. If necessary, the men on the sides

and rear could stand sideways or backwards with their shields held as the front row to protect the sides and rear. When used correctly, this was an excellent shield against missile troops, and the legions could move with less fear of being harmed by arrow fire and javelins.

This is the amazing way Maximus Meridius, portrayed in the famous and thrilling movie *Gladiator*, led the Roman army to victory in the year 180. He was a very powerful Roman general much loved by the people. It was fierce, but because of their perfect unity in battle, they ended a prolonged war and won the esteem of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. As the emperor was dying, even though he had a son he wanted to appoint leadership to Maximus as keeper of Rome, desiring to return power to the people.

You and I are in a tremendous warfare against the powers of darkness.

The Bible says the world is in the power of the evil one. How will we win the battle against these forces of darkness that we are facing? How will we reach our cities with the Gospel of Jesus Christ when they are growing in crime, immorality, and thick darkness? We can only win as we come together shoulder-to-shoulder, sword touching sword, united in prayer. Like Maximus in *Gladiator*, our life and victory in battle depends on our ability to unite. We must be like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

This is an excellent chapter to help you teach about united intercession, as well as put together prayer and worship teams with antiphonal singers. You will learn about the incredible power of united intercession and the values that help facilitate this unity. You will discover how to incorporate antiphonal singing, and harmonize in song and intercession for God's glory. Learn how God's united creativity in prayer is being expressed all over the world.

The Incredible Power of United Intercession

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of

> *his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore* (Psalm 133:1-3).

Intercession is spreading just as the urgency of the hour for prayer is increasing. God is moving across the earth, and the prayer movement is growing as the days grow darker. We are in an enormous battle just as the Romans were in the movie *Gladiator*. We must unite in prayer; the life of the Church depends on it.

During a time of traveling for several months overseas, I was able to visit several countries and was amazed at the rapid interest there was for 24/7 prayer. There were young people in France who desire to spread 24/7 prayer all throughout that land. And this was in just one nation. There are so many others!

There is no other way that we will be able to reach the nations and see revival and salvation spread. There must be a dramatic increase in united prayer. While praying overseas with many different Christians of various denominations and from many nations, I was struck with the realization of the incredible power of united intercession**.** This is why the enemy hates it so much. This is why starting and maintaining a House of Prayer takes all our determination and commitment.

You have heard of the saying, "United we stand, divided we fall."

During World War II in the battle for Salingrad, the soldiers were ordered by their Russian commanders not to give up any more ground. If a soldier fled from the Germans, he was instantly shot on the spot. The Russian commanders knew the seriousness of uniting together. If a couple of soldiers fled their posts, the Germans would have an opening and would be able to invade the city. The Church must stand together in unity. When we are divided, Satan finds it easier to attack us and conquer. United day and night prayer within our cities will protect us from enemy attack.

Psalm 133 speaks of the blessing of unity. This blessing includes the Holy Spirit's presence and power. When we unite in prayer, we will see a great increase in the realm of God's manifest power. With unified and anointed prayer, we shall see divine possibilities in our cities and nations that we had never before imagined possible. The fullness of God is only released to the unified Church. We must pay the price to see

this happen. We must face and endure the difficulties of uniting in intercession in order to see the blessings of the Lord flow. We read in Ephesians 4:3:

> *Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

One hundred pianos that are all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other. They are in one accord not because they are being tuned to one another, but to another standard outside of themselves. Each one must become tuned to that one standard in order to be in tune with the others. When we worship and pray together, we are looking to Christ. He is our standard. In this way we become like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

A few years ago we were planning a one-month 24/7 House of Prayer in our city of Virginia Beach. I was signing individuals up for the two-hour time slots in the prayer room. Being unsure as to the various combinations of people that would end up in the prayer room together, I stepped forward by faith hoping that God would arrange it in a perfect design. To my surprise, God worked it out to the smallest detail.

During that month an elderly woman intercessor had signed up for the very same hours as a young African American pastor with a group of his lively and somewhat rugged-looking church members. So here they were in the prayer room praying and seeking God together.

I thought to myself, "Will it work?"

To my amazement, after it was all over, the elderly intercessor came up to me and told me how much she had enjoyed praying together with that pastor and his church team. She expressed with sadness how she was going to really miss praying with them.

Such is the beauty of how God unites in heart very diverse individuals in the prayer room.

Jesus prayed for unity in His Church in His high priestly prayer in John 17 shortly before He died. In John 17:1-19 He prays directly for His disciples, but in the last six verses He prays for His Church throughout all of history. He prays that we would be united with Him (John 17:21, 23). He wants us to live in unity with His heart, doing and saying what

He says. He prays that we would know His glory and beauty and that our love would be pure and undefiled; that we would passionately love just as He does. He wants us to love Him just like He loves the Father (John 17:26). We want this tremendous portion of Scripture to dramatically change our lives. We should pray these Scriptures in the prayer room because unity is so important in our cities.

Unity is a key to fruitfulness. This is true in all dimensions of life, especially in the prayer room. We need to do everything we can do to help maintain unity, love, and peace with one another. We are glorifying God in our prayers and worship. Valuing and prioritizing unity will help bring the manifest presence of God into the prayer room. We need to ask ourselves:

How can we maintain unity in our House of Prayer? How can we stay united in powerful intercession on a daily basis?

Colossians 3:12-14 emphasizes the character qualities that we must cloth ourselves with in order to build perfect harmony:

> *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

Possible Hindrances to Unity

Even as we look at these beautiful character qualities that enhance unity, it is also important to realize that the devil will try to stop or hinder prayer in many ways. He will deceptively bring in many problems. You are moving into heavier warfare when you start a House of Prayer in your city or church, but the blessings will far surpass the hindrances. You are entering greater opportunities for harvest.

The following are a few of these possible hindrances. Many of them are especially problems in a citywide House of Prayer. If you are doing a one-week House of Prayer in your church, most of these hindrances won't affect you. For example, you won't run into denominational problems or lack of finances if it's in your own church. In one short

week you may not have to face as many opportunities for offense or division. It's in the longer term 24/7's where the more serious hindrances can occur. It would be good to pray about these possible hindrances ahead of time, and be alert as you build 24/7 prayer in your city or church.

- **Denominational barriers**. We must unite, and learn to pray with those outside our own denomination. We must decide within our own heart that the unity of the body of Christ is far more important than our own personal preferences. Humility is going to be key in this end-time revival and in Houses of Prayer. There will be no room for pride.

- **Offenses**. Individuals may get offended with one another. We must all learn not to carry an offense. It is absolutely necessary that we forgive quickly and move on. Entire cities are at stake; therefore, we must choose to love. Confession of sin removes the barriers of disunity in relationships. Confession and repentance should be encouraged in your House of Prayer.

- **Lack of finances or agreement in location.** When starting a House of Prayer in a city, finances can hold us back. Or there may be difficulty in agreeing on a location. Some may want it in one place and others somewhere else. Continual prayer for God's provision and direction is vital. Asking the whole body of Christ in a region to contribute is helpful.

- **The struggle with control.** Many times "control" can be a spiritual problem causing disunity, and certain individuals or churches may want to control what God is doing. The truth is that God is the ultimate leader of the House of Prayer. He must get all the glory. Any man that God uses will be one who walks in deep humility.

- **Individual strongholds affecting relationships.** The enemy will do anything he can to find open doors (strongholds) in individual lives to prevent united prayer. In warfare, Satan will try to ruin relationships. This is why we must personally close the door of strongholds in our own lives and constantly forgive. We must let God radically deal with our own personal lives.

- **Division.** The enemy will always try to divide and conquer. We have seen him do this all over the mission field between husbands and wives, leaders and followers, team members, and churches. We must seriously pray, and choose not to be divided or bring accusation against one another.

Realize that God can break through all these hindrances. He is able. Love does cover a multitude of sins. It's worth it to have Houses of Prayer even in spite of the hindrances. God can exceed our greatest expectations if we are willing to battle through the hard times. Let's look at what will help us facilitate unity.

Values to Help Facilitate Unity in Prayer[1]

The following are three values that will help facilitate unity in your House of Prayer.

- **Mature team ministry.** When there are instruments, antiphonal singing, and prayer together, then there is a need for unity between the worship team, the intercessors, the singers, and everyone in the prayer room. There needs to be the desire to function as a divine symphony. We truly need each other. Skilled hands and trained minds are needed. The musicians must play with restraint in order to bring out the best in the team. Intercessors must refrain from lengthy prayers. Mature team ministry is vitally important.

- **Inclusiveness.** There needs to be the desire to include everyone. The ungifted, weak, or untrained need to feel welcomed. Everyone is needed. Everyone is part of the prayer room. Again, we must be very careful that one or a few people do not dominate the House of Prayer. I have experienced this many times. When one or two people dominate the prayers because they are quick or loud, the quieter ones can feel frustrated or left out. We need to guard against this.

- **Centrality of the Word.** Praying the Bible should be included, as emphasized in the last chapter. Mike Bickle from the International House of Prayer in Kansas City says that we should be a singing seminary.

> We are to be rejoicing in the language of God's heart as opposed to being frustrated by the limitation of biblical language. The Scriptures impart a governmental function into the model that automatically hinders the use of error and weirdness.[2]

Think about the beautiful sound in a united symphony orchestra. This instrumental ensemble containing sections of string, brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments, when united make a beautiful symphony.

> A psychologist at Union College and R. Scott Builione, a graduate student at Columbia University, were presenting their discoveries at a meeting of the American Psychologist Association. They were showing how various sections of eleven major symphony orchestras perceived one another. String players were seen as arrogant and unathletic. The percussionists were viewed as hard-of-hearing, unintelligent, and insensitive. The brass players were thought of as loud and woodwinds were seen as meticulous, quiet, and quite egotistical.

With such widely divergent perceptions and personalities, how could they ever come together and make such wonderful music? The amazing answer is that even though these musicians see each other with different eyes, they come under submission to the leadership of the conductor. Because of his guidance, they play breathtaking music.[3]

In the same way, those in the prayer room might all be different and have a variety of ways of doing things, but when they submit to the leadership of God and His Word, they play and pray in harmony. No one is left out; they function as a divine symphony. They are of one heart, giving glory to God through their unity. Just as in the book of Acts, God will show forth His power through His people when they are of one heart and soul. I look forward to that day, don't you?

> *After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. All the believers were one in heart and mind... With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus…* (Acts 4:31-32a, 33).

Harmony in Song and Intercession

> In the unity of faith, love, and the Spirit, the power of the name and of the presence of Jesus acts more freely, and the answer comes more surely. The evidence that there has been true, united prayer is the fruit—the answer, the receiving of the thing for which we have asked. "I say unto you… it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." What an extraordinary privilege united prayer (and worship) is! What a potential power it has![4]

Just as we saw the powerful unity God is bringing in intercession, the same is true in song. The wonderful thing about this is the fact that you and I are part of it. This harmony that is beginning is powerful as 24/7 prayer spreads from city to city and nation to nation. And within the circle of prayer that you are involved in, creating this harmony is of extreme importance. The enemy loves to bring disharmony and disunity as we just saw, but the new thing that God is creating is a beautiful song of unity that will break through tremendous spiritual strongholds of the enemy.

So as you attempt harmony in your own prayer room, remember that you are part of a bigger whole that will bring tremendous effect in the spirit realm all throughout the earth. And in your city in particular, you are the ones called to bring the release and freedom of the Kingdom of God into your sphere of influence. This is absolutely exciting. There is tremendous power when you prayer together in agreement. Jesus says in Matthew 18:19-20:

> *Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.*

God is a musical God, and He has created us as people who function best when there is a song in our heart. Music motivates us. The greatest entertainment in the world is music, because the human spirit is musical. There is power released in song. If you question this, for some of you in mid-life, think back to the songs you heard on the radio as a teenager. If the music comes on the radio now, you know the words to the songs just as if it were yesterday.

The devil wants to rule the domain of music because he knows that there is power in it. This is why intercession combined with music and the Word is a dynamic combination and is of utmost importance at this time. When the Word of Christ dwells in our hearts richly through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, nothing will stop us from God's purposes in our lives both individually and corporately. Music combined with words of truth move us deeply into spheres of active commitment that we would never imagine otherwise. We read in Colossians 3:16:

> *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*

Antiphonal Singing

God loves it when we make music in our hearts to the Lord. He wants us to speak and sing His Word. It's a safeguard for our hearts because when we sing God's Word, we are singing about who He is and who we are in Him.

When we corporately pray and sing the Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit, He reveals His will and heart to us. This renews and transforms our minds. It touches our spirit and impacts our emotions. We begin to align our hearts and thoughts with God's. Instead of talking about all the negative things in life (which is so easy to do), he teaches us to speak to one another in psalms and spiritual songs with a thankful heart. How easy it is to look on the dark side of life, but this is a much better way to live. The Bible tells us in Ephesians 5:19-20:

> *Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Let's look at a powerful way to do this where singers interact back and forth with singing and the Word. This type of responsive singing is excellent for the prayer room. It's called antiphonal singing. The singers interact with the intercessors and musicians in singing the Word. Day and night prayer is team ministry where the team works together. Nobody gets the spotlight except God Himself.

This is the beautiful thing that God is doing with his end-time Church. He is beginning to get all the glory. Everyone takes part in the House of Prayer, and nobody takes the spotlight. Everyone gives way to one another because there is the understanding that all of us in harmony are better than one of us alone.

This is a learning experience for some of us who like to be up front because we are good musicians or strong intercessors. We need to realize that we must give way to others. But if we do, in the end God brings a beautiful harmony that we couldn't have done on our own. There is no more room for lengthy ten-minute prayers or a personal concert where we show off our musical talents. No! It is all for God and Him alone—an audience of one—and we all work together to bring about His will in the prayer room for His glory.

It is time that we join in unison as with one voice. In 2 Chronicles 5:13-14 we see how the musicians and singers were so united in song that they were as with one voice:

> *The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: "He is good; his love endures forever." Then the temple was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God.*

God wants to invade your prayer environment with His presence and power. This will eventually spill over into your city and nation. This team ministry is God's end-time way. He uses musicians, antiphonal singers, spoken intercession, and proclamation to bring about this unity in prayer.

- Worship and prayer becomes dynamic.
- Worship and prayer becomes enjoyable and not boring.
- Worship and prayer becomes intense but without exhaustion.

And revelation takes place right in the midst of it all. Instead of a labored, grueling experience, every meeting becomes a joyous occasion. I say this because I see it happening and personally experience it myself.

I have seen worshippers and intercessors come in with the burdens of the week and leave with the joy of the Lord. Some find it hard to wait until the next prayer meeting. This also enhances our own prayer times during the week. "Harp and bowl" prayer is not a burden. It is a gift of God for the end-time Church. Let's look at one way singers can do this effectively.

Keys in Antiphonal Singing

> *They held harps given them by God and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages"* (Revelation 15:2b-3).

- **Sing short.** This is not the time for singing a whole song. Short phrases are the key and should be only a few words in length.

- **Stay on the same theme.** Keep with the theme that is prayed in the Word.

- **Pay close attention to what is happening.** Remember you are a team, and the Holy Spirit will give you a natural flow. It may take time but stay in tune with what is happening.

- **Sing one at a time.** This will keep from confusion. Antiphonal singers alternate in their singing. The prayer meetings I have been involved with usually have three or four antiphonal singers who sing one at a time.

- **Echo phrase, paraphrase, repeat, or develop the phrase.** The singer may want to sing exactly the same phrase as the last singer or what the intercessor prayed. A repeated phrase can be powerful. A singer may want to paraphrase or summarize the phrase. He may want to develop the phrase by expanding the same idea or repeat a phrase for impact.

Singing and praying the Word partners with God's heart. Worship agrees with who God is—He is righteous, loving, kind, powerful, mighty, good, truthful, merciful, etc. Praying agrees with what He has promised to do. The Word of God provides fuel for prayer and keeps it alive. His Word is His will. Praying the Word connects with the sing-

ers in singing the Word, and there is a powerful interaction that takes place.

I am an intercessor and when the singers sing what I have prayed, it moves me into a greater intensity and faith in my next prayer—and this goes on and on. The praying and singing together rise up to a new level. You will see it yourself as you begin. This is what happens in heaven (Revelation 4:8).

There is no greater strength than the power of the Church with one heart and one goal united before the throne. The diversity of types of intercessors, the diversity of different musicians and different singers intensifies this oneness. I believe this is one of the most effective forms of spiritual warfare. It's powerful—It's dynamic—It inspires awe in God because He creates it, and it's all for Him. Andrew Murray in his book, *Andrew Murray on Prayer,* emphasizes the power of agreement in prayer. He says:

> Christians cannot reach the full blessing God is ready to bestow through His Spirit until they seek and receive it in fellowship with one another. It was to the hundred and twenty praying together in full agreement under the same roof that the Spirit came from the throne of the glorified Lord. In the same way, it is in the union and fellowship of believers that the Spirit can manifest His full power.[5]

What happens when intercession and singing is combined?

When these two come together with the Word, then revelation increases. The intercession hits the mark, the body of Christ is encouraged and empowered, and evangelism takes place as one leaves the prayer room. Singing the Word together with intercession is definitely going to lead to dynamic evangelism, because the human heart will not be able nor want to contain what happens in the prayer room. It will spread through the entire world to every tribe, language, people, and nation.

> *And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song: "You*

are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests… (Revelation 5:8-10a).

Gods United Creativity Expressed

There will be an understanding that will go forth: The Father's house is not first the house of preaching. The Father's house is not first the house of sacraments. The Father's house is not first a house of fellowship or supernatural gifts. My house shall have many of these things, but My Father's house shall be known first as a house of prayer for all nations—of people being built together, holy, on fire, compassionate; of living stones being brought together as they seek My face. And there will be a smoke that shall come forth from these living stones being built together. And the smoke signal shall rise up to the highest heaven and will be received. This smoke is called the incense of prayer.[6]

The incense of prayer is rising up to heaven all throughout the earth. A passion for prayer is springing up in many nations. We are seeing the creativity of God expressed in the prayer room in ways we have never seen before. God is showing up in the most unusual places with creative ideas and expressions in worshippers and intercessors. I have been to many prayer meetings, and I am amazed at how filled each one is with God's creativity and uniqueness.

God is putting this together into a united tapestry of creative prayer all throughout the earth. This is exciting! Each prayer meeting is a creative expression of God's glory. He is a creative God. Just as no two snowflakes are the same, no two prayer meetings are exactly alike either; each one is beautiful in its own way. We can go to prayer with anticipation and ask:

"God, what are you going to do today? How will you lead us? Show us your glory and majesty as we pray."

We may have a plan, but God expresses it in His own way through our prayers and worship. The prayer room is a dynamic place where the united creativity of God is expressed in all its dimensions of magnificent beauty.

> Creative and unusual environments can be highly conducive to prayer. The prayer room enables people to pray nonverbally by posting artwork, poetry and graffiti on the wall. The environment can be designed artistically to stimulate and direct prayer.[7]

There is a united creativity within diversity that gives us a bigger picture of what God is like. He does not want everyone to sing exactly alike. In His wisdom He brings unity through the various expressions of praise from His people. The word "create" in Webster's Dictionary means: "to produce, to bring forth, to bring into being from nothing, to make or form, to form anew, to generate, to shape or organize."[8] God shapes and produces a beautiful sound from His people as they praise Him. The following are just a few examples of creativity expressed in 24/7 prayer.

- **Creativity in antiphonal singing.** Each singer has a unique way of singing not only in voice but also in the phrases sung that spring from the Word.

- **Creativity in intercession.** Intercessors are all unique in the way they pray. Some may praise God in intercession while others like to pray warfare prayers. Some may pray for cities while others pray for countries or individuals.

- **Creativity in prayer rooms.** Prayer rooms are all decorated in different ways. Some are large and some are small. Some are colorfully decorated and bright while others may have a dimly lit lamp.

- **Creativity in action.** Some are very action-oriented towards reaching the lost while others are more interested in helping the poor and needy.

- **Creativity in age.** Some prayer meetings are filled with youth and louder music while others have older or more seasoned intercessors. Others may have every age group represented.

It is exciting to see how uniquely creative Houses of Prayer are that are springing up throughout the world. Think about it. If you have children, do you want them to all be alike? No. You probably delight in their unique design. One likes to paint while another likes to read. Another child is good at sports. Their unique gifting and expression of life is a delight to your family. If everyone in your family were exactly alike, it certainly would be boring. We need diversity to compliment our unity. And together you, as a family with a wide array of unique looks, personalities, gifting, and talents, make a solid family unit that is such a delight to God. The prayer room is like a uniquely created family.

God is up to something big! We must learn to celebrate His united creativity and diversity as Houses of Prayer spread worldwide.

Expect variation and creativity as the prayer movement increases. Some people have thought that Houses of Prayer have to be exactly alike. As you read about what God is doing, you can see that this is not true. The Holy Spirit is extremely creative. Each city and nation is different and is uniquely designed by God. Rejoice in different people and ways of praying. Rejoice in the different instruments and singers that God brings. Rejoice in God's unity in diversity.

Seek God for the perfect expression He wants for you, your church, and your city. Don't think it has to always turn out the same way or be done in the same fashion. The important thing is to begin so that you can take your part in the beautiful tapestry of prayer that God is designing throughout the earth. Peter Greig expresses the creativity of God in unique expressions of prayer:

> One of the things that often take people by surprise when they create space for 24-7 prayer is that there is an instant explosion of creativity. Instinctively, it seems, many people choose nonverbal ways of communicating with God the moment they have the opportunity. Suddenly prayers are painted, drummed, enacted, rhymed, choreographed, and even sculpted… The creativity of God is evident all around us, as is the inadequacy of speech amid the mysteries of life. How then can we reduce something as profound as prayer to mere words? Loving God demands the whole of our being: emotion, imagination, and personality.[9]

A friend I was visiting was mending a big tablecloth with a beautiful design. There were a few tiny holes in various places and instead of throwing it away because it had no use, she wanted to mend the holes. At one point she told me to take the two ends and help her hold it up to the light. She then looked carefully for any holes that would be hard to see when looking at a small section. We held it up and sure enough, I found a small hole in one of the corners. She quickly mended the hole and there it was, a beautiful tablecloth!

The worldwide prayer movement is like this beautiful tapestry as it grows with united and creative intercession. Each piece is important. The entire piece makes a beautiful design for the world to see. Just as a tablecloth has a purpose for a family to eat and dine together on it, so the tapestry of prayer has a purpose. Believers gather to feast on the goodness of God and pray for the world. Its purpose and design will touch people all over the world with the glory of God and His salvation.

A tiny hole in this worldwide prayer movement will diminish the overall effect and purposes of God in that location. God is mending the nets and preparing the world for a huge catch of fish. It's time that we each do our part in bringing about this great design of creative and fervent prayer in God's House.

Let's do our part and rejoice in the expression of God's united creativity.

As you anticipate this beautiful tablecloth of blessing, go to prayer with great expectation. Pray for God's blessing in each prayer meeting you hear about, and pray for a great increase in 24/7 prayer in every nation. God is releasing a spirit of prayer throughout the earth.

He is raising up Houses of Prayer with great uniqueness and creativity in every land. This creativity does not diminish our unity. This unites us more because we realize that we don't have to be exactly alike. Our unique prayer meeting adds to the overall unity of the prayer movement. God-inspired creativity is part of God's plan in the prayer movement (Exodus 35:30-35; Psalm 45:1; Proverbs 8:22-31).

Ask God to show you a bigger picture of Himself through the diversity and creativity of 24/7 prayer. He is zealous for His House of Prayer throughout the world. He will take the full expression of His praying

Church and make it a beautiful tapestry for the world to see and desire. When we unite, nothing is impossible.

