



Freedom Outreach



FREEDOM OUTREACH INTERNATIONAL (A MINISTRY TO THE MILITARY)

21-DAYS OF
PRAYER AND
FASTING

SHARPER

JANUARY
8 - 28
2023

"AS IRON SHARPENS IRON, SO A MAN SHARPENS THE COUNTENANCE OF HIS FRIEND." PROVERBS 27:17

Corporate Prayer Initiative & Devotionals 2023

Sunday, January 8th to Saturday, January 28th

There's an old lumberjack story about two loggers that held a contest against each other to see who could chop down the most trees in a day. Both were matched in size, strength and experience and were armed with only one axe each. John kept at the task all day long, not stopping even long enough to take the briefest reprieve. He noticed the steady sound of Pete's axe ceased every hour for a significant break. John smugly kept on, sure that he would well outperform his friend through his constant effort. Yet, at the end of the day, Pete had cut down significantly more trees than John. "How is this possible?" John demanded. "I heard you stop and rest every single hour!" Pete responded calmly, "I did not stop because I needed to rest. I stopped to sharpen my axe."

Saints, each of us needs to take time out to sharpen our axe! Is there anything more frustrating than expending copious amounts of time, energy and resources and not seeing the outcome you had expected? Of course, Holy Spirit aids believers in the work but He typically uses the agency of the Church to render that aid. He chooses us to sharpen one another so that, together, we are as powerful and effective as we can be. In short, if we want to be sharper and more effective, we must be in agreement and we must be together.

This "time out" every January is not a cursory habit but a movement toward individual and corporate breakthrough. It is a required spiritual discipline for every follower of Jesus Christ and will surely serve to sharpen us as individuals and as a people. The Lord fasted and spoke of fasting as something that all disciples would do. "When you fast..." (Matthew 6:16) gives Christ's assumption that His followers would be people who do fasting. The Old and New Testament leaves no question as to whether or not fasting is a powerful part of any prayer life. How you fast is another matter.

Many people opt to do the "Daniel Fast" during this time. Information about this kind of fasting can be found here:

<http://storage.cloversites.com/realitythechurch/documents/21%20Day%20Daniel%20Fast%20Instructions%20.pdf>.)

It is beneficial to mention that fasting should take our minds, our energy, our focus and attention AWAY from food and not toward it. There are always emails and questions about, "What are we allowed to have on the fast?" and "How are you fasting?" Because each person has different convictions, family situations, temptations, metabolisms, food intolerances, blood sugar issues, and so on, exactly how you fast should be uniquely tailored to you. Prayerfully decide ahead of time and share with an accountability partner to keep you on track. Obsessing about what you can/can't have and spending endless hours devising meals that avoid any sense of deprivation misses the point. My personal philosophy (and mine alone) is to follow three simple guidelines:

NO MEAT – NO WHEAT – NO SWEET. I also set aside days for full water-only fasts, because that is my conviction. If there are a few days you cannot fast due to prior commitments, perhaps start a few days early. Only you and the Lord knows what constitutes discipline to your flesh and that is different from mine. Personally, I opt for almost no cooking during a fast, using prepackaged vegetables, soups and such. For me, it is about simplification - freeing up my time from the constant cycle of shopping, meal prep, cooking and cleaning up!

There is one note concerning a change from prior years of FOI corporate fasts. Thanks to feedback from many of our director's, the fast will begin on a Sunday and end with the worldwide prayer call on Saturday, January 28th. Please mark your calendar for this incredibly special time of intercession! The prayer meeting will begin at 6 AM Central - 7 AM EST USA time through Zoom per the information below.

We look forward to hearing testimonies of breakthrough during this time and to forward in 2023 as well-honed instruments in the hand of our God!

Jennie Humann
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(Devotionals were written by Jennie Humann unless otherwise noted.)

Zoom info for worldwide prayer call:

Jacobsgen FOI is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: FOI Worldwide Prayer Meeting
Time: Jan 28, 2023 06:00 Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86598025750?pwd=MWQyMEo4eFY4c0x5TEVoTSs3UEszUT09>

Meeting ID: 865 9802 5750
Passcode: 253386
One tap mobile
+13092053325,,86598025750#,,, *253386# US
+13126266799,,86598025750#,,, *253386# US (Chicago)
Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/kcSSKNhM3t>

Day 1 – Sunday, January 8 – “Anticipation” Read Isaiah 55



My, my, my! How we love the waffles of Belgium, the brötchen in Germany, the sumptuous Korean bakeries (not to mention the goodies created at the Brazilian-Japanese-American fusion bakery operated by our Directors, Cris and Meiko Reyno, in Okinawa, Japan)! How cruel does it seem to begin our 21 days of fasting by focusing on the baked goods that we aren't supposed to be eating right now? It is so tempting because everyone loves the smell of fresh bread and baked goods, hot from the oven!

There is a well-documented phenomenon called, “the cephalic response” where just the sight of food, and especially the smell of baked goods, raises the blood sugar of an individual. The lengthy scientific explanation for this is summed up in one word: expectation. The memory of having experienced something wonderful before brings about a bodily chemical reaction in anticipation of another experience.

Oh, that we would hunger after God this way! Day by day, He sets out the fresh bread of His presence and calls to us, “You who have no money, come, buy and eat!” The more we taste and see that He is good (Psalm 34:8), the less likely we are to be able to pass by unaffected! In the very moment that the leather-back Bible opens or the words of the Bible app light up, our senses should come alive with eager anticipation. He will speak. He will move. He will heal. He will fill. He will encourage. He will save to the uttermost. The good things He has done before, He will do again! We who have experienced Him time and time again should have the greatest excitement to start this time of fasting and dive deeper into His word. The bread of this world is a perishing delicacy but, truly, nothing on earth satisfies like Jesus!

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, awaken in each of us a love for Your word and Your presence! We pray for this time of corporate prayer to begin with unrivaled expectation that You will move in each of our lives, families and ministries. We repent for times that we have passed by as You laid a table for us and bid us to come. Renew us to be people of Your word and people who live in eager excitement to be with You daily. In Your Name, Jesus, amen.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: Brandon Allen - Camp Humphreys, Korea - Pray for divine help and guidance in the ministry here in reaching and discipling people.

I'll never forget the aged, Georgia preacher who chastised his congregation one Sunday saying, "The reason we can't get folk to come visit our church is most of you look like you got baptized in pickle juice!" A few of the congregants looked around at one other and broke into a grin while other expressions became even more "pickled" making it glaringly obvious who the culprits were. Surely our countenances tell on our hearts.

♥

**JOY IS THE
SERIOUS BUSINESS
OF HEAVEN**

C.S. LEWIS

You can always find the joyful person in the group. They are the ones that put problems in perspective, cancel out negativity and keep the temperament of the dooms-dayers from dominating. The joyful Christian trusts the sovereignty of God in difficult circumstances and finds hope in the bleakest situations. In the troubled days we live in, as war rages on in Europe, inflation is seemingly out of hand worldwide, difficulties and uncertainties surround us on every side, we cannot forget the importance of being joyful.

Hebrews 12 tells us that joy was in Christ's focus as He went to the cross on our behalf. Certainly, there was little in those torturous moments to feel joyful about. Yet, because joy was set before Him, He did not dwell on the pain but the joy that was waiting at the end of the pain. *There's a strategic position in joy and it's always forward-facing.*

In this time of renewal and consecration, let us not forget to enter in joyfully. Joy is God's invention, design and provision for us. Even in the most somber moments, joy lifts us up, refocuses us and encourages our hearts. It is the Spirit's fruit inside of us so let us take joy as seriously as our Father does.

