

CALL TO PRAYER

NOVEMBER 2021



SHAMELESS BOLDNESS

It's easy to feel powerless to make a difference in a world of pain, disease, injustice, and other forms of brokenness. But as Christians, we are not without power. The Lord's Prayer exhorts us to invite God's Kingdom, where the fullness of His goodness and justice exists, to come here; to ask God to provide for our physical needs; and to request His protection against spiritual warfare. But Jesus goes even further: "Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I don't have anything to offer him.' Then he will answer from inside and say, 'Don't bother me! The door is already locked, and my children and I have gone to bed. I can't get up to give you anything.' I tell you, even though he won't get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his friend's shameless boldness, he will get up and give him as much as he needs" (Lk. 11:5–8, CSB).

What provokes the friend's abundant provision? The audacity of the one who asks. God loves to respond to our shameless boldness—not because of anything we've done, but according to His compassion. Scripture repeatedly teaches that prayer is a powerful means for effecting change, and this has been lived out in The Alliance from the very beginning of our movement.

Skye Jethani puts it this way: "We are not merely passive set pieces in a prearranged cosmic drama, but we are active participants with God in the writing, directing, design, and action that unfolds. Prayer, therefore, is much more than asking God for this or that outcome . . . In prayer, we are invited to join him in directing the course of his world."

When we feel overwhelmed by our world's brokenness, may we have the audacity to intercede for God's provision, intervention, and salvation. Let us pray as Jesus did with the persistence that Jesus urged. This is how we've been invited to participate in God's renewal of our world.

adapted from an article by Spencer Sweeting, pastor, North Springs Alliance Church, Colorado Springs, Colo.

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THE POWER OF FERVENT PRAYER

Over the past 130+ years, God has raised up men and women within The Alliance who have had a profound impact on Christ's Kingdom. Below are just three examples of those who have helped usher hundreds—perhaps thousands—into a saving knowledge of Jesus.

When the Japan field closed during the Great Depression, Alliance missionary Mabel Francis prayed, and God told her to stay. She respectfully resigned from the C&MA, trusting God for all her needs. At the outset of World War II, the U.S. and Japanese governments offered her safe passage home. Again, Mabel prayed, and she remained in Japan—and was interned. At the end of the conflict, she was there to welcome the C&MA back. Upon her retirement at age 83, Mable received the highest civilian honor that can be conferred by the Japanese government for her contribution to the welfare of the Japanese people.

William Christie is considered the “Indiana Jones” of early Alliance missions in Asia. His exploits for the gospel read like a spy novel. During China's Boxer Rebellion, which claimed many missionary lives, William was often called

upon to make decisions concerning the fate of his colleagues. His fervent prayers helped him to know exactly what to do. William also opened large portions of western China and the Kingdom of Tibet to the gospel.

E. B. “Daddy” Whiteside was called the “Praying Man of Pittsburgh.” When neighbors opposed a plan to expand his home so it could serve as a meeting place for a new church, he prayed until he clearly heard from God: “Stop praying and go downstairs.” “Walk outside.” “Turn left.” “Keep walking.” “Turn here.” Soon he was in front of a new property available for a rental price less than he could have imagined!

History is full of Christians who took great risks for God and were rewarded with tremendous victories. Almost without exception, these were preceded by long hours of prayer, which requires time and an intimacy with God that few of us have. But if we are willing to sacrifice our comfort, exchange some precious sleep for a quiet vigil before His face, and truly desire to listen, then we can have what we desire. Our God is still a God who speaks.

I adapted from an *Alliance Life* article by John Soper

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