> The zeal of the Lord of Hosts is loose in the land. The power and anointing in the Church is escalating as God releases the zeal of the Father's house upon His people. It brings holy boldness, (creativity) and an unquenchable spirit of prayer. It stems from a holy jealousy of God who is declaring in a loud voice, "I'm coming to take over My house and to claim My house for My own."[10]

United Prayer Life Application
How to Build Harmony in Houses of Prayer

In this chapter we looked at the incredible power of united intercession. We saw how God brings harmony through song and intercession in Houses of Prayer throughout the world, and studied how united creativity is expressed in the prayer room. Take time to incorporate this into your own prayer life and House of Prayer by carefully doing the following:

- Meditate on Psalm 133. What blessings have you experienced in your life when you have been united with other Christians? In what way do you think there is power in united intercession?

- Study Colossians 3:12-14. Look carefully at the values that help facilitate unity in prayer in this chapter: mature team ministry, inclusiveness, and centrality of the Word. Have you experienced these values in the prayer meetings in which you have been involved in the past? Explain. How can you improve?

- Study Ephesians 5:19-20. Have you ever experienced the combination of singing and praying the Word? In what way does this partner with God's heart? Write down your answer. Explain antiphonal singing from what you have learned from this chapter.

- How is the united creativity of God expressed in the prayer room and around the world? Write a prayer thanking God for what you have learned about united prayer, and ask Him to build united intercession in your city.

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Meet together and study the above verses, thoroughly answering each question as a group. Carefully discuss the "Keys in Antiphonal Singing" from this chapter. Then put together a prayer and worship team, designating who will be the intercessors and who will be the antiphonal singers. Choose a leader for the intercessors and a leader for the worship team. Pray through some of the apostolic prayers of Paul as shown in chapter five (Romans 15:5-7, 13; 10:1; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8;

Ephesians 1:17-19; 3:16-19; Philippines 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-12; 4:2-4; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; 5:23-24; and 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; 3:1-5).

Then take it into the prayer room, and practice with the intercessors praying the Word and the antiphonal singers responding to the Word through singing short phrases. Have the musicians play their instruments throughout this prayer time. After your one or two hours in the prayer room, come out and have a time to debrief and evaluate your prayer time. What did you do right and wrong? How can you improve in the future? In closing, pray the following prayer.

Our Prayer for Unity

Lord, thank You for bestowing blessing when we live and pray together in unity (Psalm 133). Teach us as Your people to walk shoulder to shoulder in unity. Help us to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). We thank You for the power of corporate intercession. When we combine instruments, songs, and prayer together, help us to be unified for Your glory. Thank You for the harmonious unity of prayer that You are creating among Your people throughout the earth. You promise that where two or three of us come together in Your name, that You are with us (Matthew 18:19-20). Unite our city in 24/7 prayer. We choose to join in unison as with one voice because You deserve our praise. You are good; Your love endures forever (2 Chronicles 5:13-14).

LORD, we want to keep Your Word central in our lives and in our prayer meetings. We want to be those who make music in our heart to You, always giving You thanks (Ephesians 5:19-20). Help us to let Your Word dwell in us richly as we sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in our hearts to You (Colossians 3:16). Help us to partner with Your heart as we sing and pray Your Word. Release Your united creativity in our prayer room. We celebrate Your united creativity and diversity in the Houses of Prayer that are spreading worldwide. Thank You for the beautiful tapestry of prayer that You are fashioning throughout the nations. "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name?

For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you…" (Revelation 15:3b-4). In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree
about anything you ask for,
it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.
For where two or three come together in my name,
there am I with them.
Matthew 18:19-20

CHAPTER SEVEN

Houses of Prayer and Action

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news
to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release for the prisoners.
Isaiah 61:1

WE MET TOGETHER TO PRAY every Monday night. Norm and I attended that prayer meeting for a few years. It was a focused prayer meeting for one particular Muslim nation. We knew what was happening in that country every week through the e-mails and information streaming in. We were well informed in our intercession even though we weren't actually living in that country. Many from our group would go in and out, bringing back prayer fuel and news about what was happening there. The prayer meetings went from house to house as the prayers kept streaming up into the throne room of heaven.

The Holy Spirit was moving not only in that country, but also in our hearts. Transformation was taking place. God's heart was becoming ours. He was giving us His passion for the world, especially for that country. But as time went on, the prayer meetings got smaller. At times it dwindled down to only a few. What was happening? What was the reason for so few coming?

Through week after week of prayer for that country, God had released His burden for the nation. Our heartbeat had aligned with His. Prayer

had led to heartfelt action. They went—they prayed in that land—they reached out with works of justice—they touched the hearts of people and met needs.

Some from that prayer meeting are now living and praying for the harvest on-site. They were sent by God to that nation to go and bear much fruit. Others from our church go back and forth to that country; some have gone to other Muslim nations. We have gone several times ourselves. God is raising up prayer in other lands. The Bible promises that whatever we ask in His name, He will give it to us.

There was enjoyable prayer and fervent intercession in that prayer meeting as we focused on that needy nation. Enjoyable prayer leads to abundant fruit as weekly petitions are brought before the Lord. The on-the-field workers and the at-home pray-ers were a powerful combination, bringing stimulation to the prayer meetings and hopeful anticipation of what God was going to do.

We were watchmen for that nation. We believed God would change the atmosphere through our prayers. We were on guard as doorkeepers, covering God's worker in protective prayer. We knew that God brings the victory, and one of the greatest testimonies from this prayer meeting was how it led to heartfelt action. Certainly Houses of Prayer are going to lead to abundant fruit. The spirit of prayer together with abundant action is going to bring in a mighty harvest, far greater than any of us can possibly imagine.

Surely God has anointed us all to preach good news to the poor. He has sent us to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness to the prisoners (Isaiah 61:1). Perhaps you desire to learn to pray strategically with others and reach your workplace or neighborhood for Christ. Discover how Houses of Prayer lead to heartfelt action. Learn the secret of enjoyable prayer, and find out how it leads to abundant fruit. Learn how to be a powerful watchman for cities and nations.

This chapter is very good for helping your prayer group discuss and plan how to take strategic and heartfelt action to reach your city as you pray. It will be a helpful tool in evaluating your city in the area of watchful prayer. As your House of Prayer experiences enjoyable prayer and learns how to be God's watchmen for your city, the natural response is to take action.

Heartfelt Action

> It is Jesus who teaches us how to pray. He learned it amid the trials and tears of His earthly life. In heaven it is still His beloved work. His life there is prayer. Nothing delights Him more than to find those He can take with Him into the Father's presence, clothing them with power to pray down God's blessing to those around them, training them to be His fellow-workers in the intercession by which the kingdom is to be revealed on earth.[1]

Jesus teaches us how to pray and love. He wants us to feel compassion and begin to take action for those in need. He teaches us how to pray heaven's blessings to earth. Prayer must lead to action. Prayer is vitally important, but it is not the end. As we pray, we receive the heart of God for the world around us. He clothes us with power—He leads us to people in need with His love and compassion—He brings us to the lost and lonely, the hurting and sick who need healing. Prayer leads to a lifestyle of loving and caring. Jesus is our example.

Through prayer God gives us power to be His witnesses everywhere we go.

Let's realize that prayer and action go together, but we can't do it alone. It is nothing less than the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit where God Himself is our guide. It is geared towards His glory alone. All selfish ambition and man-made schemes must fall by the wayside as God leads this most amazing prayer movement through His Spirit. The work of man is to glorify the King. And as John the Baptist said in John 3:30:

> *He must become greater; I must become less.*

An amazing thing happens when we have times of prayer together in the prayer room. A transformation takes place in our lives where God's heart becomes ours. This fact alone is reason to begin 24/7 prayer. The hour is urgent. We need to pray and feel God's heart for the world. Michael Howard, in his book, *Tales of an African Intercessor*, stresses that the key to intercession is when our heart lines up with the heartbeat of God and His agenda. He says:

> Nothing was more pressing than that the nations and multitudes who were marching to a Christless eternity should be saved.

> How I saw the agendas of men: so many and varied and all of such vital importance to them, but there was only one paramount agenda to God: THE NATIONS. I instantly realized that the entire task of the glorious TRIUNE God was completely and utterly devoted to this one supreme purpose for which Jesus had so freely given His life. All else was rather trivial in comparison and we all had majored on the trivial.[2]

The Houses of Prayer that God is raising up are not just little prayer meetings without power. They are leading into fervent outreach where lives are transformed by God's power. God wants to give us revelation—He wants to change our lives—He wants us to care for the lost. When day and night prayer meetings begin to take hold of us, and when God actually begins to arrest our attention right in the middle of the prayer room, we will be dramatically affected in our lifestyle. We will begin to see the world as God sees it.

The world is in desperate pain, and it is time that we die to our own plans and get in the center of the prayer room long enough to hear His heart. I don't know about you, but I desperately want to have the heartbeat of God for the world. The prayer room will lead to works of justice in the city. This includes taking care of the needy, orphans, widows, the homeless, and feeding the poor. It also includes helping to alleviate the oppression of poverty, abortion, racism, and so much more.

Read this passionate testimony of what one young man named Pete expressed at a prayer gathering regarding his anorexic sister. It's a challenge to all of us:

> But God's been challenging me to feel my sister's pain, because that's actually what it means to truly intercede. I also believe God is challenging us as a movement of young people to dare to feel the pain all around us. To move from praying "for" people from the comfort of our own salvation to interceding "with" them from a position of need… Here's the question:
>
> "Will we allow the things that break God's heart to break ours too?"
>
> It'll mean more tears, more listening. It may even be the reason why so many of us struggle with our own personal burdens and

> heartaches—God is allowing us to feel the pain, to be weak and broken so that our prayers have power. Intercession means weeping for the earthquake victims in the news right now; and for the anorexics, the drug users, the sexually abused, the friends who don't know Jesus. And God says that if we will stand in the gap in this way, bridging the ravine between a hurting generation and a healing God—we will see breakthroughs, a new level of effectiveness in prayer… But what if the call to pray is a call to bleed as well as receive blessing? Maybe we'll run out of words in the prayer room and just join the Holy Spirit in praying with "groans that words cannot express." Maybe our passion will consume us until we actually live out our prayers in practical action. Will you carry this cross? Can you receive it?[3]

I've written about this experience before, but I want to do it again because it so strongly reminds me of the power of prayer and the heart of God that is released in the prayer room. I had just experienced a tremendous prayer meeting for Israel right in the middle of the day. I hated to leave—the presence of God was so strong. But I knew that I had to work and run some errands, and so I hesitantly left.

I felt excitement and joy as I walked out of that prayer room.

Immediately after leaving, I drove to the post office in my city. The post office is not my favorite place to go, especially when I have many things to do, because it takes time. It was right before Christmas—the worst time to wait in line—and I had to mail a package. So I anticipated a boring, long, and tedious wait. Sure enough the parking lot was full.

But when I walked in, my heart suddenly had a new agenda. LOST people were all around me. And there I was standing in line with nothing to do (or did God have something eternal in mine?). I looked at those people in line. Perhaps in a small way God had called me to bring the reality of heaven on earth. I looked—I prayed—and I began to share with the woman in front of me. I discovered that the lady behind me was a Christian, and the lady in front of the one I was witnessing to was one as well.

It turned out to be a glorious experience where others heard about Jesus, and Christians were encouraged in their faith—including me. The

very powerful presence of God had gone with me from the prayer room. And it had all started in a prayer meeting.

Let's let our prayers lead to heartfelt action. Make sure your House of Prayer focuses at times on outreach and praying for the lost. One youth pastor in Spain was amazed at what happened to his young people in the prayer room:

> For years I've been trying to get my young people to have a heart for the lost and a desire to pray. Last night I found eight of them on their faces in the prayer room at two A.M. weeping for their non-Christian friends. What's happening?[4]

In God's presence we change as God gives us His heart for the lost. As we leave the prayer room, the presence of God goes with us and flows through our lives to all those with whom we come into contact.

Maybe you are not sure if you would go to heaven when you die. Salvation is a wonderful experience and leads to a fulfilling life. I accepted Jesus into my life over forty years ago, and I wouldn't trade my relationship with God for anything.

If you are not sure and want to receive Jesus into your life as your personal Savior and Lord, then here is how. Read the following, together with the Bible verses, and with a sincere heart pray the prayer at the end. It will change your life forever. It did mine, and I have never regretted it. Jesus helps me every day of my life, and I know He will help you too.

How to Find Eternal Life

- **God loves you -** *This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins* (1 John 4:10).
- **You have sinned** - *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23).
- **The result of sin is death and separation from God -** *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Romans 6:23).

- **Jesus died for your sins -** *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 5:8).

- **Jesus is the way to eternal life -** *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6).

- **Heaven is a free gift -** It can't be earned or deserved. *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

- **Receive Jesus today as your Savior -** *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16).

Admit that you are a sinner and can't get to heaven yourself. Be willing to turn from your sin. Believe that Jesus died for you on the cross. Through prayer, invite Jesus Christ to come into your life.

> *Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You are God and You died for my sins. Forgive me for my sins. I now invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as the Lord and Savior of my life. Thank you for the free gift of eternal life. In Your name I pray, amen.*

After receiving Jesus as your personal Savior, it is important to develop your relationship with Him. He loves you and desires an intimate relationship with you. You can learn more about growing in your relationship with God at: www.intercessorsarise.org.

For those of us who have kept our intimacy with God as our primary assignment, fruitfulness will flow through us. We bring Him with us to a lost and dying world. He energizes us with His life as we go forth, and we realize that time spent with Jesus has empowered us. It is worth it to seek the Lord's face. As we go forth from the prayer room, let's pray this prayer found in Tom Tenney's book called *The God Chasers*:

> *Father, we confess that we want to see change in our lives and in our church so that we can bring about change in our city. Give us such a heart and passion after You that we may begin to see your glory flow out of us to convict and save the lost. Release your presence through us as You did through Charles Finney when he walked through factories and saw workers drop to their knees under Your glory and cried out for forgiveness although not one word had been spoken or preached. May the faintest shadow of Your presence in our lives heal the sick and restore the lame we meet in the streets. Let Your presence so saturate us that unsaved guests can't step into our homes or be around us with unrepentant hearts. May Your glory bring conviction in their lives that lead to salvation—not because of the words we say but because of Your presence and power in our hearts.*[5]

God is awakening our hearts in the prayer room. That's why it's good to have your prayer room outward-looking. Maps, globes, news about missionaries, and many other things can give it an outward focus.

We've had one-week Houses of Prayer where unsaved friends and family's names were taped up on one wall and the local pastors names on another wall. We had evenings in our prayer room where we focused on praying for the sick. In all these demonstrations of loving prayer we are showing earth that our God reigns supreme. We are bringing the reality of heaven to earth.

> The wake up call is now being sounded for the greatest force for truth and righteousness that has yet been released on the earth. It is now time to show the earth that heaven exists. All that we know on earth is but a shadow of the reality that is in heaven. We are called to bring reality to earth so that men will seek God.[6]

Enjoyable Prayer Leads to Abundant Fruit

Isaiah also prophesied of a totally new paradigm of prayer characterized by "joy". The Lord promised, "I will make you joyful in

> My house of prayer" (Isaiah 56:7). The Church will be surprised by joy. In other words, God will fill the Church with enjoyable prayer that is "refreshing and invigorating". Imagine the implications of a paradigm of "enjoyable prayer". The climate within the body of Christ would be different because of deep partnership in prayer with the Eternal Intercessor who is our Bridegroom God. If God is not enjoyable, it will not happen 24 hours a day. Historically, prayer has been hard and thus greatly neglected, but new days of refreshing prayer are breaking forth even now.[7]

If we are to bring in the great harvest at the end of this age, we must know the secret of enjoyable prayer. We saw that as we are involved in the combination of prayer and worship, our hearts are stirred towards the things that stir God's heart. How can we get away from the reality of the world situation? We can't. We will enter into the heart of God, and we will find great joy not only in prayer, but also in reaching out to the world around us. The angels rejoice in the salvation of the lost; we will do likewise. When we partner with God in reaching the poor and needy and in sharing the Good News, we will find exceeding joy. Luke emphasizes the great joy among the angels when one sinner repents. He wrote in chapter 15:10:

> *In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.*

The "harp and bowl" prayer room will help us to abide in Christ. This brings us into enjoyable prayer because it combines prayer and worship. When we combine prayer with singing and worshipping God, our heart begins to soar. The most significant passages related to enjoyable prayer outlines the beauty of God in context to the heavenly worship around the Throne in Revelation 4-5. We begin to encounter God's emotions and affections. Some think seeking God in prayer is boring and frustrating. No! God is releasing enjoyable prayer to His people (Isaiah 56:7).

I look eagerly forward to praying in the International House of Prayer. It is the best part of my day, and I thoroughly enjoy it!

I have been watching a tiny apple tree in our back yard. It's only a couple of years old, and it didn't look like anything would come forth from

this tree. It seemed to just sit there, looking absolutely lifeless with nothing to show for itself on the surface, but actually it was digging its roots deep down into the earth. Then, all of a sudden this year it is growing apples! It is bringing forth fruit. This is definitely a miracle from God because to the naked eye it looked like it wouldn't ever produce anything.

God wants us to live in Him with our root system deep into the ground, unshakable by what is happening in the world. He has chosen and appointed us to bear lasting fruit, but before we can bear good fruit, we need to have our roots deep in God—in who He is and who we are in Him. The fruit can only be sustained by the life the roots give. If the roots aren't deep, the weight of the fruit might be too much to bear. We read in John 15:16-17 in the Amplified Bible:

> *You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed you [I have planted you], that you might go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit may be lasting [that it may remain, abide], so that whatever you ask the Father in My Name [as presenting all that I AM], he may give it to you.*

Day and night prayer will keep us stable where nothing will be able to unearth us or cause us to fall, but there's one important requirement. We have to be vitally united to the source. God's Word has to continually be living in our heart. As we pray and abide in Christ in the prayer room, we will begin to bring forth abundant fruit outside the prayer room where the need is great. In John's Gospel, he emphasizes abundant fruit when we are linked intimately to the vine:

> *Dwell in Me and I will dwell in you. [Live in me and I will live in you]. Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (being vitally united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing… If you live in Me [abide vitally united to Me] and My words remain in you and continue to live in your hearts, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. When you bear (produce) much fruit, My father is honored and glorified, and you show and prove yourselves to be true followers of Mine. I have loved you [just] as the Father has loved Me; abide in My*

> *love [continue in His love with Me]. If you keep My commandments [if you continue to obey My instructions], you will abide in My love and live on in it, just as I have obeyed My Father's commandments and live on in His love* (John 15:4-5, 7-10, Amplified).

Enjoyable Prayer + Abiding in Christ = Abundant Fruit

Enjoyable prayer and abiding in Christ go together. You can't have one without the other. It is in that vital union with Christ that our prayers will go forth with power, and our feet will begin to carry the Gospel message with us wherever we go. We have not seen this yet in most countries, but we soon will because we won't be able to contain the truth within us any longer. The Good New is just too good! It will bring abundant fruit.

But can we actually begin to enjoy prayer? Prayer does not have to be hard and laborious—it can become something we love doing. We can delight in an intimate relationship with God.

What does it mean to enjoy something? Webster's Dictionary describes the word "enjoy" as: "something capable of being enjoyed, possessed or used with pleasure, to take pleasure or satisfaction in the experience of, to have, hold or occupy as a good or profitable thing, and to delight in the possession of."[8] You and I have the privilege of experiencing God in the prayer room. He is capable of being enjoyed—He is truly our satisfaction—He wants us to enjoy prayer and an intimate relationship.

The primary identity of the Church before Jesus returns to earth will be a cherished Bride who has a revelation of Jesus as the passionate Bridegroom. Only enjoyable prayer will sustain us as we enter into day and night prayer. Mike Bickle, who has been involved in non-stop, day and night prayer for many years, says the following:

> The power to engage in night and day prayer is found in having a heart that soars in God.[7]

I want my heart to soar with God, don't you?

Evangelism and joyful intercession stimulate one another. Evangelistic success brings joy to the prayer room; lack of success brings urgency

and burden to the prayer room. Either way, our prayers are fired up because we are touching the world that Jesus loves so deeply. And all of this leads to worldwide harvest and missions. We begin to really understand God's heart. Empowerment comes in the marketplace as we go out of the prayer room, and empowerment comes into the prayer room as we come back. They go together. Jesus wants to fill us with overflowing joy in the prayer room so that we can take it out into the streets and neighborhoods where we live.

Here at IHOP, we have an inner-city ministry called Hope City. Prayer meetings are held at the Hope City prayer room from 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. from Monday through Friday. Lunch is served at noon. The prayer room is open to all. Hope City is like a "church on the streets" with two weekly services at night. The services focus on knowing and loving God, developing a relationship with Him, and the end times. Dinner is served after the services. On Monday afternoons healing ministry is available. Through enjoyable prayer and outreach to the poor and needy, many lives are dramatically changed.

Prayer together with action brings transformation into the city one person at a time. The following are testimonies from those who have been touched in the inner city through Hope City:

- **Butch** (40 years old) - "About three years ago I jumped down some stairs while I was under the influence of drugs, and I hit a concrete wall head first; I was in a coma for four months. I woke up at St. Luke's Hospital. I lost some of my brain function and was moved into a nursing home where I live now. I've been coming to Hope City's ministry center for about a year. I gave my life to Jesus on the first night."

- **Kris** (20 years old) - "I was homeless, without any family, and living under some stairs when it was zero degrees Fahrenheit outside. Hope City gave me a sleeping bag and some food, then I began attending the prayer meetings. Since then, I have seen the changes Jesus makes in people's lives and I gave my life to Him. I have to go to rehab for a while, but Hope City continues to be my visiting family, and I can't wait to get back there and help!"

- **Connie** (48 years old) - "I've lived over twenty years on the streets as a drug dealer and a drug user. I've always wanted God but

could never encounter Him in a way that set me free from my issues. I am now glad to say that I am free from some of the things that have had a hold on me. I consider myself a vital part of Hope City's ministry."

- **Barbara** (54 years old) - "My friend Randy invited me to a "church deal" dinner on Monday night. I liked the surroundings and I liked the people; I have been coming three times a week for about a year. I am a Jewish woman who didn't realize I needed a savior. I prayed to receive Jesus in my heart about two months ago. I like reading my Bible during the prayer time."

There are other testimonies, but this should bring great encouragement as to what God can do when our Houses of Prayer lead to heartfelt action that brings forth fruitfulness. Individuals working with Hope City learn how to minister in the city by leading in the prayer room, serving in the soup kitchen, participating in the food distribution project, and ministering to gang members, drug addicts, and the homeless. They focus on a lifestyle of prayer and develop skills they need to minister in the inner city.

We can learn from the prayer life of the Apostle Paul. He thoroughly enjoyed praise and worship wherever he was. He knew how to abide in the Lord even in the hardest of circumstances, and his life was abundantly fruitful. Let me give you an outstanding example that shows how deeply the Apostle Paul and Silas knew the secret of joyful prayer. You will find the story in Acts 16:16-40.

Although these two men were stripped, beaten, and thrown into prison, they practiced prayer and worship right in that prison cell. It certainly sounds like they were experienced in 24/7 prayer. Imagine if it was you in prison. The darkness must have been overwhelming. Wouldn't you be worried about your life or your family? Wouldn't you wonder where your next meal was coming from or if you'd ever get any sleep? Not Paul and Silas. Having been severely flogged and tortured with probably every bone and muscle in their body aching, they practiced enjoyable prayer. We read in Acts 16:25-26:

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the

prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.

Through prayer and worship in an incredibly difficult situation, they experienced the supernatural power and fruitfulness of God right in those dark prison chambers. They prayed heaven down and the salvation of God came into that place in mighty power. The prison actually shook! The trembling and frightened jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?"

He and his family were saved, baptized, and filled with joy. Paul and Silas were enjoying the presence of God in a place of utter darkness. They were practicing 24/7 prayer during the night watch. How we need to do the same.

Are you experiencing a hard time? Do you feel you are facing a dark situation?

Enjoyable prayer (praise, worship, and thanksgiving) can turn your sadness into joy. You, too, can experience the supernatural power of God. Enjoyable prayer brings us into the place of abundance. We can only imagine how many of those other prisoners were saved that night through the example of these two men. We all need to learn from their example. Our cities, and even nations, can be transformed as we practice enjoyable prayer.