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, how we need Your joy in these times. We pray together for all of those among us that struggle with negativity and feelings of depression and ask for a renewal of Your joy in their hearts. We intercede for all of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, their families and those in their communities, who are struggling with suicidal thoughts and emotions today. Lead them to the hope of Christ in us! Help each of us live in the forward motion that joy provides so that they can see You through our lives. Help us to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in our lives so that joy can abound in everything we do, in the words we say, and in the way we interact with one another and the world. In Jesus' Name – amen.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: Gary & Theresa Stalnaker - Spangdahlem, Germany - Pray that the gospel will bear much fruit at Spangdahlem Air Base and community; for clarity and direction as we move into our new building; & pray for a youth minister to lead teens

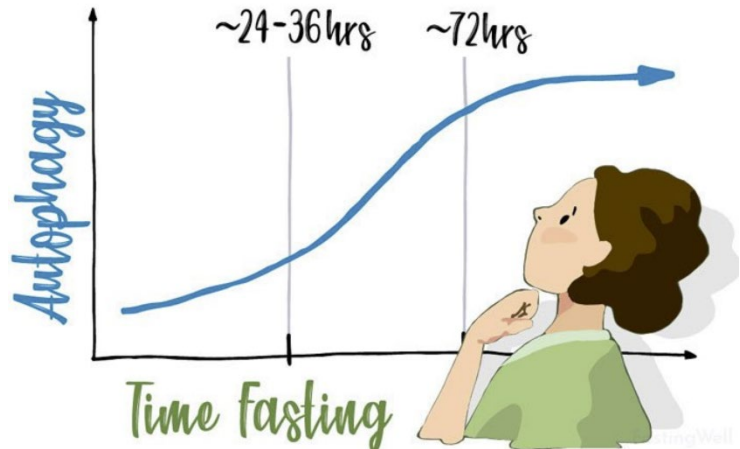
Day 3 – Tuesday, January 10th – “Spiritual Autophagy”

(Read Mark 2:18-22)

Fasting brings out the best in us.

When we fast, every night while we sleep as a minimum, our bodies undergo the most extraordinary process called “autophagy”. During this time, the body conducts a cycle of cellular clean-up and repair. The longer the body goes without the work of solid digestion, the more thorough the cleaning cycle with optimum levels being reached (in a typical, healthy adult) at the 48 to 72-

hour point. (Anyone doing a water-only fast beyond this point should consult their doctor first.) Recently, Alzheimer researches were able to dye corrupted, aging cells and, for the first time, actually watch the process of autophagy during a fast. As autophagy literally means “self-eating”, the assumption had always been that healthy cells consumed the unhealthy cells to process them out of the human body. What they discovered, instead, is that the healthy cells tag unhealthy cells, attack and break them down. Instead of eating them, they shoot them out like a canon during fasting to be discarded as waste.



How extraordinary is God’s design that the healthy parts of a body surround and attack what is unhealthy during a fast? Even more amazing is that Biblical fasting dates back to Moses (over 3,400 years ago) as a discipline of humility and consecration, yet autophagy was not discovered until 1961 and the health benefits of fasting are just now beginning to be understood. It is not difficult to make the correlation of spiritual results being mimicked in our bodies during fasting.

What kind of mental/spiritual/emotional clean-up is happening during a fast? As we consecrate ourselves to the Lord anew and focus upon His internal nourishment instead of that of the world, we surely undergo a spiritual autophagy of sorts, an attack on all that is unhealthy inside of us so that we can be fully renewed!

In Mark, Chapter 2, Jesus teaches His disciples about fasting and uses the analogy that new wine must be placed into new wineskins. When He is doing a new work, the vessel must be prepared to receive it. If we want Him to pour into us, we must undergo renewal first.

We all want to be sharper and more effective in 2023, therefore, we must submit to God’s processes in His prescribed ways, of which fasting is key. The result is that the very best in us will remain, that which supports life, health and stamina both in our physical bodies and spiritually. Lord Jesus, bring out the best in us in every way!

Our Prayer: Lord, prepare us for this time of consecration. As we have focused on anticipation and joy, we now get down to the business of allowing You to do Your clean-up inside of each of us. We long for the fruit of fasting, to be vessels that can receive the new wine of Your Spirit in greater measure! We give You permission, Holy Spirit, You who search hearts and minds, to do all You want and intend during this season. Thank You for this deep cleaning of our bodies, minds, spirits, emotions, relationships and priorities during this time. In Your Name, Jesus, amen.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: John & Betty Cranford (Interim) - Ansbach, Germany - Pray for God sent laborers & divine insight and plans to reach the people for Christ.

Day 4 – Wednesday, January 11 – “Replacement”

(read all of Isaiah 58)

Fasting brings out the worst in us.

Have you ever noticed how the Holy Spirit, through the words He inspired in the Old and New Testament, does not tiptoe around anyone’s feelings but says what He intends quite bluntly? Such is

the case in His instruction on fasting found in Isaiah 58. He first delivers a stern rebuke and then paints a picture of what true fasting looks like. There are striking parallels of replacement between verses 3-4 and verses 6-7 (pardon the paraphrasing).



Instead of strife and debate, loose the bonds of wickedness. Don’t exploit those that report to you but undo their heavy burdens. Hold back the fist of wickedness and let the oppressed go free. Don’t fast in the usual way but share your bread with the hungry. Instead of approaching it as just a day to afflict your soul, use it as an opportunity to bring the poor and outcast into your home. In place of the outward show of piety (bowing your head like a bulrush), do something that shows true humility like covering the needs of someone who lacks. Instead of spreading out on sackcloth and ashes (religious tradition), start a new tradition of reaching out to your own family members. Then these things are promised to you: your light will break forth, you’ll be healed, your righteousness will go before you (your reputation as a Christ follower), the glory of God will have your back. Best of all, the Lord will answer your prayers!

Why should we focus on replacement instead of just going without? Because fasting will cause our flesh to act out like few other things and being intentional about replacement will put it under subjection to the Holy Spirit. Fasting is withholding from self, which causes self to focus *even more* upon itself! Here’s proof: do you feel like going out of your way and helping others when your blood sugar is crashing and you’re afflicted with caffeine withdrawal headaches? It is unlikely. The best way to tame the beast of our own carnality is to do the opposite of what it wants and to focus deliberately on God and others instead of self.

God allows the worst in us to be revealed during a fast so that we can see ourselves as we really are and choose to replace our selfishness and negativity with His love and service to others. Let’s allow the worst in us to be revealed by the Holy Spirit so Christ’s best in us can reign instead!

Our Prayer: Christ Jesus, we choose Your ways. We want true, spiritual breakthrough as a result of this fast. We submit ourselves to You, Lord, and choose to walk in the Spirit so we do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). Change us during this season and use us to do Your works of service to others. We pray that this time of fasting ends with tremendous testimonies of how You used Your people to touch many lives! Open our hearts and our hands to reach those around us, in Jesus’ Name.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: Dan and Andreja Davis - Vilseck, Germany - We are asking God for guidance and divine strategies on how to take the Vilseck and surrounding areas for Christ in 2023. We also ask for unity among us as we undertake this task.

Day 5 – Thursday, January 12 – “Stir Up The Gifts!” (Read 2 Timothy 1:1-7)



She couldn't stop crying.

The Jacob's Generation mission teams had just returned to their homes in Europe and throughout the USA. Everyone's flights had landed and they'd unpacked their luggage and gone back to life as usual. One of the kitchen leaders, Tamika Clark, had come with us from North Carolina (she is a minister who had served previously under Pastor Wade and Tammy Miller). She could not get back to "normal life". After laundering her clothes and putting away her suitcase

she sensed a strong brooding of the Holy Spirit that ended in days of tearful intercession. She sent a group message to the mission team. "The Lord says to pack my bags again. We are going back!" This was the very end of June and we had only been home for a few days. In fact, my luggage had just been delivered by the airline that day and was still packed and sitting by my front door. I texted her back, half-jokingly. "Maybe you're going back but I'm not going until Fall Retreat in October!"

I headed out the door that same day to send an international bank wire and settle a final bill. Of the four banker's offices I could have been called into, the next banker available was a lady in her early 30's that I had never met. She processed the paperwork for me with very little conversation, only a strange look in my direction now and then. At the end of the transaction, she went to hand me the receipt, took a deep breath and said, "The Holy Spirit wants me to tell you to get some rest and get ready because *He's sending you back!* There is an opportunity that He is opening to you and He will not send someone else to do it. You have to go."

I was shocked and speechless. I thanked her, said nothing else, went to my car and sent a group message in reply to Tamika's "word" about going back. I told them what this stranger in the bank had just prophesied!

Just a few days later, I received an email from one of the leaders of NATO Special Operations in Belgium. He asked if we would assemble a team and lead a summer camp for the children and youth of Ukrainian Special Operations soldiers. Through a miraculous series of events, we and most of our ministry team (plus some new faces) were back in Europe a month later to organize and lead a camp for 106 Ukrainian children, teens and a few of their mothers.

Oh, how we need the flow of the gifts of the Holy Spirit! How we need miracles, signs and wonders in our time! Tamika prophesied by faith to our group. A banker took a chance and prophesied to a total stranger who had just walked into her office. Because of the operation of the gifts of the Spirit, we were able to confidently say YES to the opportunity the Lord was opening, though we did not have the time, money or people available when we made the commitment. There could be no doubt that this was the Lord's doing because He confirmed it miraculously through the gift of prophecy.

In our centers and ministries throughout the world, we need a fresh flow of the gifts of the Spirit. There is not a minister among us that does not desire the manifestation of the miraculous. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, we learn that Timothy had gifts but that they needed to be stirred up again. That tells us two things: 1. Our ministers must pray for gifts to be released in our people, as Paul laid hands on Timothy for that purpose; 2. We must pray for dormant gifts to be reactivated and stirred up!

I went back to the bank in October and found the lady that worked there. It was a moment just before the bank closed when there was no one waiting after me. I told her about the ministry we had done and her part in confirming the word of the Lord to us. She began to shake and cry, praising God for the opportunity to be used by Him. How powerful and humbling it is to watch the supernatural gifts of God at work in His people for the furtherance of His Kingdom!

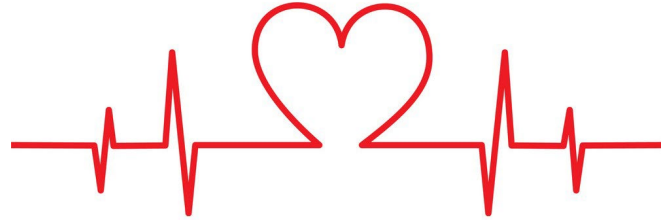
Our Prayer: We say YES and AMEN, Lord Jesus, to all that You have for us! We pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our centers, for the gifts of the Spirit to be manifest and stirred up! We ask for a year of miraculous moments, supernatural leading and provision and for Your people to be activated in each of their gifts and callings. In every way that we have left our gifts stagnant or dormant, we repent and ask for Your forgiveness. Stir us again, each and every heart, so that You may receive glory for the Spirit's gifts operating through us. Amen.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: Angeles City, Philippines - Bong and Sharon Tiru, Clarkview Center - Pray the Lord will send more laborers to the harvest here at COG Clarkview. Aladin Ordillo, Humphrey Center - Pray that those called by God will willingly step up in their ministry calling; that the people will comprehend God's love in the face of life's troubles; for God to financially provide so workers may be fairly compensated and that the students will accept Christ.

Day 6 – Friday, January 13 – “Take Heart”

(Read Matthew 22:34-40)

The human body is comprised of three kinds of muscle: skeletal (the kind of muscle we typically imagine, that which covers our bones), smooth muscle (such as our stomachs and digestive tract) and cardiac (the muscle that is our hearts). Ironically, skeletal and smooth muscle can be manipulated into voluntary movement and they are prone to grow weak and weary. Only the heart muscle cannot be controlled by our wills or brains and it is incredibly immune to fatigue. The heart is composed of cardiomyocytes which have 10 times the density of the mitochondria of any other muscle, making the heart almost impervious to fatigue. In fact, it never truly tires until it stops completely.



It makes sense that the Bible refers to the human heart when giving an analogy of our most inward man, our intents, our desires, and our purpose. When Jesus was questioned by the Pharisee's, they sent a lawyer with the nefarious intent of trying to lure Him into saying something they could use against Him, and asked Him which command was the greatest. In the Jewish religious system of Christ's time, pleasing God came down to works, keeping the law of Moses (and the hundreds of additional customs they had attached to them). Yet, Christ answers the question plainly. The greatest command is not ascribed to outward action but is strictly internal. Love God above all and love others as much as you do yourselves. He then makes a profound statement. All of the laws of God and the words of the prophets hang on this. If you want to please God perfectly, it comes down to love.

Jesus points to the heart. Our literal hearts are the only muscle that cannot be manipulated or controlled by our minds. Spiritually, Christ demonstrates in His answer that, if the Father has our hearts, He has us completely. How perfect that the only thing our brains or will cannot tame is the one thing He demands we surrender to His control. How exactly like God to make the one muscle we cannot control the only one that does not grow weary.

Our Father designed our natural hearts to be a nearly inexhaustible powerhouse of life, one that does not give up, does not grow weary, fights for life and health until it's final beat. Then He draws a parallel in scripture with reference human hearts a whopping 826 times (per the KJV). Perhaps it is not a coincidental that the physical heart and proverbial heart have so much in common considering Christ tells us that the one thing that means everything is to have the love of God reigning in seat of our emotions, character, beliefs and affections – our hearts.

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, in this season of consecration, we pray for our hearts to be recommitted and resubmitted to You. Search our hearts, Holy Spirit, as only You can and show us the ways that we have neglected to allow the love of God to reign in us. Teach us to guard our hearts with all diligence because the issues of life flow outward from it. Purify our hearts, we pray, so that everyone around us will know we are Yours by the way we love God and one another.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: MTTM, Hawaii - Pray for open doors, favor, God sent workers to establish/reestablish ministries in the military communities on Oahu, Hawaii, SHAPE, Belgium, and Poland.

Day 7 – Saturday January 14 – “Concrete Arrows” (Read Acts 16:1-15)



There is a strange network across America that one is unlikely to see except from a singular vantage point: looking down from the sky. They are usually found in very remote locations and in the middle of terrain that is difficult to access.

There, on rocky cliffs and in lonely deserts, are huge concrete arrows. Some are affixed to metal or are part of a small shack. Others have been so eroded by nature that they are barely visible anymore, having been hidden away in areas where severe weather has

battered them. Regardless, they all once served the same purpose, to direct early pilots making transcontinental flights.

You would likely drive past one and never know what it is. You would not recognize it or understand its meaning unless you were looking at it from the right perspective, from the sky to toward earth.