When I wrote this chapter I was enjoying the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia. I remember looking out my window at the beautiful mountains decorated with colorful fall trees of bright reds, yellows, and oranges mixed in between all the green. The tapestry of colors was outstanding and rather breathtaking to say the least. Our friends sent us there to spend a week in this gorgeous fall scenery. What a place to write!

The colors and majestic beauty of the trees against the mountains reminded me of enjoyable prayer and abundant fruit. You couldn't help but feel the joy as you looked out the window or drove along Skyline Drive. Breathtaking overlooks, majestic ridges, and wonderful walking paths reminded me of enjoyable prayer.

It's always unique what God does in the prayer room. He brings us in prayer to breathtaking overlooks and through colorful prayer patterns as we pray and worship. Our praise is like those colorful dancing leaves

blowing in the wind. He brings us into deep caverns of silent prayer as well as powerful mountaintops of faith-filled declarations of His truth. And the view from His perspective far exceeds what we can even imagine. When we come down from this glorious scenic encounter with God into the world where we live and work, we bring His glory and His abiding presence with us. This is truly enjoyable and leads to abundant fruit.

As I said before, take advantage of worship and prayer CDs that help bring you higher in the realm of prayer and intercession. It is definitely a way to enter into enjoyable prayer. Recently, I was sitting outside praying and worshipping with a CD that was intercession and worship for the nations. It was definitely enjoyable prayer.

There are so many ways to enhance prayer. You can make prayer enjoyable by using worship music, playing a guitar or other instrument as you pray, or playing light background or soaking music.

Enjoyable prayer is not just for a select few—it's for everyone!

> The Lord will release enjoyable prayer to His church. The only type of prayer that will continue night and day is enjoyable prayer. Anointed enjoyable prayer is for everyone."[9]

Watchmen for Your City

> A watchman on the wall does many things. He carefully watches what is happening and alerts the community when good ambassadors approach the city… A watchman also warns the city far in advance when an enemy approaches. He sounds an alarm to awaken the people because he knows "to forewarn them is to alert and arm them." Then they quickly can rally to take their stand on the wall against the enemy before he wrongfully tries to enter into the city.[10]

Day and night prayer is not only enjoyable, leading to heartfelt action and abundant fruitfulness, it will also change the atmosphere of your city. If there was ever a time when we needed to be alert for our cities and pray day and night for our neighborhoods, it is now. Too many

evil things are happening at an increasing rate. We have the secret of prayer and God's presence that can touch our cities and ward off the evil intent of the enemy. Day and night prayer is much more powerful than we realize. It can release the power of God and His anointing in even the darkest of places.

In the House of Prayer we welcome and honor the Holy Spirit, asking Him to lead us in our prayer time. We need to pray by the power and at the initiation of the Holy Spirit. We can't do it ourselves (John 5:19). Sometimes He whispers to us with an impression in our heart as to what to pray. Sometimes He directs us to specific Scriptures to pray. We need to be watchful and attentive to the Spirit's leading (1 Peter 4:7; Ephesians 6:18). We ask the Lord what He is doing and listen. We spend time in worship when we come into God's presence.

It's almost like putting up the sail in a boat on a lake when the weather is calm. Suddenly the sail catches the wind even with the most gentle breeze, and the boat begins to move. We position our heart to listen carefully for the knowledge of His will; then we pray it back to Him. Many times God's leading is like a whisper. If we pray faithfully and thankfully during the day of small beginnings, God will lead us into action and will bring increase (Luke 16:10; 19:17; Matthew 25:21). Sometimes the action God wants us to take is prayer for protection. Sometimes it is reaching out in love to a needy person in the inner city. Look at what happened to a 47-year-old woman named Martha:

> I was walking down the street on my way home from work around two years ago. A lady told me there were people inside praying. She said they prayed here every week and invited me to come. I was looking for God everywhere and knew He was speaking to me, so I went in. I have struggled with loneliness for many years. These people told me I belonged and had a place with them. I am now serving God and know my place is truly with Him. I still have struggles, but I now have people to help me walk it out.

There is not a better way to protect our cities and touch the needy than to have Houses of Prayer.

This is going to be a necessity in the coming days. Through prayer and intercession we can pray into the atmosphere of heaven and bring

heaven's will to earth, praying the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. The word used for intercession in the Bible is "paga." This word can also be translated as "boundary." Through prayer we can build boundaries of protection around our cities. Through united prayer together with heartfelt action, we can protect God's purposes and plans for our cities.

What is the central dream of your city? What is the plan or purpose of God for your city?

Think about it. God has a good plan for your city, but the enemy has an evil plan. God anticipated your city and planned it. Your city does have a divine purpose; there is the need to cry out to Him 24/7 for the fulfillment of that purpose. You need to protect the dream of God for your city through prayer. Read what well-known intercessor and author, Dutch Sheets, says about watchmen:

> Protection is an important aspect of the watchman anointing. Watchmen are guards, bodyguards, doorkeepers and, generally speaking, those who protect by covering in prayer.[11]

We used to live in the city of Virginia Beach, very close to the Atlantic Ocean. Often we were threatened by possible hurricanes that occasionally came up the east coast of the United States. I remember a time when a group of Christian leaders, made up of pastors and intercessors, decided that the threat was too serious. They called the region—which included seven cities—to day and night prayer for the protection of our area. God protected each city.

In the Old Testament times, a watchman would keep watch on the walls for enemies or watch after the crops at harvest time (Isaiah 1:6-8; Ezekiel 22:30). We need watchmen to watch over God's harvest in our cities and protect it as well. Just as God appointed mankind as guardians and watchmen of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2:15, He wants us to be watchmen and guard the land where we live. The Greek words used for "to guard" are "gregoreuo" and "agrupneo," which both mean to be awake or sleepless. This implies protection. We need to be God's night watchmen and be on the lookout for danger.

In an area of Africa, the first Christians were very serious about watchful prayer. Each believer had their own special place outside the village where they could be alone to pray in solitude. They reached these out

door "prayer rooms" by walking through their own private footpath through the brush. But when the grass began to grow over one of the trails, they knew something was desperately wrong—someone wasn't praying.

They were perfect examples of watchmen because they were so concerned about the spiritual welfare of each other. A custom sprang up among them. Whenever one of them noticed an overgrown prayer path, they would go to the person and warn them in a loving way by saying: "Friend, there's grass on your path!"[12]

God wants you to be a watchman just like these villagers in Africa. He wants you to join with others in 24/7 prayer for your city and for one another. I want to emphasize Isaiah 62:6-7 again because it stresses the need to give God no rest, and to pray day and night for the city of Jerusalem:

> *I have posted watchmen on your walls, 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.*

The same is true for each one of our cities. As you begin to look at your city through the eyes of God and with His heart, realize that it belongs to Him. We read in Psalm 24:1: *The earth is the Lord's and everything in it.* God wants you to contend for your city in prayer. He wants you to pray for His authority to rule supreme in your city. Although Satan has invaded our cities, through prayer and action we can take them back.

How to Pray for Your City

> Your city is God's city. The people are made in His image. Satan is an invader and a usurper operating in our territory. God did not give demons authority over your city. Demons have infested the earth's atmosphere since before the creation of mankind, but they can only extend their authority into a town or an institution when people sin. When you look into the history of your city, you will find clues as to what is oppressing the people today. This is our planet, and the only authority Satan has is stolen human authority.[13]

In the above quote, John Dawson emphasizes the fact that this is our planet and that your city belongs to God. The following are some ways you can bring authoritative intercession for your city into your House of Prayer:

- **Cover your city with continuous praise and worship.** God gives you His heart for your city through worship and, therefore, a positive attitude is important. Instead of complaining and reacting toward the sin in your city, praise God for the good things. Satan is already an accuser, so praising God and declaring by faith the eternal purpose and dream of God over your city brings in His presence and defeats the enemy.

- **Wait on the Lord for insight.** Don't depend on your own wisdom, but listen to God with childlike dependence. God will open your eyes as to what He wants to do in your city when you set aside your own agenda and wait upon Him. The Lord will give you His strategies for reaching your city.

- **Identify with the sins of the city.** We can all identify with the roots of any sin in our city. The potential is in each one of us. We need to identify in personal and corporate repentance. Nehemiah identified with the sins in his city and prayed, *I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you* (Nehemiah 1:6-7).

- **Overcome evil with good.** Come in the opposite spirit. If there is a lot of violence, demonstrate the spirit of peace. If your city is full of greed, demonstrate generosity. If there is hate, live a life of love. This will give you great victory in your city.

- **Travail over your city.** Just as a pregnant woman travails to give birth to a child, you birth God's dream in your city through travail (John 16:21). You must pray until something happens; this takes dedication and perseverance. This has everything to do with faith for your city and revival. The Apostle Paul is a good example (2 Corinthians 11:27-28).

The level of a spiritual victory for your city is directly affected by two spiritual conditions: the intensity of your desire and the size

> of your faith. God wants to see if you want the minimum or the maximum. Do you want institutional survival—or citywide revival?[14]

Perhaps this is a good place to mention the night watch. Larger Houses of Prayer often requires several people to spend the night hours in the prayer room. Many will rise up to this call and embrace the lifestyle of the night watch. I have seen this numerous times. Here at the International House of Prayer, there are many who love to pray in the middle of the night. It especially appeals to the youth. The Holy Spirit is raising up a community of people who will pray and contend for the mercy and power of God in the night seasons (Joel 1:13). They will be vigilant and watchful.

Psalm 134 speaks of those in the night watch. This is critical to the divine strategy of God in order to see transformation in our cities. So many evil things happen in the night—murder, theft, immorality, and witchcraft. Light can invade the darkness through prayer and worship.

Recently I heard about how thirteen young people were being trained to pray from about 8:00 P.M. until 3:00 A.M. here at the International House of Prayer. They were training their bodies to adjust to a new time schedule in eating and sleeping so that they could give themselves to prayer in the night season. The commitment of this group of young people to be God's watchmen should stimulate each one of us to give ourselves to prayer, whether it is in the day or the night.

The urgency of the hour and the present emphasis on prayer makes 24/7 prayer a possibility in this generation. Let's seek to be people who learn to pray not only in the day but also in the night (Psalm 63:6; 119:55, 148).

As God's people behold and bless the Lord at night, the spiritual atmosphere changes in the city.

A few years ago we were praying 24/7 during the month of October in southern Spain. We were praying for the Gibraltar area, including southern Spain and North Africa. I remember a particularly weary time of prayer early in the morning when it was still dark, and when I was feeling very alone in the prayer room. God reminded me of when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane and His disciples fell asleep. He had asked them to watch with Him.

In the same way, I felt like the Lord was quietly and tenderly speaking to me. I felt he was saying:

"Will you not watch with me one hour? Will you not watch and pray for the land and the salvation of souls here in the dark?"

I realized at that moment that I needed to say, "Yes" to the Lord. He is looking for those who will stand watch even when it is not easy. Will you not also be God's watchman at such an important hour, even when others are sleeping?

Will you not also pray until God brings deliverance to your city?

> Watchmen are ordinarily placed on the walls of a city to give notice to the rulers of coming danger. God appoints watchmen not only to warn men—often they will not hear—but also to summon Him to come to their aid whenever need or the enemy may be threatening. The great mark of the intercessors are that they are not to hold their peace day or night, to take no rest, and to give God no rest, until the deliverance comes. In faith they may count upon the assurance that God will answer their prayers.[15]

Heartfelt Action Life Application
How to Turn Your Prayers into Action

As you think about enjoyable prayer, abundant fruit, heartfelt action, and watchful prayer, begin to imagine the power of heartfelt action when 24/7 prayer is active in your city. Then answer the following questions:

- As you pray, are there times you have felt the heart of God for those you were praying for? - Explain a time when your prayers led to heartfelt and fruitful action? What did you do?

- Enjoyable Prayer + Abiding in Christ = Abundant Fruit - Write a paragraph about this in your own words. Use John 15:4-5, 7-8, and 16-17 in your answer.

- In what way does evangelism and joyful intercession stimulate one another? - Explain your answer using a personal example if possible.

- Study the example of Paul and Silas in Acts 16:16-40 - How did they experience the supernatural power and fruitfulness of God right in those dark prison chambers?

- How can you take action by being a watchman for your city? - Through day and prayer we can build boundaries of protection around our cities. In what areas does your city need boundaries of protection through prayer? How will you personally take action in your city after you pray?

- Evaluate your prayers individually and corporately as you look at the following ways to bring intercession into your city - Explain each answer, and consider the areas where you feel weak.

  - Do you cover your city regularly with praise and worship?

  - Do you wait on God for insight into how to pray and reach your city?

  - What insight has God already given you for your city?

  - Do you identify in prayer for the sins of your city? How?

- Do you overcome evil with good by coming in the opposite spirit? Give some examples of action steps you have taken.

- Do you ever travail or pray strong heartfelt prayers for your city? Explain.

- How can your prayers lead to action? What steps can you take personally in reaching your city this month?

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Get together with an individual or group and discuss the application assignment together after first having done it alone. Take extra time to discuss Paul and Silas's example and how you can bring intercession into your city through the ways suggested. Evaluate your city in the area of watchful prayer. Discuss ways you can take heartfelt action in reaching your city both individually and as a group. Have an action plan of some form of outreach you can do as a group.

Then take it into the prayer room by beginning with a time of praise and worship. Pray through the verses in John 15 about abiding in Christ. Cry out to God to help you learn how to be watchmen for your city. Use the list of questions in this life application, and pray for God's help to overcome any weaknesses you may each have when you intercede for your city. Pray through the areas where you need walls of protection and boundaries in your city. Ask God to raise up other watchmen for your city. Pray through the various ways you will take heartfelt action in reaching your city. Be specific. Pray through your action plan.

Our Prayer for Heartfelt Action in Our City

Dear Lord, help our prayers lead us to heartfelt action. We want to be transformed into fervent lovers who reach out to the needy and lost in our city. Anoint us to preach good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners (Isaiah 61:1). Help us to abide in you daily (John 15). We want to bear much fruit (John 15:16-17). Teach us enjoyable prayer. We want to always delight and find joy in the prayer room. We want to bring that joy into the streets and into our work places. Show us how

to take action in our city and bring forth abundant fruit in Your name. This month we choose to show heartfelt action in our city. [Name what you will do to reach out to your city.] Fill us with Your compassion and love for our city.

Teach us to worship You even in the midst of difficulty, just like Paul and Silas did in prison. Demonstrate Your supernatural power through our lives every day, and bring us into the place of abundance. Change the atmosphere of our city through our prayers. Help us to guard our city as watchmen. Our city belongs to You. [Name your city.] Teach us to continually cover it with praise and worship. Give us insight into how to pray for our city and how to take action as we wait on You. Teach us the secret of travailing prayer. Give us great faith for revival for our city. We will pray until Your deliverance comes. We choose to give ourselves no rest (Isaiah 62:6-7). We praise You for You are mighty and powerful, and You can do all things. We praise You for what You are going to do in our city as we pray and reach out to the lost. Thank You that we will bear much fruit for Your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples (John 15:7-8).

CHAPTER EIGHT

Houses of Prayer and the Nations

Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
Psalm 96:2-3

WE WERE AN UNUSUAL GROUP of mainly young people—all colors, all shapes and sizes, and with many languages, accents, and backgrounds, but there was one thing we had in common—we loved God and wanted to make Him known all around the world. Perhaps that's why we took the courage to venture out of our safe, secure homes to step out into an unknown and sometimes fearful, unstable future.

Some would probably say it was a gamble. But joining that old ship named *Doulos*, built in 1914 and still sailing around the world, was well worth the sacrifice. And all I can say in looking back is that it was definitely one of the best things I had ever done in my entire life. If I had to do it all over again, I would certainly have made that same daring choice.

It changed my life forever, and I am eternally grateful for that change.

God's House shall be a House of Prayer for all nations (Isaiah 56:7). How can we get involved in this great purpose of God—prayer for all nations? Most likely you won't have the opportunity to go on a ship around the world like I did. You may wonder, "How can I get a vision

to pray for the nations? How can I catch the vision for 24/7 prayer and spread it to others?"

In this chapter learn how to pray Biblical prayers for the nations. Discover how Houses of Prayer are spreading worldwide, and find out how you, too, can spread the vision of prayer for the nations. This chapter will excite your heart to what God is doing all over the world and how you can be a part of it. It will also help you to introduce prayer for the nations into your House of Prayer.

Now let's get back to my ship story.

As young people trying to reach the nations with the Gospel of Jesus, we appreciated the Thursday night prayer meetings. The ship's crew and staff would get together from 8:00 P.M.—12:00 A.M., even during stormy sea voyages. It was a time of unity, of togetherness, and it was a time of praying for the nations. Not just one or two but many nations, and some of them we had never even heard of! Japan, Indonesia, India, South America, Fiji, Australia, Tonga, France, Micronesia, and the list went on and on—the nations!

We would cover nation after nation in prayer, week after week and month after month. We lived among the nations day-in and day-out, and so it was very personal to us. We were over forty nations on board—special and extremely diverse nations—and for me personally, it was an awesome delight that I treasure very deeply in my heart to this day.

What made this prayer night so special for us?

Certainly many of us were tired by Thursday, and some may have grumbled about it being prayer night. We had already experienced a very full hard days work, but there was something so important about praying for the nations. What made this prayer time so exciting was that we were reaching the nations—right then and there in that main lounge (our floating House of Prayer).

We had daringly left our homes behind to venture off on this old ship representing so many nations, not knowing exactly what we would encounter along the way. The fact that we had left everything behind for a worldwide cause touched something deep in our hearts. It hadn't been a casual decision. We had counted the cost.

Sometimes we would actually be sailing towards a nation right during that prayer meeting. I remember walking out on deck near the end of one of the prayer meeting, and looking out at the deep dark sea as we dreamily sailed into Gibraltar during an evening mist. Wow! It was rather majestic and powerful.

At other times the ship had just arrived in a new country a few hours before, like Papua New Guinea. All of a sudden, there were all of these dark-skinned natives walking bare-foot and with wraparound lap-laps (native skirts) right into our prayer meeting to pray with us. It was as if we had a glimpse of what it would be like in heaven with people of every tribe and tongue worshipping the King together.

As you can imagine, these prayer meetings were very special. They brought comfort and the assurance that God was with us, and that He did love the nations and answered prayer when His people asked. And the corporate sense of united prayer made it that much more meaningful. You weren't alone. You were involved in something so significant with others, that it almost brought chills down your spine once you stopped to think about it.

We were praying for the nations. We were praying God's heart.

There were times when we had to pray for the weather to become calm. Everything was bouncing back and forth or up and down, and you realized your vulnerability as you sailed on that little old ship in such a big and sometimes ferocious-looking ocean. It was in those times that you squeezed very tightly the hand of God in fervent, passionate prayer.

There were times when we had to pray for great breakthroughs in finance, just so we could sail to the next port. There were illnesses to pray through and multitudes who needed salvation. There were days when we didn't have a captain or engineers to sail our ship to our next destination, and there were times when we were sailing towards a country without the needed permissions to get in. And with a ship with a multi-national crew and so many strict international rules and laws, there was a lot of red tape to sort through.

But God was with us, and He answers prayer for the nations. He seemed to love our little dilemmas, knowing that He alone could break through them.

We had a lot to pray for when it came to nations. We would pray for evangelistic teams on shore in the Philippines—and many church teams that were visiting a multitude of churches on a Sunday in Mexico. We would pray for the many training programs we had on board while the ship was in Germany—and the fifty volunteers that were working with us in Malaysia or some other country.

We had to learn to pray about everything.

And we saw God move in so many unusual and unique ways. We just knew that it was God doing little miracles here and there all over the ship. And big ones as well, like the time when we needed 100 thousand Dutchmarcs for fuel if we were to continue navigating the South American coast. The alternative was to stop the ministry and send everyone home. We fervently prayed, and 100 thousand Dutchmarcs came in the next day, given by an anonymous donor. That was quite a sum of money.

Those Thursday night prayer meetings made a significant mark on my life.

I saw God's heart for the nations in close encounters. I experienced His heart for people who were lost and did not know Him, and I traveled to some areas where whole cities had never heard about His free gift of eternal life. I saw God's eagerness to answer corporate prayer for countries in a way that I had never seen before, and I learned that God cared for people more than I could ever realize. His heart is big—His purposes are vast—His desire is great. And I had the privilege to be a part of it there on that ship, right in the midst of our Thursday night prayer meetings.

A House of Prayer for All Nations

The Lord is doing a new thing in the hearts of His people, drawing us and building us together so that His presence can dwell among us in tangible ways. The house God is building is not a material structure; it is not determined by church tradition or denominational affiliation, particularly theology or ethnicity. He is building a new covenant house, where His blood-washed people are His temple. The house God is building is simply a unified,

> praying church. Jesus said, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'"? (Mark 11:17). Prayer lies at the very heart of what God is doing and building.[1]

This verse and Isaiah 56:7 are perhaps the most important verses in the Bible regarding Houses of Prayer. God's House shall be called a House of Prayer for all nations. This is why I mention it often. God is certainly raising up a worldwide prayer movement which will change the atmosphere of every nation. The mission's movement and the prayer movement are now joining together in a most amazing way. I feel that my time on the *Doulos* was like a foretaste of what God is going to do. There is a strategic alliance between the two movements for God's end-time purpose in completing the task of bringing the Gospel to every nation.

God is establishing an international family. As we learn to pray locally right where we live and work, let's learn to think globally. God is beginning to bring a global connection in Houses of Prayer. Mike Bickle emphasizes how God's Church will become a praying Church with a passion to reach the nations:

> Isaiah the prophet had a lot to say about this global prayer movement. He described a time when God's people worldwide will experience unusual grace and authority in prayer. He summarized this by declaring; God will name His Church a "house of prayer". This prophetic naming is in itself a promise of functioning in grace empowered prayer. Imagine naming the Church a "praying church". All over the earth, it will become common to hear of intercessory worship ministries that continue non-stop, 24 hours a day. God has established in the genetic code a passion to reach "all nations". It will result in bringing the outcasts of the earth to Jesus (Isaiah 56:8). These 24-hour-a-day prayer ministries are vital to reaching the cities in the 10/40 window.[2]

We need to clearly see this big picture for our city, for our nation, and for the world. We need to pray for the least evangelized countries. The 10/40 window is the rectangular area of North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees north latitude. It includes the majority of the world's Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists and is often called "The Resistant Belt." Many of the unreached people groups of the world live in this needy region.

God is Connecting Us

God is uniting a powerful prayer movement worldwide; in a supernatural way, He is connecting all of us. He is realigning ministries and people—He is teaching us to celebrate one another's victories—He is orchestrating strategic shifts and realignments.

It's important not to resist what God is doing, but eagerly gain new Kingdom alliances. The Kingdom is any sphere of life that actively obeys the will of God (Matthew 6:10). He wants us to have a Kingdom view of people and all of life. It's His Kingdom and not ours. We'll look more at the Kingdom in the next chapter.

As I move from place to place and from one country to another, I sense a connection that is powerful**.** What God is doing in your area is connected and important to other cities and nations. We desperately need each other. The present task now for each one of us is to connect in unity and prayer in our city. Let us ask for God's powerful anointing in the Houses of Prayer in various churches in the city and in the corporate citywide House of Prayer. Pray that each prayer meeting is led by the Holy Spirit, and functions in grace-empowered prayer and worship.