In Acts 16, the mighty Apostle Paul is having a hard time going in the right direction. He is travelling for the first time with his young disciple and helper, Timothy. First, they try to go to Asia to preach but the Holy Spirit “forbade” them. Then, they came through Mysia and tried to go to Bithynia but “the Spirit did not permit them”. We do not have the luxury of details concerning how these Holy Spirit roadblocks manifested but we can only imagine that Paul must have been feeling very perplexed, even doubtful of his mission, as he and Timothy went onward to rest in Troas. What kind of leader takes a young, green minister-in-training and wanders from town to town without finding any opportunities to do ministry? As Paul lay down to sleep that evening, did he doubt his own leadership or ability to hear from God? Yet, that very night, Paul received a vision of a man from Macedonia pleading with him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

Are you a leader? Have you ever doubted that you are hearing from God or discerning the direction you are meant to go? Have you looked at those around you and secretly wondered if they were thinking those kinds of thoughts about your leadership?

There’s something comforting about the realization that Paul was, after all, only human. We don’t know what he was thinking but we can imagine his excitement and relief when the vision soon led to opportunities in Philippi and Lydia’s conversion, along with provision through her that sustained their ministry.

In the 1920’s, massive concrete arrows were put in place for the very few pilots who would make transcontinental flights in those early days of aviation. Across the wild landscape of America, they were signs created for one purpose only, to guide pilots when there were few navigation tools or trustworthy maps. They were signs that would not be seen by anyone except the very few who were already up in the air.

The Lord is guiding you, more than you realize. There's a call, just as sure as Paul's Macedonian, that is just for you and the people you lead. Like the pilots looking down over the landscape, it's a sign for your eyes alone and can only be seen after you've taken off and are already on your way.

Our Prayer: Abba Father, during this season of fasting, may Your leaders see and hear the signs that You are providing. Encourage them along the way that they will know they are going in the right direction. Thank You for adjusting the path of any ministry that has been knocked off course. We pray against disappointment and doubt and we block any way the enemy would try to bring discouragement. Thank You for confirming the calling of the ministers and lay-leaders in Freedom Outreach, in Jesus' powerful name. Amen.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: Eddie & Fatima Fortenberry - Velburg, Germany - Pray for soldiers during the holidays; for the filling of the Holy Spirit; for our MPRL candidates to finish strong and pray for our youth ministry to continue to flourish and grow.

Day 8 – Sunday January 15 – “Unlikely Battle Buddies” Read: 1 Samuel 30:11-20.

Mary Ludwig married local barber, William Hays, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1769. They were an unremarkable New England couple until William was drawn into fighting for American independence from England in the Revolutionary War. Keen to do her part, Mary (also called Molly) ran back and forth to the frontline carrying pitchers of water to refresh the troops in the Battle of Monmouth.



William, a gunner in the Continental Army, became affected by the heat on a brutally hot day in June, 1778. Molly had been running from a spring and back with pitchers in both hands, refreshing the troops and pouring the water over canon barrels to cool them down so they could remain in operation. When William became so weak from heat exhaustion that he could not continue to fight, Molly dropped her pitchers of water and manned his canon until the colonists pressed onto victory.

Her nickname among the troops from that day forward was Molly Pitcher and she is still known as an American patriot and Revolutionary War hero.

In 1 Samuel 30, David is at an all-time low. He was not yet King, as prophesied. His family and those of his men had all been captured. Not knowing the fate of their wives and children, the men spoke of stoning David. David famously encouraged himself in the Lord and God gave him the green light to pursue the Amalekites. Before a battle could commence. David finds an unlikely ally, a famished and dehydrated Egyptian that had been one of the raiders that burned Ziklag with fire. Instead of putting the man to death, David discerned an opportunity. The Egyptian led David and his men to the encampment of the Amalekites where they attacked and overcame the enemy and rescued every single member of their families.

Molly Pitcher was an unlikely hero in the Battle of Monmouth. The Egyptian was an unlikely ally for David and his Army. Often, it is the battle buddy we would have never expected that ends up being there for us in the thick of the war. However, it is human nature to be disappointed by who is *not there* (two-thirds of David’s men were unable to go with him on the rescue) than to focus on the improbable battle buddy that God has provided. May the Lord open our eyes to the people He has called to stand with us during difficult times, even as He encourages us to run toward the front lines, like the fabled Molly Pitcher, in the middle of someone else’s battle.

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, You have told us to pray to the Lord of the Harvest for laborers. We ask You, today, to bring us support people for each one of our centers and ministries around the world. We pray for 2023 to be a year of building up of teams, that each ministry would advance to the front lines with the people they need. Bring each of our directors a battle buddy, prayer partners, and people that are unafraid to jump in and serve. We thank You for cutting orders for people who will be arriving in 2023 to support these ministries and we pray for every area of ministry to be covered by committed, fearless and Godly men and women. Amen.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: Pray for fundraising efforts and support to cover costs of worldwide military ministry, family, youth, children's ministry, and for camp programs to impact the kingdom of God.

Day 9 – Monday January 16 - “Sharper”

(read Hebrews 4:11-13)



Most modern knives and blades are sharpened by a few passes through an electric sharpener but true experts still prefer to use a whetstone. Made up of rock and grit and wet with water, the whetstone is designed to provide friction that hones the edge of a blade. With a whetstone, you decide how fine the grit is, how narrow the angle, how hard the pressure to determine if the knife is as sharp as it can possibly be. With a whetstone, the outcome is all up to you.

The most important aspect of knife sharpening is frequency. The more often you use the blade, the more regularity you will need in taking time to sharpen it. In essence, the more active you are, the more time-outs you have to take.

Hebrews 4 gives us the powerful analogy of the word of God being quick, powerful and sharper than a double-edge sword. To be clear, God’s word never grows dull but we who wield it do. We must take time out to go to the whetstone. We need to allow the adversity of challenges to be the grit that sharpens us. With the water of the Holy Spirit, these moments aside make us bolder, braver, more steady, assured and sharper than ever before.

How much pressure and effort you apply to the whetstone is up to you. A friend used to say, “You have as much of God as you really want.” That does not seem to be true but we know it is. The Lord is always willing to give us more if we pursue more of Him. Like the whetstone, the effort is tied directly to the outcome. The Holy Spirit is waiting to refine us to be as powerful for the Kingdom of God as we can be. It must be our decision to take the time out, go to the Rock of Christ Jesus and allow Him to do the internal work that makes us sharper.

Our Prayer: Father, for those who are struggling to connect meaningfully with You in their prayer time, or to consistently take time out for personal prayer and worship, we pray for a reawakening of the conviction that it is imperative. There are those that have not experienced a true breakthrough in prayer for a long time. Let this be the season of pressing in and experiencing Your power and presence. We repent of our weak attempt of self-sufficiency and ask for renewal in our personal times of prayer and of corporate prayer meetings. Let us go to the whetstone in prayer and allow You to do the work in us that You long to do.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: David & Kate Hamilton - Sigonella, Italy - Pray for transformation that produces radical life change in people for Christ; for God to be a resting platform for that transformation at New Hope; and Holy Spirit fire, water, and oil that changes lives.

Day 10 – Tuesday January 17 - “Over There!” (Read Isaiah 6:1-8)



Have you ever stepped onto a military installation just weeks or days before its gates were closed for good? It is an eerie sight. The once-bustling Patrick Henry Village in Heidelberg, Germany was, at its peak, home to 16,000 American military families packed into just a few square miles of four-story apartment buildings. The constant traffic through the front gate, as people from other Kaserne's crammed onto the base to use its commissary, kept the base at capacity at all times. The last time I was there, just months before it closed, the dark, empty buildings were surrounded by vacant parking lots and the traffic lights were no longer in operation. It looked like a ghost town.