General Robert E. Lee was a career United States Army officer for 32 years and among the most celebrated generals in American history. He is best known for fighting in the American Civil War on behalf of the Confederate Army. General Lee saw that prayer was a mighty weapon in taking back land from the enemy and winning battles. He was one who not only fought for the nation of America, but he also pleaded earnestly that people would pray everywhere. We must likewise fight for our nations on our knees and realize that God's House of Prayer is for all nations. This is what Robert E. Lee said:

> Knowing that intercessory prayer is our mightiest weapon and the supreme call for all Christians today, I pleadingly urge our people everywhere to pray. Believing that prayer is the greatest contribution that our people can make in this critical hour, I humbly urge that we take time to pray—to really pray. Let there be prayer at sunup, at noonday, at sundown, at midnight—all through the day. Let us all pray for our children, our youth, our aged, our pastors, our homes. Let us pray for our churches. Let

> us pray for ourselves, that we may not lose the word "concern" out of our Christian vocabulary. Let us pray for our nation. Let us pray for those who have never known Jesus Christ and redeeming love, for moral forces everywhere, for our national leaders. Let prayer be our passion. Let prayer be our practice.[3]

As you work on building your House of Prayer, it is a good idea to get involved in the larger 24/7 prayer movement. There is strength in unity; knowing that you are part of something worldwide brings tremendous inner strength. When we work together we can share resources, discoveries, testimonies, and so much more than when we work alone and are isolated. We need one another.

If you would like to connect with the wider 24/7 prayer movement around the world, there are several ways you can do this. Here are a few:

- Intercessors Arise International: www.intercessorsarise.org - Receive bimonthly motivational prayer training and books on prayer. Join the Intercessors Arise International Network and network with other prayer leaders and ministries.

- International House of Prayer: www.ihopkc.org - Listen to 24/7 prayer on the free webstream, and attend prayer conferences, IHOPU, or join an internship where you can grow in prayer and network with others.

- Mike Bickle's online teaching library: www.mikebickle.org. Get free online teaching on various topics relating to prayer and the end times.

- Register your prayer room at: www.24-7prayer.com - Receive useful prayer resources, personalized coaching, and get profiled globally on the 24-7 website.

- Global Day of Prayer: www.globaldayofprayer.com - Get the Houses of Prayer in your nation involved in prayer on this day as well as throughout the year.

It's time for all of us to connect worldwide. Houses of Prayer are springing up in so many nations. With growing excitement and anticipation, let's look at what God is doing.

The Increase of Houses of Prayer Worldwide

> The worldwide prayer movement implements a specific process when establishing prayer watches. Churches, towns, cities, countries and continents are mobilized to stand before God's throne 24 hours a day to praise and worship Him, and to plead for the nations. Intercessors pray for revival in the church and for world evangelization, as well as for transformation and healing of cities and countries. In this way the Great Commandment and the Great Commission are carried out.[4]

As we have already mentioned in this book, the prayer movement is advancing at an incredible rate worldwide. Day and night prayer watches have been increasing since the beginning of 1990. By 1995 there were a few dozen, but within ten years it grew to a few thousand. By the time you read this book, you can imagine how many there will be worldwide.

There are many exciting ways this is happening. Although there are some common approaches, the Holy Spirit is creative and often uses unique methods that are tailored to each city in each country. We'll see more of this creativity when we look at the next chapter. We'll see how creativity is expressed in the prayer room in various Houses of Prayer.

Jericho Walls, a leading prayer ministry based in South Africa, encourages and gives us some incredible examples of how the worldwide prayer movement is expanding throughout the world. Realize that these statistics regarding Houses of Prayer are constantly changing because God is expanding the prayer movement so quickly. This is adapted from *Awaken the Watchmen—24/7 Prayer Guidelines and Models*[5]. Let's give God praise and thanksgiving for what He is doing worldwide in prayer.

- **The Jerusalem House of Prayer for all Nations in Jerusalem.** This House of Prayer started in 1987 by Tom Hess. The Gates of Jerusalem Watch is part of this prayer initiative, where twelve prayer teams pray daily for two hours at the twelve gates of Jerusalem. In 1999 Hess started the first convocation for the 24-hour prayer watch. This is spreading around the world. Other prayer watches have been established in Israel in the last several years. See www.Jerusalemhop.com.

- **The International House of Prayer in Kansas City, USA (IHOPKC)**. Since 1999 a 24/7, 365-day House of Prayer has been going in Kansas City. The mission of these intercessors and worshippers is to establish Houses of Prayer all over the world. Mike Bickle designed a model for prayer called "harp and bowl" which combines worship and intercession. See www.ihopkc.org.

- **The "Waechterruf Initiative" (Watchman's Call Initiative) in Germany.** This model was started in 2000 where every city must pray for the German nation, the salvation of the people, and the needs of the people and government for one full 24-hour day per month. Many cities are involved in this, each taking a day of the month.

- **Cathe, Nagaland Christian Revival Prayer Houses in northern India.** This House of Prayer was established in 1962 through a revival movement. Sixty houses have been built for people who want to devote their lives to prayer. A 24-hour prayer watch is kept there. By the end of 2000, there were approximately one thousand active prayer watches in Nagaland, and 95% of the people are now Christians.

- **Washington DC Prayer Watch in the United States.** In 1997 the US/DC Prayer Watch was established as a national prayer watch to pray for the U.S. 24 hours a day. A central prayer calendar was compiled with the names of individuals and prayer groups who commit themselves to pray for an hour a week or once a month. Several million intercessors are involved in this prayer watch.

- **A Million Hours of Praise in England.** Cathryn Hall in England initiated a million hours of praise and worship that developed into day and night praise and worship. Worship teams all over the world are encouraged to participate in this movement of praise.

- **Prayer Watches for Drug Addicts in South Africa.** A pastor's wife got parents together every Friday night to pray all through the night for their children caught in drugs. After three

years it grew to 36 different 365-day prayer chains that pray for children addicted to drugs. It has now grown to a few hundred watches that pray for young people involved in drugs and the occult. Some run 24 hours a day. Thousands are now involved in these watches.

- **Prayer Towers in Indonesia.** Through the work of the national prayer network in Indonesia, prayer towers have been established in more than five hundred cities. About five million intercessors from all over the country are bound together in a network of prayer. The intercessors cover a week of 24/7 prayer with sixteen or more full-time intercessors taking shifts of four hours a day. Others who want to pray join them. Even children are involved in these prayer towers.

- **Prayer Mountains in South Korea.** There are numerous prayer mountains throughout South Korea where people can go up into the mountains to pray day and night. Many go to these places to fast. Some up to forty days. They believe that the political stability and church growth is because of these prayer mountains.

- **Uganda.** Since 1995 World Trumpet Mission and Watchman Intercessors Network have helped to establish 24-hour prayer watches in 43 districts in Uganda.

- **The Youth and 24-7 in England.** In 1999 Peter Greig started a dynamic prayer movement among young people. They creatively decorate prayer rooms and start praying for 168 hours. They are known as 24-7. When they become 24-7, 365-day watches, they are called boiler rooms. By 2006, there were 65 countries where the 24-7 prayer movement among youth had taken root and was growing. They are spreading rapidly all over the world. See 24-7prayer.com.

In his book, *24-7 Prayer Manual*, Peter Greig shares about how day and night prayer is spreading throughout North America. This should create a hunger within us to see it happen now where we personally live.

In Canada we now have regional representatives resourcing 24-7 prayer rooms from coast to coast. Meanwhile, from Alaska to

> Florida, almost every state has hosted seasons of 24-7 prayer. By the time you read this, the 24-7 movement will almost certainly have impacted all 50 states. These American prayer rooms have been established in a diverse array of contexts: at many different churches (Evangelical, Charismatic, and liturgical), on university campuses. At festivals, at a slum motel in East Vancouver, and even at the US Naval Academy, where apparently the prayer times were particularly disciplined! Some of the soldiers who prayed in the 24-7 room have since, almost certainly, given their lives in Iraq. God is doing an amazing thing in our time, but, if you're anything like us, you eventually grow weary of hearing stories of revival and social transformation in other churches, on other campuses or at other times in history. You pray with a mixture of faith and frustration: "Do it here, Lord. Do it now!"[6]

> A person who can pray is the mightiest instrument Christ has in this world. A praying church is stronger than all the gates of hell. God's decree for the glory of His Son's kingdom is dependent on prayer for its fulfillment: "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth for thy possession" (Psalm 2:8). God the Father gives nothing to his Son except through prayer.[7]

Praying for the Nations

> When a child of God begins to get a real vision into the need of the church and the world, a vision of the divine redemption that God has promised in the outpouring of His love into our hearts, a vision of the power of true intercession to bring down the heavenly blessing, a vision of the honor of being allowed as intercessors to take part in that work, it comes as a matter of course that he regards the work as the most heavenly thing on earth—as intercessor to cry day and night to God for the revelation of His mighty power.[8]

After returning from 33 days in the Middle East, I saw the great need for 24/7 prayer and worship in all major cities around the world. The

task is so great, the lost are in such desperate need, and we have the answer to every problem. It's Jesus! As I was walking through a city of fifteen million on that ministry trip, I looked into the faces of the multitude. I thought to myself:

How can they grasp such a glorious Gospel when they believe such a great lie—unless we pray for them continually?

Our hearts must be on fire, and our eyes must see the power of intercession for the multitudes in the valley of decision. For this we must have a vision of the divine redemption of God's love for the lost. The harvest is ripe. And our tiny spark added to others will produce a huge flame of intercession. The glory of intercession and worship is so great. In his book, *E. M. Bounds on Prayer*, Bounds emphasizes the need for prayer for the spreading of the Gospel:

> The only condition that is to give worldwide power to this Gospel is prayer, and the spread of the Gospel will depend on prayer. The energy that is to give it marvelous momentum and conquering power over all its malignant and powerful foes is the energy of prayer… But mighty prayer is the one great spiritual force that will enable the Lord Jesus Christ to enter into full possession of His kingdom, and secure for Him the heathen as His inheritance and the uttermost part of the earth for His possession.[9]

It is so easy to get caught up in our own little world and miss the big picture of what God is doing worldwide. We used to live in Virginia Beach, and once in a while we would hear about shark attacks. But I doubt if anyone in our area knew this about these deadly creatures. There's an interesting lesson we can learn from sharks.

A young man who dives for exotic fish for aquariums said that one of the most popular aquarium fish was the shark. He explained that if you catch a small shark and confine it to a small space, it stays a size that is proportionate to the aquarium. A shark can actually be only six inches long and yet be fully mature. But if you turn a shark loose in the ocean, it will grow to its normal length of eight feet.[10]

It's similar for us as Christians. If we pray for only our own needs or only the small world around us, we won't grow that large in our prayers. But if we begin to see God's perspective on the world that Jesus

Christ is Lord of all—and we begin to pray for the nations—we will grow into mighty intercessors with a global vision. God's heart is for the whole world. He wants us to have a holistic vision of his purposes on the earth. He doesn't want us to be like a six-inch shark! He wants us to be fully grown. Let's become great in prayer by praying for the nations. Let's learn how to pray Biblical prayers for the nations God puts on our hearts.

Biblical Prayers to Pray for the Nations

> The Bible will teach you the language of God so that you can effectively communicate to Him. When you speak from the Bible in your prayers, you will be led to an entirely different place in prayer—one you might've not thought was humanly possible, simply because the language of the Bible is so absolutely different than our own.[11]

We emphasized strongly the importance of praying the Bible in chapter five. The following are some Biblical prayers you may want to sing and pray over nations that God lays on your heart, as well as missionaries working in those countries. You may want to pray these in your House of Prayer as a group as well as individually. These prayers are powerful and will definitely bring you to a new place of anointing when you pray them over the nations.

- Intercession for a nation - Daniel 9:1-8, 11-19.
- The Valley of dry bones - Ezekiel 37:1-14.
- Revival power - Acts 4:24-31.
- Revival of divine revelation - Ephesians 1:15-20.
- The outpouring of divine love - Ephesians 3:14-21.
- Filled with a knowledge of His will - Colossians 1:2-4, 9-12.
- The release of prophetic boldness - Ephesians 6:18-20.
- Overflowing holy love - Philippians 1:3-4, 9-11.
- The door of God - Colossians 4:2-4, 12.

- Praise of the end-time harvest - Revelation 11:5-18.

- Worthy is the Lamb - Revelation 5:8-14.

The great intercessor and author, E. M. Bounds, emphasizes the need for watchmen to pray for the large population of lost individuals scattered throughout the world. He says:

> While I am very excited about what is happening, yet as an intercessor, I can never forget that over half of the world's population has never heard of Jesus. The task ahead is still enormous. As darkness covers the earth in the last days and darkens the people, the glory of the Lord will shine brighter and brighter, brighter and brighter in the face of a people who love Him absolutely and uncompromisingly. In this way, the whole world will know that there is a God who reigns in the Heavens and man will be left without excuse on the day of Christ's appearing. The Spirit is still heralding a call for watchmen to join the great choir of intercessors.[12]

Prayer Requests for the Nations

The following are general prayer requests for all nations. It is good to incorporate them into your prayer meetings on a regular basis. In some of the Houses of Prayer I have been involved in, I've printed them out and kept them in the prayer room. I have taped prayer requests for the lost, for the city, for the nation, and for the world on the walls for everyone to see. I also have brought several copies of each one, leaving them on the table for others to take and use in prayer.

Have prayer fuel for the city and nation always available in the prayer room. Pray for the nations that God lays on your heart individually and as a group. Mix intercession, worship, and singing together—and always expect God to answer.

- Thank God for how He is working in the nations - Philippians 4:6.

- Pray for unity in the body of Christ - Matthew 12:25; John 17:23.

- Pray for a spiritual awakening among the lost - John 14:13-14; 16:24; 2 Peter 3:9.
- Pray for leaders - Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 2:1-3.
- Pray for an outpouring of God's Spirit of revival on His people - Psalm 85:6; Isaiah 64:1-3.
- Pray that God's people will walk in holiness and obedience - Psalm 81:11-12.
- Pray for the fear of the Lord to touch all Christians so they hate evil - Proverbs 8:13; 2 Corinthians 7:1.
- Pray for God to send His workers into the harvest field - Matthew 28:19-20.
- Pray that the body of Christ will reach out to the poor and needy - Proverbs 21:13; Hebrews 13:3.
- Pray for revival among children and youth and that God will use them mightily for His glory - Mark 9: 37; 10:13-14.
- Pray for just laws and righteous moral standards - 1 Tim. 2:1-4.
- Pray that the Word of God will be given its rightful place - Psalm 119:126.
- Pray that there will be united intercession in cities and regions with the ability to pray against the major principalities over those areas - Ephesians 6:12-13.
- Pray that God's people will wage spiritual warfare as directed by the Holy Spirit - Ephesians 6:10-18.

Prayer for Israel

I can't leave this section without looking at the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. God desires that the whole Church would partner with His heart and pray for Israel. His sovereign election is this nation, and His heart is jealous for Jerusalem (Zechariah 1:14-16). He will fulfill His promises towards this city (Isaiah 62:1). Jesus is coming to earth to rule from a throne in Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4; Joel 3:17; Psalm 110:2; 132:13-14; Acts 1:11-12).

Israel will one day accept their Messiah Jesus (Matthew 23:29). God is committed to Israel's salvation for the sake of His own glory in the world. His strategy to redeem the earth is the redeemed and restored nation of Israel under the leadership of Jesus (Ezekiel 36:22-23). Jesus will rule over David's Kingdom (Israel), and he will sit on David's throne (in Jerusalem). This will be His global headquarters on the earth during the Millennium (Isaiah 9:6-7). Israel will be God's vehicle of salvation (Genesis 22:18; John 4:22).

God wants us to stand with Israel in prayer.

Praying for Jerusalem is God's strategy to release fullness to the Gentile and mercy to the Jew. Our response to Israel is a test, and we will be judged according to our stance towards Israel. We must cultivate a passion in our heart for the Jews. We must contend in prayer for Israel and give God no rest till He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth (Isaiah 62:7).

The prayer movement will culminate in the return of Jesus, the salvation of Israel, and the consummation of God's Kingdom on earth (Psalm 122:6-9). The Holy Spirit is establishing global intercession for Israel (Ezekiel 13:3-5; 22:30; Lamentations 2:18; Zechariah 2:5). Jerusalem is one of the last battlefronts spiritually, politically, and militarily (Zechariah 14:1-3). There is a war between two Houses of Prayer—Jesus' and the antichrist's (Psalm 122:6; Revelation 13: 8, 12).[13]

Some Biblical intercessors who left great examples of prayers for Israel are: Moses (Exodus 32:11-13; Numbers 14:13-19; Deuteronomy 9:18-19, 25-29; 30:1-10), Solomon (1 Kings 8:46-53), Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:4-11), Asaph and the sons of Korah (Psalm 44; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85), Isaiah (Isaiah 6; 58:1; 62:1; 63:15-19; 64), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 9:1; 14:7-9, 17-22; 15:5; Lamentations 3:43-51; 5:19-22), Daniel (Daniel 9:1-19), and Joel (Joel 1:8, 13-14; 2:12-17).[14] You may want to use these prayers as you intercede for Israel.

You may be thinking, "What are some specific prayers that I can pray for Israel and the believers living there? What are some strategic ways that I can pray?" Here are some ways recommended by our friends at Revive Israel Ministries in Jerusalem:

- **Pray for believing Israeli, especially the youth.** Pray that they would be strengthened in their faith and connected to oth-

er believers in Yeshua. Pray that believing youth will connect through national camps that provide a place to be strengthened in faith and connected in deeper ways. Strong young followers of the faith are the future of the body of believers in Israel (Romans 11:5).

- **Pray for unity in the body of believers in Israel.** Pray for humility and cooperation among believers throughout the entire spectrum of faith. There are many forms of expression and variations in theological orientation. Pray John 17:20-23.

- **Pray for effective personal evangelism.** Pray for an increase in effectiveness as Yeshua is shared with the lost sheep of Israel, especially through personal relationships. Pray for Israeli believers to become key leaders in Israeli society so that many may hear and see the love of Yeshua (Matthew 10:5-7; Romans 10:14-15).

- **Pray for effective discipleship of native believers.** Pray for the development of discipleship programs to fit the needs of new Israeli believers from all walks of life. Pray that many more Israelis would come to know Yeshua, and that they would be effectively discipled into His likeness (Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 9:1-6).

- **Pray for hope found only in Yeshua (Jesus).** Israeli society suffers severe economic and natural resource limits together with international political pressure and the increased cost of daily housing, fuel, and food beyond the resources of the average Israeli. Because of these pressures, Israelis are often in a hopeless day-to-day disposition. Pray for Israelis to have hope found in Yeshua the Messiah (Luke 24:21; Romans 10:1).

- **Pray for national security.** Israel is under constant threat for her continued existence as a nation. Pray for wisdom for the Israeli governmental leaders. Pray that those protecting her borders would have eyes like eagles to uncover evil plans against her (Isaiah 54:17; Zechariah 2:4-6; Luke 19:41-44).

- **Pray for the believers in Israel to possess the land.** Because of high housing costs and persecution as believers of Yeshua, it

> is a great challenge for believers in Israel to own homes and businesses. As the believers become more recognized as a legitimate part of Israeli society, it is important as part of their witness to the wider society. Pray for Messianic Jewish businesses and families to possess the land (Isaiah 61:1-7; Luke 4:17-20).

For weekly updates, current events, and additional information on how you can pray for Israel, visit: www.reviveisrael.org. Revive Israel Ministries believe that it is impossible for Israel to fulfill her national destiny to invite Messiah Yeshua back to earth (Matthew 23:39) without the informed and effective prayers of Christian friends from around the world. I encourage you to print out these prayer requests and pray for Israel regularly.

You will experience God's blessing when you do.

It was when I left my country as a missionary, joined the *Doulos*, and sailed from nation to nation that suddenly my world enlarged; I realized that God loved the whole world. As I prayed in those Thursday night prayer meetings on the ship, my small fish bowl mentality suddenly grew and encompassed the world. My life changed during that time; my prayer life changed forever. My own problems seemed small in comparison with the need to touch the world with the message of salvation.

I began to see and feel what God felt.

God is arresting our attention because He wants to give us His heartbeat for the nations and especially for Israel. He wants us to see the world through His eyes and realize that the eternity of nations are at stake.

> His agenda is far more serious than anything man can comprehend, for He always deals with eternal issues and the eternity of entire nations is at stake… The longer that I walk with the Lord, the more I know that He is a God who has definite strategies and works according to a fixed set of plans. Nothing, absolutely nothing is a happenstance with the Lord for He is a God of order. Consequently, He has a plan concerning the nations and it is for this reason, too, that there is a judgment of the nations.[15]

Spreading Prayer Worldwide

> If Christians prayed as Christians ought—with strong commanding faith, with earnestness and sincerity—men, God-called men, God-empowered men everywhere, would be burning to go and spread the Gospel worldwide. The Word of the Lord would run and be glorified as never known heretofore. The God-influenced men, the God-inspired men, the God-commissioned men, would go and kindle the flame of sacred fire for Christ, salvation, and heaven, everywhere in all nations. Soon all men would hear the glad tidings of salvation and have an opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.[16]

There is no doubt about it. Day and night prayer ignites the power of God to release the fire of the Gospel throughout the earth. Every nation, every city, every people group, and every neighborhood cannot miss the tremendous influence of the atmosphere of prayer released from the prayer room. There is something deep and far-reaching that happens when God's people give themselves to 24/7 prayer and intercession in a given location. It cannot be measured by human means, but its dynamic power can set the fire of God loose in a nation in a way that is beyond comprehension.

I have heard of evangelists going to a region, locking themselves in a hotel room, praying unceasingly for days, and then going out and sharing the Gospel with incredible results. If one man can see that happen, imagine the effect when the Church worldwide gives itself to prayer and actually makes prayer its primary business. Then we shall surely see things happen. None of us have gotten there yet, but it certainly should be our highest ambition and shall take a primary role as we see the end-time scenario unfold before us.

Perhaps one of the greatest prayer warriors in all of history was Praying Hyde of northern India who lived from 1865-1912. He would miss meals and would bow or lie down on the ground because of intense travail, and cry out to the Lord daily for souls. He was burning within for the salvation of the lost.

Finally, with an agonizing passion for those without Christ, he began to pray that God would let him win a soul to Jesus every day that year. At the end of the year, four hundred souls had been won through his daily

witness. The next year Hyde cried out to the Lord for two souls a day. That year about eight hundred had responded to Christ through Hyde. But his heart grew in intense desperation, and he began to plead to God for four souls a day. That year he led four souls a day to Christ.

He would first travail for the lost, and then he would go out and speak to men and women about how to find eternal life through Christ. He first prayed, and then he witnessed. After praying, the Holy Spirit would lead him to the right individuals.

Multitudes came to Christ through this praying man. What a fantastic method of evangelism!

The ministry of Anna in the Bible is increasing across the earth—individuals who give themselves to day and night prayer as she and Praying Hyde did. Anna, even though extremely old, worshiped God night and day almost all her life. We read in Luke 2:36b-37:

> *She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.*

God is raising up intercessory missionaries who pray night and day. The urgency of the hour and the present emphasis on prayer makes 24/7 prayer a possibility in this generation. We cannot do without intercession and individuals who give themselves to prayer like Anna. The need is too great. Here at IHOP there are several hundred intercessory missionaries, and their number is increasing. Multitudes of intercessors visit this mission base annually to learn about day and night prayer.

God will release finances for the harvest and for this great worldwide prayer movement. He will shake all things as He does this (Haggai 2:6-8). He will open up the financial windows of heaven supernaturally, if we will be faithful to obey Him with our money (Malachi 3:10-11). The release of finances will bring great blessing, but there certainly will be pressures as God deals with our heart issues.

Already there is a spirit of fear throughout the world regarding finances, and Satan greatly opposes and hinders the release of finances for God's work. Giving forces us to wrestle with covetousness and the

spirit of fear. Economic prosperity gives us an increased ability to help others, to grow in righteousness, and to increase our position in the Millennial Kingdom.

More money in our pockets is not for a bigger house or a nicer car, as many of us may think. No! It's for God's Kingdom purposes. The struggle will be great for many of us until we see everything in light of God's Kingdom. He will return to us in proportion to the measure of our giving (Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9:5-6). We must have money to eat, but God also gives us money to sow. In the midst of all that is happening in the end times, we must refuse the spirit of poverty and the mentality of lack.

Norm and I have been involved in missions and the prayer movement since 1978. We have not had a regular paycheck, but have had to trust God for our finances all these years. That's about 35 years. I can testify that God has provided for us all these years, and we never lacked anything. He has been faithful.

Catch and Spread the Vision for 24/7 Prayer

> Prayer is the key to reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus. The greatest forces of power in the universe are mobilized, and history is made when we pray. God is looking for men who will stand in the gap on behalf of the land. Ezekiel 22:30; Isaiah 59:16; 63:5[17]

We've seen how Houses of Prayer are spreading all over the world. Prayer rooms are also being established in churches throughout the world. Not only are churches starting them, denominations and Christian organizations have started prayer watches.

The Salvation Army in Australia and in England started praying 24/7 for a week in 52 of their branches with immediate results. YWAM, with sixteen bases in Western Europe, set aside an entire year where each base took responsibility for a week, filling the whole year with day and night prayer. In 2005, thirteen denominations and Christian organizations in England alone started filling the whole year with 24/7 prayer.

Several prisons in Argentina have established 24/7 365-day prayer watches where the inmates pray for their families, communities, their

country, fellow inmates, and the world. Inmates are converted and change their lifestyle. Breakthroughs are happening in the prisons. Here's how you can catch and spread the vision:

- **Daily pray that a House of Prayer starts in every city in every nation.** Keep on praying for your own city to catch the vision for Houses of Prayer.

- **Rejoice that God is awakening the watchmen.** Watch the *Awaken the Watchmen* DVD and others to find out how the 24/7 prayer movement is spreading worldwide. Visit the Jericho Walls website at www.jwipn.com.

- **Register your prayer watch.** The purpose of this website, www.global24-7.org, is to register and encourage prayer watches all over the world. This will support what God is doing worldwide and help to link 24/7 prayer in different regions of the world.

- **Start a one-month House of Prayer in your city.** Use the practical guidelines found in the next chapter as your training manual. Write to us at: www.intercessorsarise.org, and let us know how God is working in your House of Prayer.

- **Start a one-week House of Prayer in your church.** You may want to use one my books on prayer to help encourage your church in intercession. See the recommended book list at the end of this book and www.intercessorsarise.org for an extensive list of recommended books on prayer, intercession, revival, fasting, evangelism, intimacy, spiritual warfare, and how to reach cities and nations.

- **Learn from other Houses of Prayer.** Notice how they are functioning, and what they teach and emphasize. Observe the creativity in each one. Here are a few House of Prayer websites to encourage your heart in how the 24/7 prayer movement is spreading worldwide, but there are dozens of other websites.

  - www.ihopkc.org - 24/7 prayer internationally.

  - www.jerusalempraise.com - 24/7 prayer in Israel.

- www.justicehouseofprayer.com - 24/7 prayer in Washington D.C. for justice.

- www.24-7prayer.com - 24/7 prayer internationally among the youth.

- www.hollywoodprayernetwork.org/prayerministries - 24/7 prayer in Hollywood for the media.

- www.nationalhouseofprayer.com - 24/7 Prayer in Canada.

I highly recommend the book, *Red Moon Rising*, by Pete Greig and Dave Roberts. This book gives the amazing story of how the prayer movement is spreading worldwide among the youth. They have 24/7 prayer rooms that have grown into 24/7 prayer houses called "Boiler Rooms" that are modeled after the ancient Celtic monasteries.

These Boiler Rooms are mission-focused and are places of disciplined prayer and outreach to the poor. They pursue missions, justice, hospitality, and prayer. As the world gets darker, they are spreading all over the world at an incredible rate. The vision is catching fire! Here is their incredible testimony:

> A movement to encourage churches to make room for nonstop prayer has spread to 63 nations in the last seven years and is especially multiplying in the United Kingdom, the United States and South Africa. "We don't have a fixed number of prayer rooms because they can take off so quickly," said Pete Greig, 37, who founded the 24/7 prayer movement in 1999 in Chichester, England. Named for its nonstop concert of prayer, 24/7 has meeting places as diverse as a bus in the slums of Delhi, India, and a brewery in Missouri. Volunteers pray, usually alone, in one-hour shifts, round the clock, seven days a week for global issues and requests they receive from their international website or from their local communities. Visitors are free to drop in, pray and talk. 24/7 also has planted itself in places where there is a crisis, such as Lebanon during the recent war between Israel and Hezbollah, and in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. Teams also live long-term in needy communities in Mexico, where intercessors can be found ministering among pimps and prostitutes. "In a squatter's camp in Soweto, South Africa, we've seen 64 prayer tents spring up in just two years," Greig said.

> "The local man who spearheads them said 80 percent of new converts in the camp are maintaining their salvation, and the local police chief says crime has dropped by 20 percent." Greig said the movement is being fueled by young people who are passionate about prayer, justice and missions.[18]

This is only a small taste of what is happening worldwide in the area of prayer. As I've said before, our God is creative, and we see the unique ways he initiates 24/7 prayer in different nations. Day and night prayer will lead to the final gathering of the worldwide harvest. Let's jump on board and prepare for this harvest and the salvation of millions of souls. Let's learn from the outstanding example of Praying Hyde, and as we pray, let's expect to see many souls saved. It is time for the Gospel to advance.

> If men would pray as they ought to pray, the marvels of the past would be more than reproduced. The Gospel would advance with a facility and power it has never known. Doors would be thrown open to the Gospel, and the Word of God would have a conquering force rarely if ever known before.[19]

Pray for Nations Life Application
How to Pray for the Nations

We looked at the need for a House of Prayer for all nations. You've learned about how to pray for the nations and how to spread the vision of prayer worldwide. Carefully review this chapter before answering the following:

- A House of Prayer for all nations - In your own words, write down what a House of Prayer for all nations means to you and to your city. See Isaiah 56:7 and Mark 11:17.

- In what way do you see God realigning and bringing a divine connection in the prayer movement - Explain your answer. How does God want you involved in uniting with the world-wide prayer movement and prayer in your city?

- Pray some of the following Biblical prayers over your country every day this week - They are found in Ezekiel 37:1-14; Daniel 9:1-8, 11-19; Acts 4:24-31; Ephesians 1:15-20; 3:14-21; 6:18-20; Philippians 1:3-4, 9-11; Colossians 1:2-4, 9-12; Revelation 5:8-14; and 11:5-18. Journal regarding any insight God may have given you as you prayed for your country.

- Pray several of the general prayer requests for nations found in this chapter - Pray them a few times this week. This will help you become familiar with Biblical ways to pray for nations. They are prayers for unity, spiritual awakening, revival, leaders, holiness, obedience, the fear of the Lord, reaching the harvest, the poor and the needy, just laws, united intercession, the Bible, and revival among children and youth. They can be found in Psalm 81:11-12; 85:6; 119:126; Proverbs 8:13; 21:13; Isaiah 64:1-3; Matthew 12:25; 28:19-20; John 14:13-14; 16:24; 17:23; 2 Corinthians 7:1b; Ephesians 4:11; 6:10-18; Philippians 4:6; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Hebrews 13:3; and 2 Peter 3:9. Review the section called "Prayer Requests for the Nations" to get the best layout for prayer.

- Write a paragraph commenting on the spread of Houses of Prayer worldwide - Look carefully at the examples in this chap-

ter. How do you plan to catch the vision and spread it in your own sphere of influence? Write down action steps that you plan to make in your own life.

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Complete the application assignment individually before meeting in a group. This will help each person to become familiar with verses to use in praying for the nations. It also helps each one think about what a House of Prayer for all nations really means, as well as how to apply it personally. Then get together in a group and discuss your answers together. Especially discuss what a House of Prayer would mean for your city and how you, as a group, can spread the vision to others in your city.

Then with Bible and instruments, take it into the prayer room. Have a good time of worship and thanksgiving before praying for the nations. In your prayers use many of the recommended Scriptures. Encourage each one to pray for the nations that God lays on their heart. Blend in your prayer requests for your particular city regarding a House of Prayer and spreading the vision. Thank God for what He is going to do. End with praying the following prayer.

Our Prayer for a Heart for the Nations

Lord, help us to see the big picture of what You are doing in the nations. Your Word says: "these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isaiah 56:7). Give us vision for this worldwide House of Prayer for all nations. Help us to build Your House in our city. You are orchestrating strategic shifts and realignments. Help us not to resist what you are doing but eagerly gain new Kingdom alliances. Help us to relinquish our personal rights and celebrate the victories of others. Teach us to pray Your Word over the nations.

As we seek to start day and night intercession, we ask you to give us your heart for the world. Help us to feel as you feel for the lost and the dying. In the midst of our prayer meetings,

transform us into your likeness. Give us Your perspective on the world and all that is happening internationally. Empower us, and give us faith so that as we leave the prayer room, we will be a blessing to all those we encounter in our lives. We want to see Your mighty power to save, to set free, and to heal everywhere we go.

Arrest our attention. Revive us, and free us from ourselves so that we may represent You to a lost world. Give us Your heart-beat. Help us to cry out for souls as Praying Hyde did. Help us to catch the vision for prayer in our city. Increase the vision for prayer in our churches. Clothe us with Your presence, and use us for Your glory in the prayer movement. We sing to You Lord. We praise Your name. We proclaim Your salvation day after day. We declare Your glory among the nations, Your marvelous deeds among all peoples (Psalm 96:2-3). In Jesus' name, amen.

Verses to Memorize

And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations (Isaiah 56:6-7).

CHAPTER NINE

Houses of Prayer and the Kingdom

The Lord has established his throne in heaven,
and his kingdom rules over all.
Psalm 103:19

WITH ANTICIPATION THEY CAME. They wanted to experience God's Kingdom purposes in Spain as a family. Michael, Marissa, and their two children prayed for the possibility of participating for a week in the 24/7 House of Prayer in Spain. They prayed in faith that God would provide financially for all of them to go.

One day, taking a short break from work, Michael stopped at a nearby Starbucks for a cup of coffee. While sitting there sipping his coffee, he started a casual conversation with a man sitting at the next table. With excitement, he told about the possibility of his family going to Spain to pray for God's Kingdom to come into that area of the world.

All of a sudden the man asked him if he would go with him to the bank. Michael simply said, "Yes" and off they went. The man withdrew some money, put it in Michael's hand, and left. And guess what? It was $1000 for Michael's trip! God had supplied for His Kingdom purpose for 24/7 prayer. And it all began with a simple stop at Starbucks.

While in Spain, Michael and his family were amazed at how the one-month House of Prayer brought unity to the body of Christ. Different churches were praying together from various denominations. There was a strong sense of the presence of the Lord. Michael wept at the

altar when the Lord revealed to him that it was an altar of sacrifice. He was honored to wait and pray for what was in His heart.

God showed them in His Word and through the Holy Spirit what to focus on in intercession during that week of prayer. Here is their testimony of the power of 24/7 prayer in their family's life:

> The miracle is that when you reach out to go into that Holy Presence in that concentrated moment of prayer, you never go out empty. The Lord in His goodness re-ignited our hearts with His passion for the lost. He showed us how to pray for Spain and other countries in Europe. He showed us our connection with Israel and His Kingdom purposes. Most importantly the Lord met our family with His warm embrace. We were inspired to bring this to our family altar when we returned home.
>
> Our time with our kids at our family devotionals have become richer. God led us to set aside Fridays to continue to pray for the nations in the midnight hours. After soaking in the prayer room, the Holy Spirit gave us opportunities to share the Gospel in Spain, and now here at home. We go to the beach and the nursing home to share the love that is our life, Jesus Christ. One family member came to Christ this year. We are awed by how good God is. We need to be changed from glory to glory so we can be more effective witnesses. We look forward to His miraculous Hand in all areas of our lives, body, soul, and Spirit. We praise God for the Elijah Company's faithful response to God's call to start 24/7 Houses of Prayer for His glory.

Isn't it amazing how much God radically changes our personal lives through our involvement in a House of Prayer? Michael's family's life radically changed when they returned home. Prayer and the Kingdom of God became all important. You may be thinking, "What a testimony! How can my family experience God's presence like Michael's family did? How can I help prepare the way for God's presence in my city?"

In this chapter discover what a Kingdom vision in a city looks like. Learn the steps in starting a one-month House of Prayer in your city. This chapter is designed to help you brainstorm, discuss, and plan a one-month House of Prayer with others in your city. It could also be adapted for a one-week House of Prayer in your church. It will help you discover and implement God's step-by-step plan and strategy as a

group, as well as begin a weekly prayer meeting leading up to your House of Prayer. Discover how to prepare a prayer room for God's presence and welcome His Kingdom into your city. The practical ideas presented in this chapter will help you to launch your House of Prayer in every detail.

Kingdom Vision Ignited

> A city that becomes a "crown of glory" is a city that is consecrated or set apart to the Lord for His purposes, a city with an uncompromised church that is reflecting God's glory. It's a city where the church is victorious, the house of the Lord is established, and His presence is tangible in their midst, offering the protection of His presence. It's a city where the priests are watching and guarding the city and contending for God's presence, a place where the lost can look at the church and see Jesus and His power at work in life-changing ways.[1]

Without question, cities begin to change through 24/7 prayer. When we pray in unity day and night, we begin to get a kingdom vision because we start to see everything from God's perspective. Things that are not essential begin to fade into the distance. Our vision begins to sharpen as we see the city in a new way through eyes of faith.

Let's begin by thinking about what it really means to have a Kingdom vision and perspective. We pray about it in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:10: ***Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,*** but what does this actually mean to us?

Did you know that the central message of Jesus and the apostles concerned the Kingdom of God?

Think about this amazing fact. Jesus is the King of kings, and He will one day rule every sphere of society worldwide. The Kingdom is already here in a limited way, but it will be fully here when Jesus returns. The centerpiece of God's eternal purpose is for Jesus to come back to earth to establish His Kingdom rule on earth and join the heavenly and earthly realms (Ephesians 1:9-10). He will rule nations on earth during the thousand-year Millennium Kingdom, and there will be a global

blessing of righteousness (Revelation 20:4-6). This will be a thousand years of peace, righteousness, prosperity, and blessing throughout the earth. It will be wonderful.

As I previously mentioned, I lived on a ship as a missionary. This was for over ten years with over three hundred people, mainly young, from about forty different nations. We sailed from country to country spreading the good news about Jesus. One of the songs we liked to sing in those early days was based on Habakkuk 2:14:

> *For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*

I used to like to go out on deck and look at the ocean during many of our calm, or sometimes rough voyages. If you've never been on a ship, you must try it. Often from east to west and north to south, you couldn't see anything but blue-green sea. There were no ships or land anywhere as far as your eyes could see. The sea was massive—it was impressive—it gave me a picture of how one day the whole earth would see the glory of God and would know about Him.

The heavenly and earthly dimensions will one day come together and fully express the glory of God.

You and I have the privilege to proclaim in our prayers—and through our lives—that Jesus is King and is coming to earth to establish His worldwide Kingdom. We can bring heaven to earth through our prayers. We can proclaim the knowledge of God and spread this Kingdom message with power everywhere we go (1 Corinthians 4:20). He wants us to walk in His authority and power, even as we wait for His Kingdom to come in all its fullness (Acts 1:8). He is reconciling all things to Himself (Colossians 1:19-20). All the earth will be filled with His glory (Numbers 14:21; Psalm 72:19; Isaiah 6:3). Our lives should be filled with the knowledge of God.

This must be our focus. Houses of Prayer ignite a Kingdom vision and help us to live fully committed lives. As this happens, we shall experience supernatural boldness and authority.

Daniel prophesied of the Messianic Kingdom in Daniel 2 and 7. God's Kingdom is any sphere of life where God rules over Satan. The Church is the community of the Kingdom, and we spread His Kingdom by liv-

ing holy lives, praying for the sick, sharing our faith, etc. This is why it is important that we get a vision of the Kingdom of God for our church and the city we live in. Before Jesus returns, the Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world (Matthew 24:14). And God will use us in this great task of making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). We must have vision to see God's great perspective of the Kingdom. When we see this, we see how important day and night prayer really is.

To understand the end-time scene, we must understand the book of Revelation. It is our prayer manual for the end-times. If we understand this book, we can live successful through the difficulties, and we can know how to pray strategically. We don't have to be caught off guard. We don't have to fear the tribulation. God will use the least severe judgments to reach the greatest amount of people at the deepest level of love. Jesus, our King, will judge everything that opposes love (Revelation 19:11-21). The measure that we develop love, meekness, and holiness determines our place and function in His government.

Let's realize that Houses of Prayer will help us know how to live in this present seventy-year internship that prepares us for life in the age to come (Psalm 90:10). Let's give God our all now! Let's look at the future with positive optimism instead of morbid discouragement. Jesus is King of all, and He has already won the battle at the cross.

A Vienna born psychologist, Viktor Frankl (1905-1997), rejected Freud's emphasis that the past is the primary force that forms us in the present. He was a survivor of several Nazi concentration camps. After the war he analyzed the holocaust survivors and categorized them in two categories: Those who were emotionally stable and those who weren't. The predominant factor was not their experience before or doing the concentration camps. It was what they believed about their future.[2] Our hope and what we believe about the future matters greatly. We need to see it from God's perspective and with the hopeful anticipation of Christ's rule here on earth.

Eye Surgery for a Kingdom Focus

Norm and I went for a free vision exam. The advertisement made a lot of amazing claims, just as they so often do. It said the doctors were

skilled with extensive experience in advanced diagnostic equipment, the procedure rooms were specially designed for optimal results, the technology used was the best, and they had complete follow-up care with affordable prices! We had thought we were going for a normal eye exam, only to discover that the doctor was examining us for laser surgery. Because of the advertisement, the place was packed with people wanting to improve their vision through free laser surgery.

While we were waiting, I noticed a group of patients gathered around a big window intently watching something very interesting in the next room. I walked over, and to my surprise, they were watching a live laser surgery being done on one of the patients. It took only about ten minutes to complete this surgery that provided a vast improvement of one's vision, even with those who had been wearing bifocal glasses for years and years.

I was fascinated as I watched the doctor wash the eye with a solution and know exactly how to do what seemed like a simple surgery on the eye. I am sure it was much more complex than I imagined. Then he would wash the eye again, and I would see magnified a beautifully colored and designed eye, so unique and carefully created by God. It was an amazing surgery that impressed me greatly.

God is doing eye surgery right now on the body of Christ. He wants us to see with His vision. He is a skilled physician with the very best equipment, and He has the greatest experience of anyone in the entire world. His technology is supernatural, and He provides daily follow-up and personal care. God wants to remove our short-sightedness and the cataracts that fog our vision. He wants us to see through eyes of faith what He can do in our cities. He wants to put His own eye salve on our eyes so we can see brilliantly what is before us and how to pray.

While on a prayer journey in the Biblical city of Laodicea in Turkey, I was reminded of God's message to the Laodicean Church. God wants us to be willing to go through His refinement so that we are not lukewarm and naked like the Laodicean Church, but instead are on fire for Him. He wants us to buy salve to put on our eyes. He says to the Church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:18:

> *I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your*

> *shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.*

By the way, I didn't qualify for laser surgery, but I am glad that I do qualify for God's surgery that opens my eyes further to see from His glorious perspective. You qualify as well. I encourage you to begin to see your city from God's Kingdom perspective. Think about starting 24/7 prayer in your city for a week or a month. Think about the Kingdom of God invading your city.

We have had one-month Houses of Prayer just as Michael and his family participated in. When we do this in cities for a month, it changes so many of our lives. Time in God's presence changes you dramatically, just as it did Michael's family. Perhaps you are thinking:

But you don't know my nation—the church is too small and too divided!

God doesn't need a large population of Christians in order to bring in His presence. He will work through a few churches that decide to unite in prayer in order to seek His presence for their city. This is where He loves to show His presence. When we had a one-month House of Prayer in Spain, we had only twelve to fifteen committed churches.

A City with a Kingdom Vision

> God's kingdom, when it comes, probably won't arrive in the way we expect or even want it to. But viewing history with the eyes of faith, through the grid of past prayer movements, we can easily see the correlation between seasons of intercession and the extension of God's kingdom in the world.[3]

What will your city look like when it has a Kingdom vision and focus? How will it be different than it is right now? Notice the abundant prosperity that God brings to the city in Jeremiah 33:9:

> *Then this city will bring me renown, joy, praise and honor before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things I do for it; and they will be in awe and will tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace I provide for it.*

When the believers in a city have a kingdom vision and begin to pray together with eyes of faith, several dramatic changes take place:

- **Trust.** A new level of trust is developed between believers of different backgrounds; suspicion is gone. There is the realization that we need one another to reach our city.

- **The wisdom of God.** The Christians begin seeking heaven's perspective and heaven's agenda for their city. They begin seeking the mind of Christ and the wisdom of God for their city.

- **Relational unity.** The city Church begins to want deeper fellowship with other churches. This unity is much deeper than a unity based on an event. It is true friendship.

- **Transformation.** The believers seek for God to transform their city and revive the city Church. They then bring the revival fire into the streets and community. The Church begins to influence the city.

- **Lovers and worshippers of God.** The Church becomes a lover of God instead of just a worker for God. They learn to worship God out of intimate fellowship. This pushes out the powers of darkness.

- **Kingdom building.** There is a willingness to lay down personal agendas and work towards building God's purposes. The Church begins to see the big picture of what God wants to do in the city.

- **Presence of God.** There begins to be more emphasis upon waiting on God. The presence of God replaces man-made fleshly ideas, programs, and methods.

- **Learners of simplicity.** The Church learns the power and wisdom of simplicity. The way God works is not through a highly intellectual, organized, and complicated program. He works through simplicity.

This is what we must prayer towards. When we had our first one-month House of Prayer in southern Spain in 2006, we only started to taste what God wanted for the city. The taste made us desperately hungry for more. It was life changing, and I don't think any of us could say that we wanted to go back to the old way. We had just begun to taste

what God wanted for the Campo de Gibraltar area. A Kingdom vision was born—but there was so much more.

God is giving incredible grace for prayer at this hour. This vision is spreading far and wide, and we will soon be captured in a movement of prayer and a hunger for His presence that is unstoppable. All over the world there is beginning to be a desperate cry for fervent prayer and intercession.

Let's discover how to prepare the way for God's presence and Kingdom by learning to pray together with churches in our area for extended periods of time. In the rest of this chapter learn a simple strategy of how you can have a one-month House of Prayer in your city. I encourage you to begin to cry out for God's presence, and begin praying for God to raise up 24/7 prayer in your city.

Pray through this list over and over again for your city. See with eyes of faith what God wants to do. Cry out for Him to ignite a Kingdom vision in your city; the hour calls for it. Your city desperately needs God's presence. His vision is life changing.

> Without a vision, people are doomed to live mediocre lives, carried along by social influences and self-centered interests. The Bible says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 28:18 KJV). Our own vision for our lives cannot sustain us; we must have a vision that originates from the heart of God, from His very throne room. His vision is life-giving, life-changing, and worth abandoning our hearts and lives to.[4]

Preparing the Way for God's Presence

> In every revival in history we read a similar testimony. When God responded to His people by sending His presence, He didn't just work Himself into their routine religion—He overtook them by His power and glory! He left a trail of glorious chaos in His wake—weeping, repenting, rejoicing, reconciling, changing of habits, healing of families! Nobody wondered if Jesus was involved in these meetings. There was no doubt in their minds and no lack in their hearts.[5]

God wants to invade our cities with His glorious and powerful presence. He wants to overtake our lives and change our plans and routines so that they are fully in line with His purposes. As we look at the Kingdom of God and preparing the way for God's holy presence, the Sermon on the Mount is the greatest test to measure and evaluate our personal success.

- How well do I live out the eight beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12 and all of Matthew 5-7?
- Do I seek to obey God in every area of our life?
- Do I declare war on all compromise?

This is the test. We will look more at the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle in the last chapter. This is the great personal challenge we are all facing as we prepare for 24/7 prayer. We are made for personal holiness and to intimately know God. This is what is so fantastic about a House of Prayer. God begins to change you, and you begin to prioritize prayer in a way you have never done before—or even imagined possible. Prayer begins to take center stage in your life.

We experienced this at our House of Prayer in Spain. Prayer suddenly became a priority. God began to deal with our lives—our speech, our time, our money, our relationships, and everything else. There was an internal calling from God to love and follow Him with all of our heart. God wanted our hearts and a life of complete obedience so that we would be perfect and complete, not lacking anything (James 1:4).