I was there to visit veteran directors, Bishop Willie and Carolyn Courtney. Their nearly three decades in ministry to that military community were legendary. The bases in that area were all but shuttered by that time in late 2012 but the Courtney's had stayed to ensure that there was ministry available for the few dozen families left to close down the base. They were resolved to stay until the end.

During that visit, I was reminded of a popular WWI patriotic song sung among the troops called, "Over There". Songwriter, George Cohen, picked up a newspaper and read the headlines announcing that America would be sending troops overseas as part of the United States' declaration of war against Germany. Cohen began humming a tune that morning as he read the article and later penned part of the lyrics:

"So prepare, say a prayer
Send the word, send the word to beware
We'll be over there, we're coming over
And we won't come back 'til it's over, over there."

Pastor Courtney and his wife, whom he affectionately nicknamed "Rosebud", were staying in Heidelberg until it was over.

In Isaiah, Chapter 6, the Prophet overheard a conversation between the Triune Godhead in a visitation of Heaven's throne room. "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

The man of God did not hesitate but blurted out, "Here am I. Send me!"

Isaiah didn't ask when he would go, how long he'd be gone, where the destination was, whether there was a salary involved, or any of the usual details. He was willing to go under any circumstances and stay as long as he was needed.

There are a few, but not many, who have made a nearly lifelong commitment to this ministry. Some went via orders from the Department of Defense but stayed upon the orders of the Lord. Precious saints like Owen and Kaye Martin in Gaeta, Italy, Willie and Carolyn Courtney in Heidelberg, Germany, among others, have given decades of their lives on the field simply because God called. They came back when the last ship left the port and when the last soldier was transferred off of the base.

There is no doubt that these couples endured countless crises, heartaches, uncertainties, wipe-out troop rotations and God only knows what else. However, they also went through the joys of being a stand-in Grandma and Grandpa to countless families as new babies were welcomed. They were the home away from home for lonely soldiers and sailors. They were fixtures of their communities and spiritual parents to innumerable military personnel and civilians.

We do not highlight their ministries merely to laud their achievements but as a catalyst to cry out to God for another generation of servants who are willing to go, to plant new works, to do whatever needs to be done to reach our nations military wherever they are stationed or deployed. Oh God, raise up people who are willing to say, “Send me!” May these people and this ministry of Freedom Outreach International be the ones who say, “We won’t come back ‘til it’s over, over there.”

Our Prayer: Lord God, how we need ministers who will go! We pray for locations like SHAPE, Belgium, the many military bases and veteran communities in Hawaii, and areas like Naples, Italy where new ministries must be birthed. We pray for every center that is undergoing a leadership change or will in 2023. We ask You, Lord of the Harvest, to send laborers and leaders! Thank You for raising up men and women who hear and heed Your calling, in Jesus’ Mighty Name, amen.

In Our Prayer Guide Today: Ryan and Angie Miller - Aviano, Italy - Pray for continued renovations funding for the new building; a renewed sense of grace and unity in the body to connect, equip, empower and send that God’s kingdom be enlarged and He is glorified.

Day 11 – Wednesday January 18 – “Oh Manna!” Read: Exodus 16:13-21 and John 6:26-40



In the wilderness, God provided bread on the ground every morning for Israel. It was fine as frost and was awaiting the Israelites each morning as they arose. From scripture, we know that the substance could be baked and boiled but it could not be stored beyond the morning or it would spoil (with the exception of the Sabbath, when it would keep).

In Psalm 5, David sings to the Lord, “My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up.” He knew where to go first thing every morning, to collect the manna, the bread of the Lord’s presence, and to be fed spiritually before embarking upon anything else for the day.

January gives us a chance for a new beginning, a fresh start. It isn’t as though this time of fasting is going to miraculously undo every bad food decision made in 2022 or over the holidays, but being intentional about what is consumed in the body also helps us think intentionally about what we are consuming in our minds, hearts and spirits.

Every morning, the manna was there. It never failed to be available to the people who would go and gather it. Every morning, the manna was enough. No one was over filled and no one went hungry. Every morning, the manna satisfied. The people were sustained by its nutrients.

We must go to meet with the Lord every morning. For some, it is the moment they awake. For others (such as the households with lively toddlers that rise with the sun) it is at quiet moments later on. Most people will find that the day will get away and the moments will spoil if they are not seized.

Let this season be a reset of that morning gathering, feasting, deliberately setting time aside to meet with the Lord. He is faithful and is waiting for us to reestablish (or for some, to establish for the first time) those morning meetings with Him. Jesus told us plainly that He is the manna, the bread that came down from Heaven.

³² Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴ Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.” ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

May we be the ones who know the Lord’s presence and fill our spirits with Him every day. Lord, give us this bread always.

Our Prayer: Jesus, Messiah, how we love Your word and Your presence! How we want to love You even more! This time and season, help those who are struggling to regularly make time with You. You know the demands of military service, ministry and just the challenges in each day. Thank You for the conviction that we simply must set aside time each day and meet with You. Strengthen and encourage those who are struggling and help those who are consistent in their devotion to have renewed passion and freshness. Thank You for Your incredible faithfulness to us, morning by morning!

Today in Our Prayer Guide: Rod and Steffi Nyman - Heilbronn, Germany - Pray for the upcoming Easter revival Rod will preach in his home town in Wataga Illinois and for a new church to be planted.

by Mike Jenkins

Calling precedes greatness. By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Hebrews 11:8 NAS



We may refer to God’s revealing Himself to Abraham as Abraham’s “calling.” Our verse says, “By faith Abraham, when he was called ...” All greatness may be traced to one’s calling, and so with Abraham.

One interesting thing about the call to Abraham was the promise of greatness. God said to Abraham, “I’m going to make you a great name,” (See Genesis 12:2). And yet the very thing that made God angry with regard to the Tower of Babel was that people were going to make a name for themselves. Is there a contradiction?

God is not against greatness—as long as He is the architect of it. He resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (1 Pet. 5:5). But if we are thinking of making ourselves great and building a name for ourselves, we will be fighting against God. One of the most common temptations for a Christian, especially if he is involved in Christian service, is to think he must build up a certain image—or build up his name, as one would do in show business. The parallel between show business people and some Christians in the Lord’s work is one of the most ominous signs of twenty-first-century Christianity.

God promised to make Abraham a great name, but not before Abraham was ready. Indeed, Abraham had much to go through before he was ready.

As you read these lines, God may be calling you to greatness. You may think you are the most insignificant person on earth. But God delights in making His people great—provided that He is the One doing it. He created all things “out of nothing” and continues to make men great who hold no promise whatsoever.

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, we ask for You to prepare us each with humble, servant hearts like Abraham, that we could be regarded in Heaven as a friend of God. We lift up those who are just beginning to discern and accept Your calling. For all of those who will embark on MIP and MPRL this year, we pray for a special grace for the discipline, patience and sacrifice they will need to commit to. For those who have never realized their potential in the Kingdom of God, birth within them Your vision for what they can be. Forgive us when we have adopted worldly means of accomplishing spiritual things. Help us to live as the leaders, and followers, that You mean us to be. Amen.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: – Lance and Lisa Falagan - Camp Casey, Korea - Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to be open and active in our church; for revival and salvations.

Day 13, Friday, January 20 – “Great Followers”

Read: Luke 5:1-11



What we know of Simon Peter, the fisherman-turned-apostle, is that he was brash, zealous, impulsive, strong-willed and, at times, spoke before he thought through what he should say. He was a common, imperfect man and on one unlikely day, a spiritual teacher in Israel asked to borrow his boat as a platform to preach a sermon.

Everything changed that day.