We were challenged in our prayer lives as the Holy Spirit began to reinforce the importance of personal prayer and the absolute necessity of corporate prayer for the region. There was a lying down of secondary priorities for many. We were becoming very hungry for Jesus and His presence (Matthew 5:6). Through prayer and praise, we were welcoming God into the region. Many of us began to treasure the presence of God above all else, as we realized deep in our hearts the truth of John 15:5: *Without Me you can do nothing.*

That time, and now being based at the International House of Prayer, has personally challenged me to make quality decisions for holiness and to let God challenge my motives on a regular basis. I still have a long

way to go, but at least I am on the road. It definitely is a life-long journey. You may be thinking:

"How do I even begin to think about a one-month House of Prayer in my city?"

The first step is to PRAY! You start by praying about a one-month House of Prayer in your city. Even if you are not the one to start it, you can pray for others who will. Pray that God raises up the right ones to begin it, and you can be the one who supports them in prayer. If one month seems too long for you to start with, begin with a one-week House of Prayer. In starting to plan towards a one-month House of Prayer and beyond, there are several initial steps to pray and work towards. Every city needs a House of Prayer, but there always needs to be a few who start it.

Think about some of the things you want to see accomplished. You want to create an unbroken string of focused intense prayer of entreaty to God for an entire month. Now this may seem overwhelming at first, but you will be surprised at how God helps you. After all, it's His idea and desire in the first place. You want to provide times and places for many to come together in prayer. You want to ask the Lord to visit your city with His presence. Ultimately, you want to roll out a red carpet for the King of kings, and invite Him to come and do His work.

In Biblical and church history, united prayer has proven to be the single lifesaver of a nation during times of danger and uncertainty. The Lord commands His people to seek His face (2 Chronicles 7:14). Noah was warned by God concerning the flood, even though there was no visible sign of it coming—not even a raindrop! He took heed and diligently constructed and prepared an ark for the deliverance of his family (Hebrews 11:7).

It is difficult to predict exact results in a one-month House of Prayer. The key is to be faithful in doing what God shows you to do in prayer. In our House of Prayer in Spain, I believe that many were radically changed in their prayer lives, but there were also those who went back to their previous lifestyles and life as usual.

We have to be willing to pay the price for God's continual presence in our city. It's up to the Church to decide long-term how much of God they really want. It is important that churches and intercessors continue

to pray and anticipate the ongoing development of God's plan and Kingdom purposes for their city while the discipline and blessing of united prayer is still fresh.

In Spain the glory of God was visible in one of the most spiritually needy areas in the world, but the churches needed to continue asking God to help them develop the prayer movement in their area. Outsiders who came to help could not do it. It had to be those who lived in that city. I believe the following results will happen when Christians do accept the challenge of continual united prayer in their city:

- A united, praying church develops that is pleasing to the Lord.
- There is a breaking of the spiritual darkness that is invading the nation.
- The Church demonstrates an example of corporate prayer that challenges others in cities around the country to develop prayer in their region as well.
- A movement of the Spirit occurs, bringing salvation to thousands of people.
- A continued growing movement of prayer arises, sweeping thousands of tired Christians into a fresh new excitement and vitality in Christ.

Imagine the future of your city when a House of Prayer is operating day and night. God will pour out His Spirit. There will be the manifest presence of the Lord scattering His enemies and ours. Signs, wonders, healing, and deliverance from demonic oppression will become the norm. There will be the revival of the Church, and it will grow. Sinners will come under conviction and will open their hearts to the message of the Gospel on a regular basis. But you must ask the Lord what you are to do.

What is the blueprint, the plan for building His Kingdom in your city?

Lets look at some practical steps in developing a House of Prayer for one month. Remember if you want to start with one week, adapt these steps to your situation as the Lord leads you. After our House of Prayer in Spain, we wrote up the following guidelines to help others. Every

House of Prayer will be different and unique because every city is unique. In our case we started preparing for it while in the United States, but actually led the month of prayer while in Spain.

Steps to Developing a One-Month House of Prayer

These are general guidelines. I've added a few ideas to the list from my experience with other Houses of Prayer. You may want to add more or subtract what does not fit your situation, but the important thing is to begin and make it your own for your city. Initially concentrate on applying these points, and let the Holy Spirit guide you in every step. You may want to copy this page and give it to others who are praying with you for a House of Prayer in your city. Here are the steps:

- **Pray regularly and diligently for several months before the month of prayer.** We, and many of the churches involved, prayed for the month of prayer long before we started it. The congregations in the location began to meet for prayer. In Virginia Beach we prayed daily for the work in Spain. And for several months before the event, we met for prayer every Monday evening with a group of people who had a vision and burden for it. Many of them would eventually join us in Spain. It is important to pray for a prayer event of this size. We found a strong correlation between the success of the Houses of Prayer and the amount of prayer beforehand.

- **Seek God wholeheartedly and become desperate for His presence.** A sense among believers that we must know the Lord is the driving force behind the House of Prayer. We need a sense of desperation. We prayed every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning from 5:30-7:30 A.M. for the 24/7 House of Prayer we had in Virginia Beach, Williamsburg, and Richmond (USA) in April of 2007. These prayer meetings were quite fervent. Bathing the area in prayer three to six months beforehand was key for successful corporate prayer.

- **Build trust with local churches.** The work in Spain began ten years earlier than the actual time we launched a month of prayer. We talked about initiating a month of 24/7 prayer in the targeted area one year in advance. Before we could do this we

met with pastors, spoke in many of the churches about prayer, held training seminars and teaching on prayer, and ministered in other ways. Elijah Company, Inc. had a reputation in the churches of encouraging the congregations and not trying to build its own vision, but it was a united vision of what God wanted to do in that region. We took sufficient time to communicate this to these pastors.

- **Find a group of pastors and leaders who will act as catalysts.** Among the fraternity of pastors, there were some who acted as catalysts. The president of the group was a relational person and motivator who effectively shared the vision. The pastors, in turn, took enough time to adequately communicate the vision to their congregations. It takes time to inspire and motivate people to pray, so make sure you take sufficient time for this.

- **Cast the vision for prayer.** Teach about prayer from the Bible, cast a vision for the prayer room, recommend books on prayer, and share stories of answered prayer. Encourage everyone to get involved. Link them with resources. Let individuals pledge hours in the prayer room during your House of Prayer. You might have them write down their commitments so as to be accountable. Be careful not to pressure people or put them on guilt trips.

- **Organize a good communication system.** We had an excellent means of communicating. A quality website was developed. This site explained the purpose of the effort, location where the event was to be held, who should be involved, registration information and forms, contact information, and payment options for those needing accommodations.

  We also set up a website for the Virginia House of Prayer and made several thousand attractive brochures to pass out to the churches and to interested individuals. Keep the motivation going, possibly through a newsletter with testimonies of answered prayer, words of encouragement, and updates. Encourage people to visit the website. It will help them to feel a part of what God is doing.

- **Enlist other cities to come and help motivate the Church to pray.** International participation in Spain ignited the passion in local believers. They felt that if others were willing to come at their own expense to pray for their area, the Lord must have really spoken to them. Some of those internationals were pacesetters, as they modeled the effectiveness of long hours of prayer through the days and nights. The local people were encouraged to see people able to pray for long periods. Intercessors are a key resource. Increased excitement about prayer is probably an answer to their prayers.

- **Have an on-call team of intercessors.** The intercessors were our on-call team to fill in any empty prayer slots a couple days in advance. You want people who don't mind being on call to pray in an emergency. I found this to be so helpful because emergencies do arise, and not everyone will show up. I would feel relieved because I knew there were people who would fill in any gap of time joyfully. You may want to have different individuals on call daily, with their number and name clearly posted near the prayer room. Then everyone knows who to call if there is an emergency.

- **Write a memo of understanding for all who are involved in praying.** A memo of understanding was attached to the website. This made it clear to all involved, both locally and internationally, what we were going to do. Some areas in the memo included: key relationships, goals, motivation, training and equipping, types of prayer, doctrine, the prophetic, team praying, ministry outreach, personal support, personal time, costs, registration, medical coverage, travel arrangements, and arrival and departure dates.

- **Meet with the leadership to pray and debrief together.** After your 24/7 House of Prayer finishes, meet together with the leadership team to debrief, pray, and talk about what's next. How does God want to further develop prayer in your city? Don't make any big announcements of a long-term House of Prayer too quickly and then not be able to do it. It's better to go slow and work your way up gradually. You can extend a week or a month at a time or commit to a few hours a week.

People will be hungry for more, and there will be no unrealistic expectations and then discouragement.

A one-month House of Prayer welcomes God into your city.

As I traveled from nation to nation on the *Doulos*, upon arrival in a new country we would often have a great welcome from the people of that city. In New Zealand we experienced a special dance from the Maori Indians. It was quite impressive, and one I will never forget. At the end of that unique tribal dance, the staff and crew of our ship received a beautiful lei of flowers around their neck and the Maori greeting of rubbing noses. It was quite a cultural experience for many of us, I can assure you.

In other countries we had special greetings unique to each culture—everything from other cultural dances, gifts, songs, and banners—that were a beautiful welcome for the ship into their unique city. It made all of us on board feel very welcome in that country and city. It made us deeply desire to stay there and interact with the people.

Perhaps God feels the same way.

When He sees His people eagerly pray for His presence, and welcome Him into their city day and night in prayer, He is delighted and wants to invade that city with His presence. When He sees your desperate cry for His presence, He feels like a welcomed and longed-for guest. He wants to make your city His home.

Begin now to prepare the way for God's Kingdom and presence in your city. Start with increasing your prayer life, and find a few others who have a vision for transformation in your city. Get together regularly; God will lead you and add others to your prayer meetings. Transformation will occur in your lives, and you will become consumed with a hunger for God's presence. The Lord will hear your cry for your city, and God will begin to move in your midst.

Early in our month of 24/7 prayer in Spain, God made his presence known to us in a very special way. There was no rain outside; it was completely dry. As I was having my prayer time early in the morning, I suddenly looked out the window and there in the sky surrounding the House of Prayer was a bright rainbow. It was as if God was speaking to me and saying:

"My desire is for citywide, united prayer, and I love your House of Prayer. Keep it up for I shall surely come with my presence—I have heard your cry."

It is time that we change our lifestyles and become desperate for God and His ways. We must be willing to do this and put God first. It is time that we welcome His Kingdom into our neighborhoods, our cities, and our nations.

> To be desperate means to be without hope in your current condition and to know that in your own power you don't have the necessary resources required to change it. People who are desperate become determined to find help, often taking great risks to meet their desperate need. In the communities where transforming revival has occurred, the people of God were desperate enough to change their lifestyle and their priorities and to commit their time and resources, making everything secondary to the desperate pursuit of God in their midst. They cried out in desperation, and the Lord heard their cry.[6]

Preparing the Prayer Room for the King

> Every person is different, but we all need to find those people and places that enable us to re-center on Christ regularly, so that the reflex reaction of our lives remains prayerful all the time. A season of 24-7 prayer provides a place, a time, a context, and a catalyst for this conscious and persistent prayer to continue, both individually and corporately. The prayer room is a picture of constant activity in the heart of every believer. It helps us maintain the flame of worship on the altar of our lives. We leave the prayer room encouraged and enabled to keep on praying consciously and subconsciously through the trials of the day ahead… A regular hour in a 24-7 prayer room is both an expression of and an inspiration for a lifestyle of continual prayer.[7]

Preparing a place for the King of kings, the Creator of the universe to come and dwell, is an awesome privilege. We should take great care in such a wonderful undertaking. We want the prayer room to enable every person to center on Christ, and maintain a flame of worship that car-

ries them through the ups and downs of daily life outside the prayer room. We just looked at the initial steps in starting a one-month House of Prayer. You may wonder:

- Ok, we understand how to get started, but what do we do about the prayer room?
- How do we create an atmosphere of prayer?
- How do we decorate the prayer room attractively so people want to come to pray?
- What should it look like so that it attracts God's presence?

Again, I am giving examples of what we did in Spain as well as other places. This is a long section because there's so much to say, but the details are quite important. It's God's prayer room, and you want it to be designed in such a way that it uniquely glorifies Him in your city.

The most important key throughout the whole preparation phase is to seek God together with other like-minded people. Pray about every detail and every need. As I already mentioned, before our one-month House of Prayer in Virginia, a group of people got together to pray every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 5:30-7:30 A.M. to prepare for it. We prayed about everything again and again. We brought before the Lord our hearts and our desires for our city and the entire region. We prayed about every need.

As we started, God put everything together just in time. It was as if we were flying the plane as we built it. This takes faith because everything did not fall into place as early as we would have liked. But it kept our dependence level high and our prayers fervent.

God knows every need and is fully aware of every challenge in setting up a House of Prayer.

As we look back to these initial times, we are amazed at how God worked things out even at the last moment. We must learn to depend fully on Him because only He can work out the details. It is God who makes things grow in the spiritual realm.

At the time I wrote this chapter, we were working towards three simultaneous one-month Houses of Prayer. You can imagine how complete-

ly dependent we were on God to work it out in all three cities. But as we fervently prayed, God gave us guidance. We simply obeyed His leading step-by-step.

We also met together regularly with the prayer leaders in these locations and kept in close connection, but it was totally up to God to work out all the details and answer our prayers. Although we didn't have 24/7 prayer going continuously in all three locations, we felt it was successful anyway. Our faith grew through the tests we faced during that time.

More prayer in a city is a big success to God.

As you think about developing your prayer room, realize that there are so many ways to make a prayer room attractive and stimulating for prayer. There are no rules as long as it is conducive to prayer. The following is an example of what we did in Spain.

When we first saw the prayer room, we knew we were in for a great challenge. Everything was a mess, but we found that God could transform almost anything into a beautiful place of prayer. Hopefully this will help you to take the necessary steps in setting up the House of Prayer in your city.

How to Develop the Prayer Room

> A prayer room needs to provide privacy and be closed off from outside distractions. It should be comfortable, with a pleasant atmosphere—an inviting place to enjoy the Lord's presence. It's important that it be safely accessible 24 hours a day, with a telephone and preferably a separate outside entrance that is well lighted and has a combination lock. It should be inspirational and should have helpful information displayed to guide people as they pray.[8]

To summarize a few very important suggestions, think about the following: When choosing a place to pray, make sure your prayer room is easy to get to and doesn't require complex directions. Do you want to be seen by others, and is it a safe place at night? Remember that some will be traveling at night so safety is an important issue. It's good not to have people praying alone at night, but there are exceptions. What about privacy?

Is the room big enough for people to walk around or pace back and forth? Some prayer warriors like to walk or wave banners as they pray. Is it big enough for groups but still intimate in atmosphere for one person? You may want a medium-sized room with dividers or theme areas of prayer. A larger room next to a smaller room is ideal for flexibility. Do you need a telephone nearby in case of emergency? Is there a restroom? Is it neighbor-friendly? What about the noise level or loud music with noisy intercessors? Here at IHOPKC many wear earplugs. Different ages like different volumes of music.

All of these practical details are important to discuss as you plan your House of Prayer. Also think about the following suggestions:

- **Pray and look for the right place.** Praying for the right location added a lot to the success of our month of prayer in Spain. There were several factors associated with this: An emblem of the Spanish culture, the Hotel Solana is a two hundred year old hacienda, very rustic in appearance. It became a sign and a wonder from the Lord because prior to our initiative, most did not know of its existence. The possibility of its use would have been remote. People enjoyed being there because they were surrounded by nature, light, and the green outdoors. It was a central location, easy to access from any direction. There were large rooms for eating and fellowship, and a smaller one off to the back that was used as the 24/7 prayer room.

- **Have a warm, friendly, and inviting atmosphere outside the prayer room.** The atmosphere outside the prayer room was friendly and welcoming. You may want to supply drinks such as coffee, tea, or water outside your prayer room. Right next door to the Global Prayer Room in Kansas City, there is a coffee shop called Higher Grounds where people can buy coffee, sandwiches, and snacks, and meet for fellowship and building relationships.

- **Have an attractive prayer room created for prayer.** As one approached the prayer room in Spain, shoes were removed, and no talking was permitted inside the prayer room. We emphasized vertical communication only. Don't use too many bright lights, except at the entrance. We had lights in the prayer room

that could be turned on or off, depending what people wanted. Lighting in general should be warm and inviting.

Music DVDs with suitable types of background music were selected to accompany prayers. It's important to have a broad choice of DVDs and ones even for children. A book was left at all times in the prayer room for people to write verses, prayers, what God had spoken during their prayer time, impressions, pictures, etc. This was a valuable reminder of what happened in people's lives in the prayer room.

The room was well furnished with seats around the perimeter, DVD player, instruments, carpets, pillows, and a candle that was burning throughout the duration of the event. The candle was a symbol representing the presence of the Lord and our passion for Him. Some Houses of Prayer do not permit candles because of the fire hazard.

If you use candles, make sure they are in a safe place and not near something flammable. My book, *Intercessors Arise,* was apparently too close to the flame, and one morning I found it burnt on the edges. It was baptized in fire during that month of prayer. At a meeting in Belgium where I was selling my books, an intercessor quickly wanted to buy the "anointed" book on prayer that was baptized with fire in the prayer room!

- **Have some stimulating prayer training and books in the prayer room.** A manual of the Intercessors Arise prayer teachings was always in the prayer room along with the book *Intercessors Arise* and *Praying the Bible* by Wesley and Stacy Campbell for prayer motivation. Teachings on prayer and intercession help to fuel the flame of prayer. For bi-monthly prayer teaching for your House of Prayer, subscribe at www.intercessorsarise.org.

- **Keep the prayer room clean.** The cleanliness of the hacienda was kept at the highest possible standard. Air fresheners or incense helps keep it fresh. A few of us would always try to keep it clean and orderly throughout the month. Only water is permitted in the prayer room at IHOPKC and because we have so many thousands of visitors, shoes must always be worn because of cleanliness standards.

- **Have the month-long prayer schedule posted outside the prayer room.** On an easel outside the prayer room were posted daily sign-up sheets for the week. The scheduled sessions were divided into two-hour sets. Each week had 84 two-hour sets. We recommend two hours, but you may want to divide it into one-hour blocks of time. It's totally up to you.

  Individuals or church groups were encouraged to fill in the blocks (sets) during times when they would be able to occupy the room. Pastors often signed blocks for their churches. You may want to assign whole churches or cell groups within a church to take a day or night. You may also want to post an introduction to the prayer room, its themes and aims, as well as other important information on this "welcome" easel or wall for people to easily see.

- **Have an appointed leader for each block of time.** If a pastor brought his congregation, we would recognize him as the leader for that block of time unless he deferred it to someone else. We wanted to honor the pastors for their spiritual roles as gatekeepers in the area. In an amazing way, pastors and intercessors began to love and appreciate one another on a whole new level.

  When one church ended their two-hour block of time or set, another one would start. Intercessors filled in all the empty two-hour time slots, and whoever signed up would lead that block of time. The ones leaving their prayer time would always pray for the ones coming and for God's blessing on their prayer watch.

- **Have an on-site coordinator if possible.** An on-site coordinator equipped with a cell phone was able to receive appointments or cancellations and record them accordingly. For a citywide House of Prayer, you may want to post the schedule on an online sign-up roster on the Internet. This is especially good for individuals who have to commute a long way to the prayer room.

  As the coordinator, I was able to oversee the prayer room, making sure there was an individual or group praying every

hour of every day during the month. As already mentioned, you can assign a different coordinator every day or week if you desire.

- **Provide an opportunity for giving.** A collection bowl was always set inside or outside the door of the prayer room. Many people gave generously. A resident of the hotel who came from outside the country was responsible for collecting the offerings, paying the bills, and recording income and expenditures during the month. Good financial accounting is important to maintain the unity of the Spirit.

Creativity in the Prayer Room

> Our experience of God in the prayer room was both mystical and practical. On the walls there was always so much to see: messages that could move the hardest heart, children's pictures, intimate prayer requests, poems of worship, Bible verses scrawled as graffiti, prophetic symbols, and, of course, that evolving book of answered prayer. The stories ranged from simple encouragement to a few truly remarkable reports of apparently miraculous intervention. For many people, visiting that room to see such things and meet with God became a mini-pilgrimage even at three in the morning on a cold winter night.[9]

The prayer room can be a life transforming experience for everyone involved, but it involves hard work. You are inviting the King into your midst. All of this may sound easy, but it's not. As I already said, the prayer room in Spain was quite a challenge. The owner of the hotel was an artist, and the room had been used for storage. It was full of all kinds of old things—wood, curtains, clay, papers, dirt, and everything you could imagine an elderly artist would collect in that room.

Could this possibly be transformed into a House of Prayer?

God quickly gave us a mind to work, and He gave us creative ideas to make that room a beautiful place of prayer. With candles, cushions, chairs, flags, maps, instruments, and other items, the room was transformed. The comment we heard so often during that month was, "We feel God's presence in the prayer room!" God can transform anywhere

into a beautiful place where His presence dwells. After all, He is the one who gives the creative plan for each one.

There is no limit to the creativity that can be expressed in a prayer room. Link your hands together with His and watch Him creatively work.

As far as decorating goes, you may want to recruit a decorating team or just one or two artistic people. Some prayer rooms have prayer stations that cover many types of prayer such as: personal prayer requests, meditation and contemplation, worship, thanksgiving, confession, and intercession. We've experienced this in a church service where areas were divided into many stations of prayer. The prayer stations can be decorated to help people get involved in prayer. It was definitely a wonderful experience in prayer and a personal encounter with God.

Creativity can be expressed in a multitude of ways. Ask the Lord what He wants you to focus on in your prayer room. Think about the size of your room, the age of your participants, the material available, and so forth.

In some of our Houses of Prayer, we've put the *Operation World* book by Patrick Johnstone to help people pray globally. The *Transformation* videos on DVD are another possibility, or a slide projector with pictures from your area. Posters, globes, and world maps are also helpful for prayer. Local newspapers, prayer letters, and prayer guides are excellent for prayer.

Make good use of the four walls in your prayer room. You may want to direct people's prayers in a new direction on each wall. For instance, you may want a wailing wall for personal prayer requests, a worship wall with verses and pictures, and a world or city wall that is outwardly focused with names of missionaries, a world or city map, community issues, etc. There may be a place of praise with instruments and DVDs or a wall of promise where individuals can pray the Scriptures on the wall. You might have a thank-you wall with testimonies of answered prayer and thanksgiving. You may want a graffiti wall with poems and letters or drawings.

There is so much creativity you can use on these walls. We had a country map on one wall and a place where people could paint, draw pic-

tures, or write verses. You may want to leave lots of white paper and pens or paintbrushes for people to creatively express their prayers. One of the Christians—an artist from Gibraltar—drew a beautiful picture on one wall. You may want pictures of nature or other cultures on a wall or table. Some prayer rooms have an audio DVD or video with an introduction, welcoming people to the prayer room and helping them to focus on prayer.

We made use of the center of the room, and this is very important. As I said, we had a table in the center with a candle lit the entire month. Local Christians donated candles. We never ran out, but it certainly was difficult to blow the last candle out during our grand finale at the end of the month. We all had the urge to keep the prayer room going. It was a place where we had met with God personally and corporately. We knew that the day would come when the candle would be lit again—and maybe—it would be continuous when we had a more permanent location.

> One of the simplest and yet most profound things a prayer room offers is a place to be alone and still before God. It promotes humility and a visible dependence on God. Prayer rooms also generate and facilitate other prayer ideas given by the Holy Spirit to affect the whole ministry of the church in the community.[10]

During your week or month of prayer, you may want to have outreaches at schools, shopping centers, or flea markets. You may want to ask people to bring clothing, food, or blankets to give to the needy. You can then pray for those who receive the items. Help with transportation so that the elderly, or mothers with young children, can come in groups during the day.