One can debate the moment that Peter recognized the Messiah and decided to forsake all to follow Him. It does not seem to be the moment he first met Jesus or even when the Lord got into his boat and asked him to push it out a little way from the shore so that the crowd could hear Him. Perhaps the sermon Jesus preached was not enough to convince Peter because he still tried to reason with the Lord when Jesus told him to cast his net again. It may even be possible that Peter was not fully prepared to abandon all after the miraculous catch of fish. I believe it was, instead, hearing the words of the immortal, all-powerful, source of life Himself say two little words: “Follow Me.”

As much as this great military ministry needs great leaders, we need great followers. We need people who hear the Lord’s voice when they connect with a ministry center and make a decision to commit and serve there. It must be a heart conviction that they are following the voice and will of Christ Himself and not just following the man and woman of God or, worse, just “attending services” whenever it is convenient.

There is not a leader amongst us whose heart does not pine thinking, “Oh Lord, what we could accomplish if we had just a few faithful, completely sold-out people!” This standardized Western church experience must be replaced with committed Kingdom followership if we are to make the eternal impact, and the authentic disciples, that Christ intends for us to make.

Our Prayer: Father God, we pray for leaders, always, but we also pray for true Christ-followers in every center, every ministry, every nation, every MilCom, every ship, every deployed brigade, in every foxhole, in every field training, every hanger, and every barracks and military housing area. We pray for followers in every chapel, every VFW, every VA hospital and on every base. We ask You, Lord, to raise up an exceedingly great Army of brave men and women who are fully committed to the cause of Christ to meet the challenges and potential of the days we are in. We pray for 2023 to be the year of making true, committed disciples and fishers of men to make other fishers of men.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: - Joseph and Evangeline Carranza- Vicenza, Italy - Pray for souls here to be saved; revival in believers; discernment and wisdom on pastors; healing for marriages; financial provision; and laborers for children and youth.

By Gloria Ross



So many Christians may really wonder what will faith and prayer will actually accomplish. If you could focus on one thing that would transform your prayer life, it would be this: staying, as much as possible, in *acknowledgment of the presence of the Living God*. That, alone, will absolutely set you free, strengthen you in the Lord and will make you a dynamic testimony to others.

As a outcome of that level of intentional prayer, there are four promises that will result:

1. **Provision:** It is promised, in God’s Word, that when you pray you will have the **PROVISION THAT YOU NEED**. The Word of the Lord clearly states that He will supply our every need, according to John 14:14, “If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.” So, why not ask today and see if the Lord will do it for you?
2. **Power:** Faith and prayer will absolutely **BIND THE FORCES OF EVIL** for you. Matt.18:18, “Verily I say unto you, ‘Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’” What a promise! Through prayer, there is power as all of Heaven agrees with your prayers.
3. **Prohibition** of the enemy’s advancement: Your prayers can directly **BAR THE GATES OF HELL** – Eph. 6:17–18, “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” Stay there on the watchman’s wall of prayer and bar the enemy of your soul from entering into any situation of your life.
4. **Pouring Out:** Can prayer **OPEN THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN** for you on a massive scale? Yes, it can! II Chronicles 7:14, “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” Over and

over in that scripture the Lord says, if you will (humble yourselves, pray, seek, turn), I will (hear, forgive, heal). He is willing to pour out upon His people if we obey and pray.

Call upon the Lord of Glory today and see that, surely, He will answer!

Our Prayer: Oh, my Lord and my God, reveal to Your people what we are leaving on the table when we do not pray! Convict our hearts to go more often, more deeply, more fervently and effectually, and more sincerely, into Your presence in prayer. We choose now to go boldly before Your throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace today!

Today In Our Prayer Guide: Andrew and Rhonda Provazek - Kaiserslautern, Germany - Please join us in prayer as we move towards our specific growth goals in attendance and Operation Legacy, our campaign to finish paying for our building!

Day 15 – Sunday, January 22 - “Authority”

Read Mark 1:21-28

In U.S. Navel Institute Proceedings, the magazine of the Naval Institute, Frank Koch illustrates the importance of obeying authority. Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. Frank told the story as such:



I was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on the bridge as night fell. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities. Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing reported, "Light, bearing on the starboard bow."

"Is it steady or moving astern?" the captain called out. The lookout replied, "Steady, Captain," which meant our vessel was on a dangerous collision course with that ship. The captain then called to the signalman, "Signal that ship: 'We are on a collision course, advise you change course twenty degrees.'"

Back came the signal, "Advisable for you to change course twenty degrees."

Getting angry, the captain said, "Send: '*I'm a captain*, change your course twenty degrees.'"

"*I'm a seaman second-class*," came the reply. "You had better change course twenty degrees."

By that time the captain was furious. He spat out, "Send: '*I'm a battleship!* Change your course twenty degrees!'"

Back came the flashing light with the message, "*I'm a lighthouse.*"

We changed course.

In New Testament times, Israel had no shortage of spiritual teachers. The Pharisees, Sadducees and Teachers of the Law did their utmost to ensure that the public knew that they were in charge and had power over the people. Yet, in the book of Mark, Chapter One, we see in the earliest days of Christ's ministry that the people already knew He was different from those who tried to impose their own authority. The people were amazed at Jesus' teachings because He taught with authority and had dominion even over evil spirits.

Jesus did not need a PR campaign. No one needed to talk up His portfolio. He showed up without the fanfare and demonstrated the Kingdom of God through His teaching and actions. Through that, everyone knew that He was not like the rest of the spiritual leaders around them. He had authority.

Walking with Jesus gives us access to that same spiritual authority. The devil flees, demons tremble, evil spirits and principalities are evicted, strongholds crumble and manmade religion

falls to its knees before the Lord of Glory. The enemy cannot rob us of this great inheritance but he can deceive us into forfeiting it ourselves if we do not evoke our birthright as those born from above.

The Light of Christ stands as the lighthouse to this fallen planet. The world, the flesh and the devil can scream all they want to try and get us to change our course. If we abide in Christ, our authority is His authority and *He will not be moved*.

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, what power belongs to You! We are in awe of Your greatness! You told us plainly that all authority in Heaven and on Earth belongs to You. Forgive us when we have not trusted You completely or have not walked in the authority we have in You. In Your Name, Jesus Christ, we evoke the authority of God against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. We recommit ourselves to standing and walking in Your authority, Lord, and praying as people who know Whose we are. Amen.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: Marvin and Linda Palacios - Baumholder, Germany - Continue to pray for an answer going forward as to who the new owners will be and what they will require of us and whether we will have to relocate or remain here. Also pray for new directors to replace us when we depart on March 2023. We ask for true spiritual warriors and leaders in the church willing to pay the price that God asks from us.

Day 16 – Monday, January 23 – “Will You Build Your Faith”?

By Gloria Ross



Read Luke 17:1-10

In many restaurants (at least, in the USA) you will find a salad bar and build your own salad or a buffet and build your own plate. We will even build our own pizza. Papa John's actually has a pizza with everything on it called, "The Works". There is nothing left out on that pizza but every single possible ingredient has been added.

But, how do you build your faith?

In Luke 17:5, the apostles said unto the Lord, "Increase our faith." They realized that they did not have everything they needed to live the way Christ was teaching. We must be committed to the process of building our faith because it does not happen overnight. However, when your faith is built up, you will be strengthened to overcome any obstacle that you will ever encounter.

A few direct scriptures that will help you to build this mighty powerhouse called faith are as follows:

1. You MUST read the Bible! Romans 10:17, So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.
2. You MUST believe in the power of God and not man's wisdom. 1 Corinthians 2:5, That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.
3. You MUST draw yourself closer to the Lord in prayer intimately and in secret. Matthew 6:6, "But thou, when you pray, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which sees in secret shall reward thee openly."
4. You MUST receive the Holy Spirit so that you may build your faith. Jude 1:20, But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,
5. You MUST have faith in His Blood. Romans 3:25, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; (It is not our righteousness because our righteousness is as filthy rags. It is not by works of righteousness that we are saved but by His mercy and grace.)

Your faith will be tried. Your faith in healing and the other gifts of the Spirit will be also tried. Your faith in every single way will be tried but you MUST remember, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:" 1 Peter 1:7.

There is an old saying, "Prayer is the key to Heaven but faith unlocks the Door!" SO NOW if you put Faith and Prayer together...All of Heaven will be opened unto you! Simply ask and receive, today, that your joy may be full.

The Lord has set before us everything that we need to be people of faith but it is up to us to take what He gives us and build our faith up.

Our Prayer: Lord, in the times we live, we need to be people of faith! We are asking for Your help for every believer in this movement of Freedom Outreach, Ministry to the Military, to be built up in the most holy faith. We pray that this season of prayer and fasting will stir up every heart to desire greater personal faith. Lord, we pray, like the disciples, increase our faith! We know that without faith it is impossible to please You and we desire to be pleasing to You above all things. Thank You for awakening faith within Your people and convicting our hearts to be built up and to build up others in faith. In Jesus' Name.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: Charlie and Kathy Bryant - Ft Gordon, GA - Pray increased fruitfulness and blessing as result of the community outreach efforts; revival in the youth that are coming.

Day 17 – Tuesday, January 24 – “Never Not A Soldier”

Read: 2 Timothy 2:1-7

Army Sgt. Mary Ehiarinmwian was off duty. She was driving to the base that day in 2020 when the car in front of her lost control, collided with a road sign, flipped over and landed upside down. Ehiarinmwian pulled over and rushed to the car, assessed the driver for injuries and pulled the woman to safety as smoke billowed from the wreckage. She said later, “I thought the car was going to burst into flames. But, at the time, I didn’t think of the danger.” The only thing on her mind was making sure the driver was safe.



Sgt. Ehiarinmwian was trained as a soldier. She responded as a soldier. She rushed toward the danger to save a life because, in her mind, a soldier does what a soldier is trained to do, on or off duty.

What she didn’t know is that the life she saved was of another soldier from her unit. In 2020, Sgt. Mary Ehiarinmwian was honored as the USO Soldier of the Year for her bravery but, that on the day of the accident, after the emergency services took over, she calmly went on with her usual responsibilities not wanting or expecting any recognition for her actions.

The Apostle Paul instructs his protégé, Timothy, to endure suffering as a good soldier. He goes on to say, in Verse 4, “No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer.” In short, a soldier has a singular focus and that is pleasing the One you report to.

There is never a moment that we are “off duty” in representing Christ. We never end our time of service or retire from being a soldier of the Lord. Like this valiant woman, we must be so focused that we run toward the mess and danger for the sake of those God has called us to. As in this story, there in the wreckage was another soldier in need. You may be surprised at the people the Holy Spirit leads you to help.

Serving people, if we are honest, is almost always inconvenient. We often have the best opportunities at the absolute worst times! Like the Good Samaritan, God’s true people show up for those whom others pass by.

In 2023, let us be ready to be used by God in unusual ways. May we be always-ready soldier and the first on the scene when someone else is in need. Let us pray for the Lord to place us at the center of someone’s urgent need. Who’s to say, it may be us one day that desperately needs another soldier standing by.

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, we want to be used by You. If we are living lives devoid of miraculous moments, it isn't that You have not provided them but that we are either not discerning them or are deliberately looking away. Help us to be good soldiers in Your Army, always ready to help those that others pass by. Awaken us to the needs around us and use us in miraculous ways this year. We pray that we end this year with a multitude of testimonies of how You led us to meet a need at just the right time. May the world around us see what You are doing through Your people in this ministry and acknowledge Your undeniable goodness. Amen.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: Greg and Tamara Lunn - Osan, Korea - Pray with us for a Holy Spirit outpouring to touch this peninsula; revival in God's people; divine intervention for building repair issues and God to touch landlord's heart for resolution.

By Gloria Ross

Have you ever been tempted to give up on something you have been praying about, perhaps for years?

There was a woman, a widow, in the Bible that went to an unjust judge to be avenged of her adversary. The judge denied the woman her request yet she continued to present her case. Time and time again, the judge saw the woman coming with the same old issues. Finally, he heard her case and was moved to help her situation.



We can find ourselves, often, in difficult circumstances that make us feel like God is not seeing or responding to us. When God does not answer our prayers the first time we pray, it seems that He may not even be interested in hearing us. It is natural to experience discouragement and be tempted to give up. Yet, the Lord is looking for our continued faith.

In Daniel, Chapter 10, the prophet humbled himself in a specific fast. He ate no meat or pleasant food (it is here that we glean instructions for the “Daniel Fast”) and prayed for three weeks. He had an angelic visitation on Day 21 and was told that his prayers were answered on the very first day but that demonic forces had prevented a response. There was spiritual warfare manifesting in the heavenlies as Daniel fasted and prayed. What would have happened if he had given up? Daniel’s tenacity in prayer resulted in a spiritual victory.

There are many reasons why our prayers seem to go unanswered. Our own sincerity may be tested as we wait. Don’t give up because the very next prayer you pray may be the one that breaks through!

The enemy of your soul wants you to lose the determination that is needed to keep holding on until your prayers are answered.

Our Father God is not an unjust judge. He hears the cry of His people but the Lord also teaches us that, like the widow, we must be persistent. Be encouraged and don’t lose hope! Go to God over and over and over again if that is what it takes to get your prayers answered. Be persistent and pray effectually with intense fervency and your prayers will avail much! (James 5:16.)

Remember the acronym: P.R.A.Y, Powerful Results Are Yours!

Our Prayer: Lord, teach us to tarry in prayer and to faithfully bring our case before You in faith, being sure You will respond. Thank You, Jesus, that You ever live to intercede for us and never tire of praying to the Father on our behalf! We lift up the needs of our Center Directors and join with them in presenting their case in the Throne Room of Heaven! May this time of consecration be the breakthrough in each of the FOI ministries, in Jesus' Name.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: Wade and Tammy Miller - Ft. Polk, LA - Pray for a Holy Spirit outpouring and anointing to reach this community for Christ; growth of youth ministry; financial provision.

(Afghanistan account courtesy of the USO: <https://www.uso.org/stories/3088-5-soldiers-stories-of-army-bravery>)

On a hot summer night in Wardak province, Afghanistan, in 2019, a special operations U.S. Army Ranger raid force began an assault on a compound with enemy targets.

As enemy fighters fired back at U.S. forces and the Rangers began to close in on a target, there was a huge explosion, injuring three Rangers. Amidst rounds of machine gun fire, rockets and grenades, two Ranger combat medics, Army Staff Sgt. Charles Bowen and Army Sgt. Ty Able, leapt into action to save six American lives that night.

Pulling the critically wounded behind cover from enemy fire, Bowen and Able quickly began performing advanced surgical techniques and providing Rangers with blood infusions with supplies they had on hand.



While the medics stabilized some of the injured, unfortunately, two of the injured Rangers were losing blood, and fast. Unfortunately, Bowen and Able had already utilized all of their blood units for other injured service members. Knowing that this was a life-or-death matter, the two medics decided to attempt the Ranger O-Low (ROLO) Titre protocol, in which a volunteer transfers his or her blood to the injured Ranger on the battlefield, with the assistance and equipment from the medics.