We had some special young people's prayer meetings on some of the weekends. You may want to challenge them to spend forty hours in prayer on a weekend. We had the BURN group of young people on the weekend. Their mission statement is:

> The mission of BURN 24-7 is to plant a sustainable furnace of 24-7-365 worship, prayer and explosive supernatural outreach releasing a sound of indigenous creative vertical worship in every community, people group, city and nation in the world.

They are high in energy and can provide a tremendous momentum to your House of Prayer. See burn24-7.com for more information.

You may want to take a prayer team to a dark place in your city to intercede. Praying at the nearest police station, or near a school or business, is another possibility. You may want to have a prayer retreat. We know of a House of Prayer that started by reading through the entire Bible. You may want to pray through the Psalms or pray the promises from the Bible several times during your 24/7 House of Prayer. The New Testament apostolic prayers of Paul in chapter five, as well as extracts of prayers at www.ihopkc.org, will help you. Soaking music is available at www.soaking.net. The creative possibilities are contagious. Just go for it!

Launching Out with God

> The launch event is a fantastic opportunity to create momentum that will last for days in the prayer room. We've often observed that a well-launched prayer room continues to impact the group for a long time afterward. You'll also be surprised at how many people are still only just beginning to get their heads around the 24-7 idea by the time of the launch—no matter how diligently you've sought to raise awareness.[11]

When you finally do launch your House of Prayer, it's a big moment for your church and your city. Put some thought into the actual launching and conclusion of your House of Prayer. Make it a real event. We've had opening celebrations launching our one-month Houses of Prayer. And we've had grand finale celebrations with times of worship, testimony, and food at the end. They all have been very significant events.

At the launch, make sure you have at least the first three days filled. If not, recruit people at the meeting. Give people a positive vision for your House of Prayer. We ceremonially lit the first candle and had lots of worship. You may want to have a countdown. A group of young people in Mexico opened the doors of the prayer room and threw a feast with fajitas and tortillas for everyone! There is no limit to what you can do.

There are so many ways to end your House of Prayer. At the end of our month-long House of Prayer we had many of the local pastors share and give testimonies. They gave motivation for future Houses of Prayer and made sure everyone knew that this wasn't the end. It was

really only the beginning. Everyone celebrated with excited and fervent worship. It was a great accomplishment to all involved.

Whatever you do, make sure it's a joyful occasion. It's good to debrief as well and get feedback, share stories, deal with any disappointments, and talk about the possibility of doing it again.

God desires Houses of Prayer in every city around the world. He wants His people to welcome His Kingdom into their city. He is prompting people just like you to gather with other like-minded people and pray towards this goal. He wants us to cry out to Him day and night. We read in Lamentations 2:18-19:

> *The hearts of the people cry out to the Lord. O wall of the Daughter of Zion, let your tears flow like a river day and night; give yourself no relief, your eyes no rest. Arise, cry out in the night, as the watches of the night begin; pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint from hunger at the head of every street.*

Even though there is a lot of work involved, it's worth it all. People's lives are changed as they encounter God. Let us pray together for this worldwide prayer movement to grow in every nation. In his book, *E. M. Bounds on Prayer*, Bounds motivates us to make God's house a House of Prayer.

> The life of the church is the highest life, and its office is to pray. Its prayer life is the highest life, the most fragrant, and the most conspicuous. When God's house on the earth is a house of prayer, then God's house in heaven is busy and powerful in its plans and movements. "For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people" (Isaiah 56:7), says God. Then, His earthly armies are clothed with the triumphs and spoils of victory, and His enemies are defeated on every hand… The very life and prosperity of God's cause—even its very existence—depend on prayer. And the advance and triumph of His cause depend on one thing: that we ask of Him.[12]

God's Kingdom Life Application
Preparing the Way for God's Kingdom in Your City

In this chapter we looked at how a Kingdom vision is ignited through Houses of Prayer, and how to prepare the prayer room and the way for God's presence. Now let's begin the initial steps in the process of conducting a one-week or one-month House of Prayer. Review this chapter carefully before starting, and then answer the following questions:

- Where is your city or your church as to the possibility of a one-month or one-week House of Prayer? - Evaluate the positives and the negatives in your city or church. What are the obstacles that need to be overcome?

- How can you personally participate in seeing a one-month House of Prayer started? - Think about how God would want you to be involved (i.e. prayer room decorating, praying, motivating others, gathering a team to plan, and so forth). Write down your ideas regarding your level of involvement, and be willing to share them with others.

- Evaluate the points in this chapter carefully - Prayerfully write down anything God may lay on your heart regarding a one-month House of Prayer in your city, or even a one-week House of Prayer in your church. If one week is too much, what about one weekend?

- Meet with others who may have a desire for a one-month or one-week House of Prayer in your city - Brainstorm and write down the names of any others in your city who may be interested. Purchase a diary or notebook, and have someone write down your ideas as a group. Give a copy to each group member, and prayerfully decide on a date. Have each group member write down ideas, Scriptures, and what they feel God is saying during the week.

- Study about Houses of Prayer on a regular basis - There are several online resources in addition to this book. See the end of this book for recommended books on prayer and intercession. Also see www.ihopkc.org and www.intercessorsarise.org.

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Meet together as a group, and study this chapter together. Then prayerfully answer the life application questions. Brainstorm about how you can prepare for a one-month House of Prayer in your city. This may take more than one time of meeting together. Decide who will be responsible for the different jobs that need to be done. Carefully decide on a neutral place. The Holy Spirit will give you His step-by-step plan, and an agreement with His plan, as you regularly pray together. Pray and be alert to any who God may lay on your heart to join your group.

With Bible in hand and some worship music, take it into the prayer room. Begin having weekly prayer meetings leading up to the one-month House of Prayer. Write down what God says to you in your prayer meetings. He will give you His strategy for your city, but you must consistently pray together. Pray about all the details. Pray about the participation of the churches in your city.

When we have a one-month House of Prayer, we spend several months planning and praying. We bring in several intercessors from other countries to cover the hours. You will need to bring in many people from various churches within your city to cover the hours. You will probably not get 100% participation, but thank God for all the churches who join together for prayer. Others will join in later. If you are having a one-week or weekend House of Prayer in your church, adapt all of this accordingly. Remember, you don't have to start big.

Just start!

Our Prayer for God's Kingdom in our City

Lord, we want Your Kingdom purposes in our city. [Name your city.] Help us to see our city from Your perspective. We pray for day and night prayer. Give us eyes of faith and a vision to see what You can do. Raise up Your Church here, and break through every divisive barrier that is keeping us apart. Revive the churches, and make them an influence in our neighborhoods and places of work. Help us all to work together towards a one-month House of Prayer. [Pray your specific vision.] Teach us to lay down our personal agendas and see the big picture of what You want to do here. Invade our city with Your glorious presence and Your

Kingdom purposes. Help our city grow in trust, wisdom, relational unity, love, worship, Kingdom building, simplicity, and in seeking Your presence.

Teach us how to prepare every detail for a House of Prayer here. Give us Your wisdom as to where we should have it. Give us Your creativity in decorating the prayer room. We pray for favor with Your people as we spread the vision. We believe this is Your will. Break through every obstacle, and show us the steps we need to take. Lay a burden on our hearts to pray together for our city. Bring a core group of people together to pray towards this House of Prayer. Give us Your wisdom and Your heart for united intercession.

We are desperate for Your presence. We welcome you here. Come and dwell among us. Let our city bring You renown, joy, praise and honor before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things You do for it; and let them be in awe and tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace You provide for it (Jeremiah 33:9). In Jesus' name, amen.

Verse to Memorize

Then this city will bring me renown, joy, praise and honor before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things I do for it; and they will be in awe and will tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace I provide for it (Jeremiah 33:9).

CHAPTER TEN

Houses of Prayer and Transformation

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory,
are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory,
which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
2 Corinthians 3:18

AS A CHILD I would try to catch butterflies in a small net. In those days there were several country roads where they loved to freely fly, and monarch butterflies were plentiful. In many of my travels to other nations, I have seen outstanding displays of God's creative and rather remarkable handiwork in butterflies and moths. The colors, designs, and sizes are beyond imagination with reds, yellows, and oranges etched into a perfect design. Not even the greatest artists can create such a remarkable array of natural beauty.

We can learn a lot from these colorful insects, and I am sure we can all testify to the transformation (metamorphosis) that takes place as we watch the miracle of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly. A crawling, ugly, and repulsive caterpillar crawls up into a ball and seems to have died—with no appearance of life as it lays imprisoned in a tomblike cocoon.

Suddenly after a long time delay—it struggles, it pushes, it endures, and finally it works hard to break out of that cocoon—and comes forth as a beautiful and graceful butterfly! And did you know that the whole purpose of the butterfly is to reproduce itself? It spends all its life seeking to do this? It's amazing.

But there is a great problem when this struggle doesn't occur.

A man found the cocoon of a butterfly. One day, when a small opening appeared, he sat and watched it trying to struggle its body through the small hole but without making much progress. It seemed to actually stop and go no further. He thought, "I'll help free this butterfly." So he took scissors and snipped off the cocoon. The butterfly easily emerged but had a small body and shriveled wings. He thought the wings would expand, and the butterfly would fly. It didn't happen. The butterfly could never fly but could only crawl in its small body and shriveled wings.

No beautiful transformation took place.

That man didn't realize that it was necessary for the butterfly to struggle in the cocoon to get through that tiny opening. Fluid would force its way from the body of the butterfly to its wings, making it ready for flight once it achieved freedom from the cocoon.

God wants to bring transformation into His Church. He wants to transform our lives personally, corporately, and regionally. Often we want the easy way out. Struggles, tests, trials, and tribulations are not pleasant words. But obstacles are necessary for transformation. We would be crippled and without strength without them. We need to struggle to see things from God's perspective and do things His way. We need perseverance as we prepare for His soon return to earth.

He is strengthening our character and stabilizing our hope in the eternal. He is creating within us a faith in His promises.

This final chapter is about how God brings transformation through Houses of Prayer. Developing a House of Prayer in your city, or helping prayer to increase in your church, involves perseverance and struggle. But it brings transformation in our lives. Obstacles are necessary for transformation. You may wonder, "How can I see transformation in the prayer life of those in my church? How will a House of Prayer bring transformation into my city?"

In this chapter learn how to cultivate a transformed heart in the prayer room. Discover the way Houses of Prayer brings transformation into our lives and into our cities. In a group setting, this chapter is excellent for studying the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle together and praying

specifically for life transformation in your city. Accept God's invitation to greatness, and learn how Houses of Prayer advance God's glory throughout the world—bringing a powerful transformation on the earth. God is teaching us to fly.

Transformed Hearts

> Cultivating a responsive heart of extravagant devotion to Jesus takes time and deliberate effort. Love does not grow automatically but rather it automatically diminishes unless intentionally cultivated. A responsive heart to God, renewed in freshness and tenderness, is precious and rare, to be guarded with great care and renewed day by day. Satan's first priority against the Church is to lead us astray from cultivating the ability to be responsive to God with wholehearted love and extravagant devotion. If Satan leads us astray from the purity of devotion to Jesus, then our service and love for others will eventually fail.[1]

You've made it to the last chapter. Congratulations! As we conclude, I want to re-emphasize some important truths and add in additional ones that are extremely important regarding Houses of Prayer. As you apply this book and move forward in prayer for your city, realize that it's all about loving God and preparing the earth for the reign of Jesus, our Bridegroom King. It's all about obeying the first commandment:

> *Love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, with ALL your soul, and with ALL your mind* (Matthew 22:37-38).

The fire of loving God will ignite our faith to live a life of prayer and devotion. He wants us to turn to Him with all our heart (Joel 2:12). Then He will pour out His Spirit on the nations.

God wants to transform our hearts in the prayer room. There is no better way to experience a changed heart as in the prayer room. He wants to impact our hearts so that we impact our cities and the nations. If we love God, we will love others better and with a much greater consistency. Let's remember that the Church of Ephesus had left their first love (Revelation 2:1-5). Their once fiery love and passion for Jesus had grown cold. Their minds had been led astray from the simplicity of

pure devotion to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3). Loving God and living a holy life must be our primary focus.

As we think about loving God and Jesus, let's realize that Houses of Prayer will enable us to grow in intimacy in a way that is beyond our greatest dream.

We saw this in chapter two. Houses of Prayer help us to encounter God on a deep level. Growing in an intimate relationship with God should be our ambition, our highest calling. This means that we know and are deeply known by God. We have a relational knowledge of Him and not just a factual understanding. God is a person to be known, and our knowledge of Him produces affection.

We position our hearts in the prayer room to receive the love He desires to manifest to us. He wants to partner with us, and He releases blessing to those who are in unity with His heart. Loving God was Jesus' last public invitation and declaration before He went to the cross (Matthew 22:37-38). It is the great commandment and God's first priority. We impact His heart when we love Him. This should be our life focus (Song of Solomon 8:6-7).

Loving God in the prayer room brings transformation into our heart.

How do we grow in intimacy and in the knowledge of God? He must reveal Himself to us, and He does it as we behold Jesus in the prayer room (Matthew 11:27; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Colossians 1:19; 2:2-3, 9; Hebrews 1:1-3). God wants us filled with fiery love and desire for Him, and the prayer room is the perfect place to cultivate this transformational love relationship. What we behold of God's heart, we become. We are like the beautiful, emerging butterfly.

Our identity is in Jesus. We discover who we are and what is our worth and destiny by encountering His heart for us in the prayer room. We become successful as lovers of God, and we begin to measure our success in an entirely new way. Imagine what will happen in our cities when God's people begin to measure success in this way. There will be no more envy and competition. We will be seeking God and His ways, not ours.

> If the believer would enter into a better, deeper, fuller knowledge of God he must prayerfully study the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures! Let this be

> made our chief business, our great delight, to reverently scrutinize and meditate upon the excellencies of our Divine Savior as they are displayed upon the pages of Holy writ. Then, and only then, shall we "increase in the knowledge of God". The "light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is seen only "in the face of Jesus Christ."[2]

When we prayerfully adore and study the person and work of Christ in the prayer room and live obedient lives, we grow in intimacy. This is not studying academically, but it is more a drinking in of the beauty of Christ, just as we would behold a beautiful landscape. We fix our attention and affection upon Christ. We listen carefully—we hear—we behold—we gaze in stillness upon Christ and are transformed into His likeness. We use Scripture as we do this, and we give God our time.

Jesus must be our focal point; our hearts will be unsatisfied if He isn't. He must be central in our study, devotion, and discipleship. We must be dynamically connected to Him. We are His inheritance and delight (Song of Solomon 7:10; Romans 14:8; 1 Corinthians 3:23; 6:15-20).

God is using prayer to help prepare and purify His Church all across the earth. Remember that a House of Prayer in your city will help prepare Christians to live fully for God. He is using prayer to sanctify and cleanse His people, making her a Church filled with His glory.

The Church is like the transformed butterfly emerging from its cocoon. In the prayer room we learn to abide by dialoging with God and listening attentively to the Holy Spirit actively within us. He gives us wisdom and direction, and empowers us to live the Christian life. We are developing a heart connection with the Holy Spirit and are learning the reality of John 15:5-7. Without Him we can do nothing, but with Him we bear much fruit. In the prayer room we cultivate a transformed heart. God is developing a beautiful butterfly and teaching us to fly.

God is right now releasing grace to pray, and develop intimacy and love. He is releasing grace to develop Houses of Prayer in every nation. He is positioning our hearts by the fire of His love as we read and pray His Word back to Him. He is helping his people to cultivate a secret history with Himself. God is in the process of transforming our hearts in the prayer room. The Church will be a worshiping and praying Church, as we saw in chapter three. The Church will walk in unity with

God's Spirit, and she will be anointed with power as she intercedes and establishes herself in her bridal identity.

Through prayer we open the windows of heaven over our city. We prepare a place for the Lord to dwell individually, corporately, and geographically as we invite the presence of Jesus to come. He will one day wipe away every tear. There will be a new heaven and earth, and the tabernacle of God will be with men.

- This is what we are preparing for.
- This is what we anticipate and look forward to**.**
- This is what we are living for today as we prepare Houses of Prayer in every nation, city, and people group.

In humility, we lay our desires before the Lord and ask according to His will the things that are on His heart for us. God gives grace to those who walk in humility (James 4:6). We learn to embrace the cross and the humility of God as the normal Kingdom lifestyle (Matthew 16:24; 1 Corinthian 1:18-31). We commit our entire being to honor Him and His cause, and we lay the needs of our city and church into His hands. We seek after those things that glorify Him.

We take steps to live in His presence and bring our values into agreement with His Word. We seek His favor and not the world's (James 4:4-5). And though there are time delays, we wait and trust in His timetable. He will answer at the perfect time. He knows what is best and His ways are perfect. We boast in Him and not in our own strength and abilities (Jeremiah 9:23-29).

Developing a heart for holiness and love for God and others is essential in reaching the nations.

People are attracted to intimacy and love. They want to know what is real. According to a publishing house that has been in the romance business for half a century, more than 180 romance novels are purchased each year. This publishing house sold, on average, five and one-half books per second! People are desperately looking for love, and so often they look in the wrong places. Mother Teresa, whose life was a demonstration of love and who has impacted the multitudes in India, said:

> We need to find God, and He cannot be found in noise and restlessness. The more we receive in silent prayer the more we have to give in our active life.[3]

We receive God's love in the prayer room and give it away outside to the needy world in which we live. God's love touches people's hearts in remarkable ways right where we live.

On April 6, 2000, Ricky and Toni Sexton were taken hostage inside their home by a fugitive couple on a crime spree. Toni took her poodle outside when suddenly Dennis and Angela Tanner roared into her driveway, pointed pistols at her, and yelled for her to get back inside the house.

Trapped inside their house as hostages, the Sextons showed the love of Christ to the couple. They listened to their troubles—read from the Bible—showed them Gospel videos—and prayed and cried with them. During negotiations with the police, Ricky refused his own release when the Tanner's suggested committing suicide to end their standoff. But before finally surrendering, something remarkable happened. Angela Tanner left $135 and a note for the Sextons that said:

> Thank you for your hospitality. We really appreciate it… Wish all luck and love. Please accept this. It really is all we have to offer. Love, Angela and Dennis.[4]

This couple was touched and disarmed by the power of love they experienced in Ricky and Toni's life. The world will recognize our authenticity when our love is expressed in sacrifice, purity, and serving. A transformation took place because of the disarming power of love. God wants to remove everything that hinders love in our lives. He wants to establish His dwelling place and bring His presence on earth (Psalm 132:2-5). Our intimacy with the Lord will go on throughout all of eternity.

Intimacy is a journey. It requires time and has seasons of highs and lows.

It doesn't come automatically but must be cultivated over years of pursuing God day-in and day-out. We must faithfully and earnestly seek God all the days of our life. In the prayer room we position our hearts to seek after God, and our hearts are transformed day-by-day into the likeness of Christ.

The other day when I was praying and worshipping God in the Global Prayer Room at the International House of Prayer, I looked around at the individuals sitting there. They were all shapes and sizes, mainly young. The worship was so beautiful as it always is. I watched some with uplifted hands, others gazing intently upward, and others praying softly. I felt so privileged to be there at that moment, and I thought to myself:

These people love God so much! This is the real thing. Nothing is greater than this.

Let's give ourselves to loving God. It will lead to loving others outside the prayer room in the everyday world where we live and work. Houses of Prayer are God's strategic way to bring transformation into our hearts and our cities. It's time we seek to grow our hearts and watch it affect every area of our life for God's glory.

> Loving God with all our heart is the greatest commandment because it is the one that encompasses all else. It is the one that steadily takes over every area of our lives, from our thought life, our words, our relationships; to the way we spend time and money. If we truly give ourselves to loving Him entirely, we will in time love our neighbor as ourselves and be given to extravagant service, yet with a heart burning in the sustaining fire of intimacy.[5]

God's Invitation to Greatness

> *Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 5:19).

Establishing a House of Prayer in your church or city is pursuing greatness in God's sight. You are involved in one of the greatest things you can ever do for God. He wants to transform our thinking so we understand His invitation to greatness.

Think about it—what do we really want—fame before man or before God?

Lasting greatness is not in the praise of man but in the affirmation of God. He has placed within our heart a longing for greatness. He looks at the heart; He looks at our obedience and motives. He sees our hidden heart (1 Samuel 16:7). He sees what we do in secret, in the hidden place of prayer. Jesus wants to unlock our hearts and minds so that we are fully alive in Him. This is how he will reward us (Matthew 6:6). Most of what we do now will not be fully known until the age to come.

When we build a House of Prayer, we are building upon a foundation that cannot be shaken (1 Corinthians 3:11-15). We are pursuing greatness in God's sight. When we all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, we will be judged by the motives of our hearts and the established thought patterns behind our actions. God is evaluating our hearts. Moses prayed: *"Now, show me your glory"* (Exodus 33:18). He understood the true meaning and purpose of life. When we meet God face-to-face, He will ask:

- How much did you seek me?
- How much did you love others?
- How much did you let me transform your heart?

Let God measure the success of what we do. He is looking for faithfulness (Luke 16:10-12; 1 Corinthians 4:2) and relationship (Matt. 7:23; Luke 10:20). We must be faithful stewards as we pray and prepare our Houses of Prayer. Our goal is to help prepare the Bride for her destiny (Ephesians 5:22-27). Our identity is found in being a friend of the Bridegroom.

He must increase, and we must decrease.

We do not possess the fragrance of Jesus through education or money. God is raising up the uneducated and unknown to turn the world upside down (1 Corinthians 1:27-29). The power of the Kingdom will not come through the best training programs in the world. It will come through those who train in the desert, in that secret place of prayer. Moses had the best training in the world (Hebrews 11:24). He was the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but he needed forty years in the desert. Daniel had the best education, but it was in the secret place where he

became wiser than all the wise men of Babylon. He was steadfast and prayed three times a day, even when it endangered his life. Nothing—absolutely nothing—could hinder his commitment to prayer, not even a den of lions!

In Acts 4:13-16 we see that the boldness of Peter and John arises from their time spent with Jesus. Others realized this and marveled. They were uneducated and untrained, yet their lives were ones of power. These men had the vision and commitment to pray and spend time with God. They accepted God's invitation to greatness.

As we wait for the coming of God's Kingdom we can walk in that same power, but we must see with eyes of vision God's great invitation to us. We must have hearts of commitment to pray and advance the prayer movement. We need to believe that God wants to spread Houses of Prayer throughout the entire world. We must have vision for our city and our church. God is inviting us to greatness in His Kingdom.

Positioning Your Life for Greatness

> *Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all* (Mark 10:42-44).

Spreading the vision for prayer and starting a House of Prayer in your church or city will take a great deal of faithful serving. It will take hard work and endurance. There will be times when you wonder if you are doing the right thing or if it will ever happen. The opposition from the enemy will be great. But this is God's personal invitation to greatness for you. God designed you for greatness (Matthew 5:12; 11:11; 18:4). Deep in your heart you desire greatness, significance, dignity, nobility, honor, and impact. You want to be great in God's sight. You are learning to live for His Kingdom purposes.

The Sermon on the Mount is all about the lifestyle of the Kingdom.

When we learn a Kingdom lifestyle, look at what happens. We practice rapid repentance when we sin. We become more responsive to God with a wholehearted love. We love others more. We experience greater

fruitfulness, and we cultivate a lifestyle of sustained focus and devotion to God. But it takes time and effort. It is deliberate. We can't just run around living for ourselves.

In obeying it, we position ourselves for greatness. We pursue obedience in our speech, our appetites, our time, our money, and our eyes. We renew our inner man for eternal glory (2 Corinthians 4:16-17). We work to become faithful disciples of Jesus through our heart obedience and our ministry impact. We respond to all that the Holy Spirit shows us so that we may be worthy of our calling (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12). Our eternal destiny is to possess godliness and become like God in character, living a life of love (Ephesians 5:2; Romans 9:29).

This can be cultivated in the prayer room as well as in our daily life. We develop our secret life with God, and we do acts of justice wherever we go. He sees our heart. Seeking to lovingly obey is never in vain. We should seek to live out the eight beatitudes every day. He is looking for a people who obey Him wholeheartedly.

The Sermon on the Mount contains the core values of God's Kingdom and is the litmus test to measure our true success in life. By spending time in God's presence, God changes us on the inside and gives us more grace to live a Sermon on the Mount lifestyle daily. We are on a journey to greatness. Matt Chandler, from the International House of Prayer, writes about God's invitation to greatness:

> The Sermon on the Mount is the litmus test to measure our success in life, spiritual development and ministry impact. Our foundation call (internal) is to live out the 8 beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) as we pursue 100-fold obedience (Matthew 5:48; 6:22). The beatitudes are like 8 flowers in the "garden of our heart" that God wants to fully blossom…. God invites us to greatness without regard to our outward achievements or the size of our ministry impact. Rather it is based on the development of our inner man in love, meekness, and revelation or in righteousness, peace, and joy in the spirit (Romans 14:17). Without the paradigm of being on a journey to greatness, the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle is much more difficult to sustain. Living in light of receiving reward in heaven and being great in God's sight is a major theme that is emphasized in Matthew 5:5, 12, 19, 46; 6:1 4, 6, 18, 20; 7:2.[6]

God is developing us in the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:3-12. He is our source, and we are absolutely dependent on Him. Let's wholeheartedly pursue His fullness, and hunger and thirst for His righteousness. We are complete in Christ (Colossians 1:28-29; 2:10; 4:12; 1 Thess. 5:22-3). We are seeking to be obedient and perfectly established in Him (1 Peter 5:10; 1 Timothy 6:13-14). We are seeking a blameless life and to live out the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle.

> *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 5:3-10).

In the prayer room we learn to hunger after God, we grow in purity of heart, we learn to become peacemakers, and we grow in meekness. God brings inner and outer transformation. Then we take Him with us out into the marketplace, and people are drawn to the Holy Spirit living within us.

The prayer room helps us to become great in God's eyes rather than man's. It helps us to pursue the journey to greatness. As you attempt to get involved in His House of Prayer in your city or church, realize that it requires humility and a servant's lifestyle (Matthew 20:26-27). Those who lead in Houses of Prayer open the way to God's pathway of greatness. They must be willing to go through difficult and refining situations that seem unbearable at times—but are so worth it (Isaiah 48:10).

Jesus went through the cross for the joy set before Him. We must trust God's leadership, and live in His grace and for His glory (1 Cor. 12:8-10; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 818). We are partnering with Him and are seeking heavenly rewards instead of earthly ones (Matt. 6:1-20).

I heard about a famous professional baseball player who said that the aim of his life was to hear his manager say to him, "You are the greatest player I have ever coached." He was motivated by the hope that one day he would hear his manager's affirmation. He was waiting for

that day. How many multitudes of athletes feel like this? But how much more should we as Christians be motivated by the hope that one day we will hear our Master's affirmation. One day we will hear him say to us personally:

> *"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"* (Matthew 25:21).

What more could we ever want? In starting and maintaining Houses of Prayer we are seeking for God's "well done" in our lives. We become involved with what God cherishes and esteems so highly. Establishing Houses of Prayer helps to bring God's people into a love relationship with Him and helps them establish a close partnership with Jesus on earth. This brings glory to God in the deepest sense. Prayer is rooted in humility and takes time and energy. But when we do this, we are investing our time and energy in order to help others grow in righteousness, peace, and joy.

Let's press on with diligence and faithfulness (Philippians 3:12-14). He will help each one of us to be faithful in the face of pressure, obstacles, and difficulty. He will help us endure the mundane and the smallness of working diligently day by day and week by week as we get started. This matters to Him. We are living for a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. It's a daily adventure in pleasing God. It's all part of His invitation to greatness in His Kingdom. This invitation brings transformation in every area of our lives. Our hearts and our thoughts are transformed.

We are living in a transitional time in all of history. The Holy Spirit is preparing us for a release of His glory upon the Church. There will be a mighty release of signs, wonders, and glory at the end of the age (Joel 2:28-29). This will bring transformation. God is right now shaking everything that can be shaken in the nations (Haggai 2:6-7). He is inviting everyone to become great in His Kingdom. He designed us for this. True greatness will be fully manifested in the age to come, not here. It will be based on our heart's response, and it is available to all (Matthew 5:19; 20:26-27; 23:12).

Let's seek God in all that we do with a childlike faith and a humble heart. He is transforming our hearts and our minds. It's time to see life from His perspective because it is so far higher than ours. Let's posi-

tion our life for greatness in His Kingdom and accept this wonderful invitation.

Again I was sitting in the back of the International House of Prayer. I was looking at hundreds of young people who were accepting God's invitation to greatness with glad hearts. They were intently seeking God in the secret place. They were giving Him their time and energy with heartfelt abandonment. It was powerful.

> *Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me* (Matthew 18:4-5).

Advancing God's Glory

> Have you ever wondered if it is possible to get God's attention or attract His presence? And if it is possible, then why don't we spend more time doing those things that welcome His presence? God's Word establishes clear principles regarding His presence. There are things that prepare for and welcome the presence of the Lord—things like prayer, unity, worship, and a broken and contrite spirit.[7]

Wouldn't you like to attract God's attention to your city? After reading this book, don't you want to advance God's glory where you live? There is an eternal inheritance in every person and city. The possibility for transformation is possible. Isn't it time to see God invade your city with His glorious presence? This is possible as we build the House of Prayer. God wants to come in, but we have to invite Him.

Jesus is our model as we move forward in Houses of Prayer. The greatest example of the fullness of Christ's love can be seen in His meekness and servanthood (John 13). He was so strong, and yet He stooped so low. There is a dignity, beauty, and uniqueness about His lowliness (Matthew 11:29; Mark 10:15). Jesus was the servant of all. The weight of God's glory is His humility.

This humility will confront the pride of the earth (Psalm 113:4-6; Isaiah 2:10-11; 49:5-7). Jesus leads with the strength of meekness and the

might of humility. We must do the same. This will be a big key to the success of Houses of Prayer in our cities and churches.

Only Jesus gets the glory. It's about advancing His glory. It's not about a person, church, or ministry—it's all about Jesus!

We must give God time in the prayer room. Houses of Prayer advance God's glory. Houses of Prayer glorify Jesus.

Houses of Prayer are very do-able. God doesn't need a large population of Christians in order to bring in His presence. He will work through a few churches that decide to unite in prayer in order to seek His presence for their city. We must have a vision (Proverbs 29:18). We need a world vision, a heavenly revelation, and prophetic insight into what God wants to do in our day. We must be like Moses and cry out to see God's glory in our city (Exodus 33:18-19). As we do, we know that we are on the right course and are pointing in the direction of bringing glory to God through prayer.

Through intercession, God is training us to operate in His government. He governs in partnership with His people through intercession. The governmental center of the universe is the prayer room. We have a dynamic role because He shuts doors of oppression in response to our prayers. When we speak the Word of God that is in agreement with the Holy Spirit, God moves in power. We have the opportunity to advance God's glory through prayer and intercession.

Lets take this opportunity and make this all-important choice to center our lives in prayer.

In December of 1995, American Airlines Flight 965 left Miami on a routine trip to Cali, Columbia. On the landing approach, the pilot needed to select the next radio navigation fix named Rozo. He entered an "R" into his navigation computer, and it returned a list of nearby navigation fixes starting with "R". He selected the first and the latitude and longitude appeared correct. But instead of Rozo, the pilot selected Romeo, 132 miles northeast. A deviation would be dangerous. The pilot then began an easterly turn as he followed the indications on the flight computer.

But because he was off course he slammed into a granite peak at ten thousand feet—152 passengers and eight crewmembers were immedi-

ately killed! Only four survived this terrible accident. The National Transportation Safety Board declared the problem human error. The pilot had selected the wrong fix. When the plane is on course, the needle is centered but gives no indication about the correctness of the selected radio beacon. The gauge looks the same just before landing as before crashing. The computer had told the pilot he was tracking precisely to the beacon he had selected, but it had neglected to tell him that the selected beacon was fatal.

The prayer room will keep us on course and in the center of God's will. Houses of Prayer in our cities will keep us safe from danger and will help us know how to navigate through rough weather. They will show us how to advance God's glory in the end times.

We advance His glory by proclaiming Who He is and calling on His name. We can seek His face through calling on His name as:

- Yahweh, the source of steadfastness and encouragement - Romans 15:5.
- Compassionate and Merciful God - Exodus 34:6.
- El-Shaddai (the All-mighty, All-sufficient One, Satisfier) - Genesis 1:17.
- Yahweh-Yireh (God shall provide, Provider) - Genesis 22:14.
- Yahweh-Ropheka (the Lord who heals you) - Exodus 15:26.
- Yahweh-Shalom (the Lord gives rest; the Lord is peace) - Psalm 35:27.
- The King of the whole world - Micah 4:13.
- Jesus Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life - John 14:6.
- Christ the Power and Wisdom of God - 1 Corinthians 1:24.
- The Lamb in the center of the Throne - Revelation 7:17.
- The Lamb that was slain - Revelation 5:12.
- Christ the Hope of Glory - Colossians 1:26.

There are so many ways to proclaim Who God is. Here are a few more names of God: "The Spirit of Liberty, Insight, Counsel and Strength, Knowledge and Fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2), Grace and Supplication, Holiness, Love, Truth, Power, Self-control, Wisdom and Revelation of the Knowledge of Him, the Spirit of Glory."[9]

Pray God's names in the prayer room as you worship and seek His face. We are transformed by beholding His glory. Realize this: God is not a depressing God. He is not critical or negative. He is the God of joy, peace, and purity. We are transformed as we gaze upon Him with the eyes of our heart, when we set our mind on Him and give Him our attention. We begin to change little by little, and we go from glory to glory and strength to strength (Psalm 84:5-7). It's time to run the race to win the crown of life (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

God wants us to faithfully finish the life-long race like in the Greek athletic games and receive the crown of the victor. He wants to openly display His glory (Revelation 21:3). We must be faithful while on earth. We are running in a race as we look unto Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2). The Apostle Paul wanted to receive this prize. The House of Prayer helps us to walk in full obedience so that we might be found worthy of ruling in the age to come and receive the prize.

- Is the Lord alarming us with the crises of these days?
- Has He not spoken about those events that will bring the Kingdom authority to His Bride, the Church, on earth?
- Does not Satan tremble when Christians take God at His Word when He says: *Ask and you shall receive*?

> At such a time as this, witness this global mobilization of prayer, we can perhaps look to the future with cautious excitement. What will God do in answer to so much prayer, we wonder? God's kingdom, when it comes, probably won't arrive in the way we expect or even want it to. But viewing history with the eyes of faith, through the grid of past prayer movements, we can easily see the correlation between seasons of intercession and the extension of God's kingdom in the world.[10]

Count it all joy as you involve yourself in this worldwide prayer movement (James 1:2-12). God is raising up a glorious Church without spot

or wrinkle, and you are part of it (Ephesians 5:26-27). His government will increase over the whole earth as the prayer and worship movement increases.

Though the powers of darkness seek to hinder Houses of Prayer through disappointments, deception, distractions and difficulty, God's people will begin to see the big picture. They will start to live from the perspective of eternity rather than live a compromised life (Mark 4:7; Luke 27:31-33). They will begin to understand His strategy to bring righteousness and justice to earth, and this will keep them steady in the House of Prayer.

The Apostle Paul was consumed with a hope for the future. It sustained him in the midst of pressure and opposition. He was able to endure suffering with joy (Romans 8:18, 24). Studying the end times should fill our hearts with hope, because God will triumph over evil and Jesus will triumph as King of kings.

Let's live with eternity in view. Jesus is coming back to a praying Church that will advance His glory throughout the entire world. Jesus is right now bringing transformation onto the earth in all nations and in all of our lives. The bowls of intercession in heaven are becoming full. Like the butterfly released from it's cocoon, the Church will arise as a beautiful praying Bride as she waits expectantly for her Bridegroom King to appear in all His glory.

> Jesus is not coming back to a prayerless Church, rather to one enjoying mature bridal partnership with Him in intercession for the great harvest. The church will complete the Great Commission reaching to all 255 nations in the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 24:14). This strategic plan of the Holy Spirit will reach a crescendo before the Lord returns, as the bowls of intercession will become full in heaven.[11]

God's Glory Life Application
How to Advance God's Glory in Your City

In this chapter we learned about how to cultivate a transformed heart in the prayer room. We saw how Houses of Prayer bring transformation into our lives and into our cities. We learned about God's invitation to greatness and to advancing God's glory throughout the world. Prayerfully review this chapter, and then answer the following:

- How is God transforming your heart through prayer? - Evaluate your heart in the areas of your intimacy with God, your humility, your love towards others, and your obedience. What areas do you need to work on in your personal life?

- How are you responding to God's personal invitation to greatness? - Write a prayer to the Lord responding to His invitation to greatness. Relate your response to your personal involvement and commitment to prayer in your city or church. How will you show your commitment through serving, persistent prayer, spreading the vision for prayer, taking a humble role, and so forth?

- Read the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5—7 everyday this week - Spend time in prayer daily. Bring before the Lord specific passages that speak to you personally and ones you would like to see developed more in your life.

- Carefully study the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12 - Write a prayer to the Lord asking for these qualities to be developed in your own life and in other Christians in your city and church. Pray for transformation in your life.

- In what ways do you want to see transformation in your city? - Make a list of areas where you would like to see transformation, and begin to pray regularly through that list.

Taking it into the Prayer Room

Have each person do the above exercise prayerfully before meeting together as a group. Then meet together, open in prayer, and start by

reading the Sermon on the Mount together. Go through each of the above questions, with each person sharing their individual answers. Take time to share the areas of heart transformation God is working on at present, how each one is responding to God's invitation to greatness, and what specific ways they want to see transformation in your city. Make a written list of these areas for prayer.

Then with Bible and instruments in hand, take it into the prayer room. Begin by spending time worshiping God. Then pray God's Word from Matthew 5—7, bringing before Him specific areas of need and desire. Pray through your list of ways you want transformation in your city, mixing your requests with Scripture. Accept God's invitation to greatness in prayer, both personally and corporately, as you pray your commitment to a House of Prayer in your city or church. Use the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12 in your prayer. Thank God for what He is going to do through your House of Prayer as you apply this book into your life, your church, and your city for God's glory.

Our Prayer for Advancing God's Glory

Lord, please bring transformation into our lives through the prayer movement and a House of Prayer in our city. We want to see Your glory advance in our lives. Bring us into intimacy and the simplicity of pure devotion to You (2 Corinthians 11:3). Help us to cultivate a love relationship with You. Help us as the Church in [Name your city] find our identity in You. Teach us to walk in Your love and Your holiness. Make us attractive to the lost in our city. Show us how to advance Your glory in practical ways that demonstrate the love of Christ. Remove everything that hinders love in our lives, and establish Your dwelling place here in our city and all over the earth (Psalm 132:2-5). We accept Your invitation to greatness. We long for Your fragrance and want to learn humility, love, and holiness in our lives. Help us to obey the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5—7.

Your Word says in Matthew 5:3-10: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful,

for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Help us to practice the Beatitudes in our daily lives. We want to be great in Your Kingdom.

Help us to apply everything taught in this book, and use us to advance Your glory here on earth through Houses of Prayer. Bring transformation into our lives. We pray Psalm 24 over our city: Lord, the whole earth is Yours. You founded it! You deserve to be honored. Your Word needs to be proclaimed. We desire a visitation of Your promised Holy Spirit to open the windows of heaven and show forth Your powerful works. Create in us clean hearts. Give us clean hands. Let the ancient gates be lifted up that You, King of glory, may come in. Lord, give us wisdom for our House of Prayer in the spirit of holiness, in a way that would utilize the resources that You have already put within us. May we hear from Your Spirit—He is our director, counselor, and helper. Send Him to stir our hearts right now we pray. We invite Your presence into our midst. In Jesus' name, amen.

Verse to Memorize

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory,
are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory,
which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
2 Corinthians 3:18

Conclusion

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty!
My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
Blessed are those who dwell in your house;
they are ever praising you.
Psalm 84:1-2, 4

Throughout this book you have learned various ways to start a House of Prayer in your city. You have learned how to develop prayer within your own church. The possibilities are numerous, and there are dozens of creative ways to get started**.** We are in the most exciting time in all of Church history. There is no greater time to build the House of Prayer in your city as in our present day.

God's favor and grace is on the prayer movement.

As you begin to apply this book in your city and church, may you move forward in faith, hope, and unquenchable love (1 Corinthians 13:13). May God fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13). Houses of prayer throughout the earth are absolute certainties. May overflowing hope in God's Word be alive in your heart as you move forward in such a transforming venture for your city.

I believe that the reality of God's house becoming a House of Prayer for all nations will dynamically impact your life—transforming your view of the present and giving you a heavenly perspective on everything in your future. God's intention is to bring heaven to earth in Jesus (Ephesians 1:9-10). His desire is to release His heavenly power on earth through His Church. He has chosen to do this through you as you live and abide in relationship with Him, and as you agree with His heart in prayer. Truly He is inviting you to greatness for such a time as this.

As you set your mind on eternal issues, your heart will get excited about the eternal dwelling place of God and the establishing of His

Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10). This reality impacts your emotions in love and joy, the way you make decisions, and how you process all of life. This hope sustains you even in the midst of trouble. Hope will be an anchor to your soul, keeping you steady in the midst of end-time living (Hebrews 6:18-19). Hope will keep you from getting overwhelmed. Jesus will be the anchor in the middle of the storm.

Houses of Prayer are absolutely essential and powerful to all that God wants to do presently all over the world. We must continue to pray fervently for this in our cities and spread the vision everywhere we go. There is nothing like it.

Imagine being able to go to a place at any given time where you can be with others who are worshipping and praying to God. Think about the personal development of your own relationship with God and the enormous encouragement this will be to the whole body of Christ. It breaks the power of the enemy and brings protection as nothing else does.

Join with me in prayer that Houses of Prayer are started in God's way and for His glory in every city worldwide.

- It's time to spread His glory throughout the earth.
- It's time to prepare the whole earth for the Lord's soon return.
- It's time for 24/7 prayer to arise!

Blessed are those who abide in God's House of Prayer and make Him their home. It's harvest time and as the verse says—those who abide in Christ bear much fruit.

Abide in Me, and I in you.
As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,
unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.
"I am the vine, you are the branches.
He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit;
for without Me you can do nothing.
John 15:4-5, NKJV

About the Author

Debbie Przybylski is the founder and director of Intercessors Arise International, a part of the ministry of Elijah Company, Inc. The vision of Intercessors Arise International is to ignite the fire of prayer and worship worldwide and see a multitude of intercessors from every nation released in strategic prayer for the furtherance of the Gospel.

Debbie's passion is to see intercessors at work stirring the nations and setting captives free throughout the world by the ministry of prayer. She believes intercessors must be trained, encouraged, and released for the end-time harvest. Debbie's husband, Norman, is the founder and director of Elijah Company, Inc. Debbie serves alongside him in their ministry of training, equipping, and mentoring future and presently active cross-cultural workers by identifying, instructing, imparting, and impelling them to God's designated field of service.

Some related aspects of training offered by the Przybylskis are seminars and training courses in intercession, Houses of Prayer, missions, evangelism, breaking free from spiritual strongholds, and the Lighthouse of Prayer ministry. Norm and Debbie have ministered in over 65 nations. They envision intercession and missions uniting for global harvest.

Norm and Debbie live in Grandview, Missouri. Debbie is on staff with the International House of Prayer Missions Base (IHOPKC) in Kansas City.

Books by Debbie Przybylski

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Intercessors Arise International

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.
Isaiah 60:1

The vision of Intercessors Arise International is to ignite the fire of prayer worldwide and see a multitude of intercessors from every nation released in strategic prayer and worship for the furtherance of the gospel. We desire to encourage the strength and vision of intercession worldwide to see a release of God's power and glory. We envision Houses of Prayer established in every city in every nation.

Our Mission Statement

Igniting the Fire of Prayer Worldwide

A Multitude of United Intercessors and Worshippers
Released in Strategic Prayer for the Glory of God
and the Furtherance of the Gospel Worldwide -
A House of Prayer in Every City in Every Nation

The corporate strength and power of united intercession and worship will allow the spiritual breakthrough that releases the presence and power of God in every nation.

May we passionately seek God for breakthroughs.
A mighty harvest is at our doorstep.
May intercessors arise for such a time as this!

For further information, see www.intercessorsarise.org
www.facebook.com/Prayer.Arise

Services Offered

Intercessors Arise International
Elijah Company, Inc.

Conferences, Seminars, and Training Retreats

Norm and Debbie Przybylski travel worldwide teaching, training, and mentoring together on various themes related to missions and intercession. Topics include prayer, intercession, 24/7 prayer, breaking strongholds, power evangelism, world missions, and missionary training. One of their specialties is their Missionary Training Camps that are known to launch people into their missionary call. For information about hosting an event with Norm and Debbie in your church or city, email them at contact@elijahcompany.org. You can visit both of their websites at: www.elijahcompany.org and www.intercessorsarise.org.

Books, CDs, and other Resources

The Przybylskis have produced resources relating to subjects they teach. They have produced several articles and materials relating to prayer and missions. Norm and Debbie have also produced an Ekballo Elijah Company Training Manual and a set of CDs of their Elijah Company Equipping Seminar. Debbie has written several books and articles on prayer. You will find out more about their training materials on their websites.

Intercessors Arise International Website

Intercessors Arise International has a vision to unite, motivate, train, and network the corporate strength and vision of intercessors worldwide to see a release of God's power and glory for the furtherance of world evangelization. The Intercessors Arise International website is designed for intercessors for this purpose. In this website there are many training and teaching materials related to prayer and intercession. For further information, see www.intercessorsarise.org.

The Elijah Company Website

The Elijah Company website is designed to empower God's people in their calling to reach the nations. This website along with Elijah Company training is designed to equip, inform, train, and mentor God's people by identifying, instructing, imparting, and impelling them to God's designated place of service. See www.elijahcompany.org, for further information.

International School of Prayer

The Intercessors Arise International website includes an International School of Prayer designed for training in intercession and prayer for intercessors in every nation. Included are articles covering a wide variety of topics for those interested in developing their prayer life. This school includes training for beginners as well as seasoned intercessors. The International School of Prayer is informative, biblical, and motivational. If you would like to become a part of this prayer school, see www.intercessorsarise.org. This is still in the developmental stage.

The Intercessors Arise International Network

The Intercessors Arise International Network is designed to ignite the fire of prayer worldwide and is a companion site to Intercessors Arise International. It is interactive, informative, and motivational. In this network a member can connect with others worldwide who are involved in prayer. You will be able to unite with those who are starting 24/7 Houses of Prayer in their city. Discover what God is doing around the world in prayer today and how you can be a part of it. To join this global network, see www.intercessorsarise.ning.com.

Training through the Internet

Norm and Debbie provide teaching and encouragement on prayer or missions through their email training. These email networks are free! Join hundreds worldwide who receive these training emails described below:

- **Intercessors Arise International** is an email publication sent worldwide for intercessors and those interested in growing in prayer and intercession. It is designed to train, encourage, mo-

tivate, inform, and release individuals and prayer groups in intercession. If you would like to subscribe to this free publication, see www.intercessorsarise.org.

- **Intercessors Arise America** is an email publication for intercessors in America. It is similar to the above except occasionally it may have added information regarding issues in America. See www.intercessorsarise.org to subscribe to this free publication.

- **Intercesores Arriba** is an email publication for Spanish-speaking intercessors interested in growing in prayer and intercession. It is designed to train, motivate, and release individuals and prayer groups in intercession throughout the Spanish-speaking world. If you would like to subscribe to this free publication, see www.intercessorsarise.org.

- **Intercessors Arise International facebook page.** This is a page that provides daily encouragement and motivation in prayer and intercession. To join others around the world, "like" this page at: www.facebook.com/Prayer.Arise.

- **Intercessors Arise International Blog.** This blog provides regular training in prayer and intercession. To read this blogsite see: http://intercessorsarise.wordpress.com.

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For a more extended reading list, see www.intercessorsarise.org.

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