The procedure at the time was relatively new and had never been done in the middle of combat, but Bowen, Able and a volunteer blood donor were able to pull it off. (Photograph above is of the actual event as it unfolded. Photo credit, U.S. Army.)

The men did not hesitate but employed an emergency technique that had never before been used in battle. Blood was transferred, man to man. The imagery is striking and gives new meaning to the term, “Blood Brothers”.

Jesus commands us, in John 15, to love one another as He loves us. He tells us that no greater love has any man but he that lays down his life for a friend. It would be within our selfish nature to point out that Jesus was alluding to Himself and foretelling of His death on the cross, yet, we cannot forget the context He spoke the words was within a teaching on Christian love and brotherhood.

Seldom, if ever, will we have to make a sacrifice like the soldiers on the field in Afghanistan that day, opening our own veins to literally save the life of another. Yet, He asks us to lay down our lives daily, to pick up our crosses and to offer our bodies as living sacrifices. What does that look like at any random time? Our lives consist of days, hours and moments, all of which (for a true

disciple) belong to Christ. When He calls us to lay down our lives, it is giving up those moments to serve someone else in whatever life-giving way the Holy Spirit directs.

C.S. Lewis once said, *“There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.”*

In the Body of Christ, we are brought into a sacred, eternal brotherhood. As we are called to Christ, we are called to one another. Like the soldiers there on the front lines in Afghanistan, we are the medics to the poor, the weary, the wounded, and the broken. If we truly love God, we will love one another sacrificially and become true brothers by our Lord’s powerful, healing Blood.

Our Prayer: Lord Jesus, we ask You for a renewed commitment to the Body of Christ, to the individuals in our lives and ministries. We pray that You will touch our stony and selfish hearts and fill them with compassion and authentic love. We repent of living our lives in any other way than You have demonstrated and commanded. Fill us, again, with the same overflowing love that caused the Father to give His one and only Son so that we could have eternal life. We also pray for the veterans in our communities, for people and plans to reach and involve them like never before. We pray against the plague of veteran suicide and ask that You intersect our lives with those at risk. Lord, use us to be Your heart, hands and feet this year in ways that go beyond what we have ever experienced. We say today, we are willing to lay down our time, our lives, for those that You are calling us to. In Your Name, amen.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: Alejandro and Dinorah Velazquez - New Life CC, Puerto Rico - Pray for open doors and anointing to reach and minister to families here and for Joe and Mary Bender on Ft. Buchanan.

By Gloria Ross



Experienced fishermen, those like Peter, James and John that were used to fishing at night, were familiar with the power of storms that happen in the dark of night at sea. Yet, these same disciples were terrified by a storm when Jesus was with them. It must have been one powerful tempest!

Waves beat the ship and it filled with water. Jesus was in the back of the ship sleeping. He had told them that they were going to the other side and He was there with them physically. But the storm was so violent that they were sure they would not make it.

The disciples thought that Jesus did not even care that they were about to go under. They sought to wake Him, saying, “Master, don’t you care that we’re about to perish?” Jesus awoke and arose. He rebuked the wind and said to the storm, “Peace be still.” Immediately, the wind stopped and suddenly there was a great calm! He then turned to rebuke them for their lack of faith. He put the fear of God into them as they turned to one another and asked, “Who can this be, that even the wind and sea obey Him!”

Do you feel as if you are on a ship and are sinking in life’s ocean? As a follower of Christ, He is there on the boat! Are you tempted to think that Jesus is sleeping on the job and is unconcerned about your situation?

It is not Jesus who needs to wake up, but us. We must awaken our faith to His promises, His unfailing presence and His willingness to get us to the other side, right where He has been directing us to go.

Our Prayer: “Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.” (Psalm 57:8.) Lord, we awaken ourselves to Your word and Your promises! We wake the dawn up out of the dark night of difficulty. “I wait for the Lord; my soul does wait, and in His word I put my hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning—more than watchmen wait for the morning...” (Psalm 130:5-6.) We choose to trust You, Lord, and we awaken our faith to believe, heed and act upon Your word, regardless of what our eyes tell us. We refuse to walk by sight but walk with our spiritual eyes, the true sight, of faith. Teach us, Lord, to pray Your word and to trust what You say above all else. If we are to be sharper in 2023, we need our faith renewed and firmly planted in Your truths. Thank You for awakening this within us, calming the storms and getting us to the other side, in Jesus’ Name.

Today In Our Prayer Guide: Cris and Mieko Reyno - Okinawa, Japan - Pray for favor and anointing to reach the harvest here and a mighty move of the Holy Spirit.

Day 21 – Sunday, January 28 – “The Best Days”

Read Matthew 28:16-20

Years ago, a soldier was on his way to report to duty and was tragically killed in a head-on collision. Last year, his parents gave a memorial gift in his name to Jacob’s Generation, the ministry that serves Freedom Outreach military children, youth and families. The funds helped provide sponsorships for youth to go to the European summer camps in June, 2022.



In the middle of camp week, the students were given an opportunity to hear about the volunteers that spend so much of their own time and personal finances to come serve there. They also had a moment to hear some of the stories of churches and individuals who support the camps. We call this, “Gratitude Time”. On the table at the back of the room were empty note cards. The students were encouraged to write personal notes of thanks to the people that make camp happen for them. This practice inspires the students to be giving people themselves, helps

them appreciate and understand the effort that has been made on their behalf and makes them feel incredibly special that total strangers would care enough to serve and give so they can have a week of summer camp.

One Middle School boy made sure that the family who gave in honor of their soldier was mentioned. He wrote, “I am so sorry that you lost your son. Thank you so much for giving to the camps in his memory.” Then, at the bottom of the card, he wrote an aside, almost as a P.S.:

“Today was one of the best days of my life.”

What an honor to be able to be there for the best days. It is also an honor to be there for the worst days, the day that the parent leaves on extended deployment, the day that the High School student has to say goodbye to their friends and start over at a new school in an unknown place, even the day that the family gets tragic news that their soldier isn’t coming home again. These are the hard moments, the times we feel inadequate to shoulder such a burden or ease such a pain. In the midst, we must remember what an honor it is just to get to show up in people’s lives on the days that are the very worst but also on the very best days. It is the gift of being present.

Jesus ended His instructions that we call “The Great Commission” with these words: *“I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

Emmanuel is still God with us. He shows up every day, every moment and every time without fail. The gift of being present is one He never fails to give. We have the tenacity to keep showing up in people’s lives because He is already there, waiting for us to partner with Him in His ministry.

I sent the young mans note card to the family that gave. On the day they received it, they sent me a text message that the tears had not stopped flowing since they read the boy's words. In memory of their son, they gave one of the best days to someone else's son. We just got to show up somewhere in between and watch how God works. Those, for us, are the best days too.

Our Prayer: Lord, we bring You our children and all of the kids whose lives we intersect with around the world through Freedom Outreach. We pray for their families to be healthy, safe and Christ-honoring. We pray for their souls to be saved and for their minds and spirits to be well-disciplined. In the Name of Jesus, we command all of the forces of darkness to cease and desist concerning them and we speak life, hope and a future over them. We claim them for Your Kingdom purposes and thank You for Your special touch and anointing upon them. We ask for dedicated people to effectively serve in nursery, children and youth ministry in each of our centers around the world and at each and every Jacob's Generation event. To God be the glory for the things He has done and will do - amen and amen!

Today In Our Prayer Guide: - Pray for anointing on Strategic Partner Churches in the USA to reach the military harvest; God's help to begin new ministries in strategic MilComs and for Frank & Sue Alcorn. (Southern Command and Veterans.)