

“Praying for Justice”

Dear Friend,

Prayer provides the key to unlock an alternative future to one that often seems out of control. It is prayer that breathes the life of the Spirit into the present culture of death. It is prayer that stirs within us the faith we need to bring forth justice for the poor, homeless and elderly what a privilege it is to talk to the Lord of the universe. Jesus said, **“Ask and it shall be given to you, seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you”** (Matthew 7:7).

Those who have sold out to the status quo and made peace with injustice, benefiting economically from social injustices, will have neither the desire nor the ability to be powerful prayer warriors.

When you and I engage in the power of prayer, Revelations 8:4-5 says that, **“The smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on earth; and there were peals of thunder, voices, flashes of lightening and an earthquake.”**

This scene reverses what usually happens with heaven making decisions that are acted out on earth. The prayer warriors referred to as the saints have intervened. The uninterrupted flow of events has ceased. The unexpected has become suddenly possible because prayer warriors like you have prayed in faith.

When two or three have agreed together then the shadow of hopelessness will pass. **“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).

History belongs to prayer warriors who dare to believe, agree and stand on the promises of God. They are people who persevere for justice in spite of the obstacles and the odds. They know what is right according to Scripture and as a result, will engage in prayer that brings forth actions of hope and help.

Prayer warriors who pray in the power of the Spirit know that prayer is never a private act. It is not vocalized worry. True prayer comes from the heart where a victory has resulted from an interior battlefield in which Christ now reigns supreme. In such a life, inner liberty results where the prayer warrior is free to act in obedience to God’s Word and not the expectations of others. The dark shadow of the status quo is rendered obsolete as obedience to Christ reigns supreme.

Without a life immersed in prayer, our social activism and acts of charity will only result in self-justifying good works. Unless the rivers of living waters, resulting from a relationship with the Divine, perpetuated by prayer without ceasing, unfold, the wells of love in our lives will run dry. As a result we will take on the likeness of the beasts of self-centeredness that are destroying the wonders of God's creation.

I have discovered that prayer has become the theater where I experience the healing I need as I battle the principalities and power of this world. It is prayer that awakens me to the fact that Jesus paid the price and I get the change. He gives me more than a new start. He gives me a new heart.

True prayer is not just talking to God with my mouth, but it also involves the use of my ears and central nervous system to hear and experience what God desires to say to me at this time and place.

God created you and I to live in an interactive relationship is with the Trinity. This relationship is made possible through Jesus Christ who enables us to be connected with God in every area of our being.

When we allow hopelessness and injustice to be removed through prayer, we will behold God's glory of creation with our eyes. We will hear the wonders of His presence in the singing of the birds and feel His wind embrace us. We will breathe prayer into our lungs with each breath of fresh air and thank God for it.

When I go on my prayer walks I love to pray using my senses of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting. It adds so much more to praying than just speaking words. Such praying challenges me to focus on God and the wonders of His creation.

As I pray I want my ears to hear the birds and other sounds of creation. I will frequently smell the flowers and even taste a leaf or a flower. Then as I pray I touch a tree and let the touch of the wind embrace me. Then my eyes are used to observe that squirrel, deer and other forms of wildlife as well as the beauty of the flowers, tree leaves, sunsets and much more.

Praying with the senses causes me to praise God and literally rise above my troubling thoughts and see that God is bigger than every problem.

To pray means to me to breathe in the life of the Spirit of God by exhaling fear and unbelief and inhaling God's grace and goodness. As a prayer warrior I can not only speak, hear, taste, and smell God's goodness in prayer, but, like the woman who was bleeding in Luke 8:43-48, touch the very hem of Jesus' garment. This touch involves grasping the impossible, knowing that with God all things are possible. Touching the hem of His garment means refusing to believe the lies and accusations of Satan and instead receive the promises of scripture and make them my own.

Prayer sharpens our vision, it wakes us up to the presence, power and purpose God has for our lives. As we pray, He opens the eyes of our hearts to those things that really matter.

Prayer makes us better listeners when it comes to hearing and responding to the needs of the poor, sick, fatherless, widowed, hurting and homeless. As Psalm 41:1 says, ***“Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble.”***

God commands us to **“pray constantly”** (1Thess.5:17). *“We pray to obey God, not to play God”* as Peter Kreeft stated. He goes on to say, *“We pray to ‘let God be God.’ Prayer is our obedience to God even when it asks God for things, for God has commanded us ‘to ask’ (Matt. 7:7). Prayer gives truth to our mind, goodness to our will, and beauty to our heart.”*

Our prayer should be, “Dear God, show me how to hear those who are crying out to you in their time of need. Then please show me how to help them.”

As we lay in our beds at night let us pray for those who have no bed. As we pray before we eat, let us remember those who have nothing to eat.

How we need to remember daily in our prayers those who are hurting like the homeless women and children, the elderly, the lost and the lonely.

May the Holy Spirit show us how we can share the love of Jesus Christ with those who do not know His love, grace and mercy. ***“He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”*** (Micah 6:8).

No matter what problem our community may be having, as we pray, God will show us the answer. I have seen this happen over and over during the past 48 years. Through prayer I have witnessed Dollar Help come forth, along with Missouri Renewable Energy, KNLC and many other programs at the New Life Evangelistic Center that directly help the hurting, hungry and poor.

It is tragic so much time is wasted pursuing money and fame. This is time we could have spent praying and showing our love for God by reaching out to the poor, the fatherless, the widowed, the homeless and the hurting.

IT’S TIME TO WAKE UP. OUR STAY ON EARTH IS TEMPORARY. Every day we live could be our last. How long are we going to be indifferent to the hurting of others? Isn’t our hope greater than our hang-ups?

God knows we need a generation of prayer warriors who are praying for justice. They are the ones who are awakened, to the power and love of God and see the impending judgement and the doom of never ending hell.

Today almost everything detestable in the scriptures has become morally acceptable. Right and wrong is determined by political correctness. May God remove what is blocking the reality of the presence of God in our lives and make us fearless prayer warriors who are too bold for the system to hold and too hard to be heard. May we become prayer warriors who know in the depths of our being that the intercessor's prayer can change the course of history and see the miraculous unfold.

Intercession is defined as believing, persevering prayer. It is where the intercessor identifies with the need, not only agonizing as a result of this need, but also going before the very throne of God and standing on the authority of the Risen Christ.

John Grisham in his book *"The Innocent Man,"* tells the true story of Ron Williamson who came within five days of being executed for a murder in Ada, Oklahoma that he did not commit. Ron knew he was innocent but instead of praying he would stand at the door of his cell and scream all night, *"I'm innocent, I'm innocent, I'm innocent."* Then he would trash his cell. All this did was make his situation worse as it encouraged the guards and other inmates to further tease him.

Thank God, Ron had two sisters who believed in the power of prayer. They would intercede for Ron hour after hour. As a result, through a miraculous chain of events Ron's life was not only spared but he was released from prison.

I often think of the futility of Ron's efforts when I feel like screaming in the midst of the injustices of life. Then I remember Ron's sisters, and the promises of scripture and instead of screaming out in frustration I go to God in intercessory prayer.

Listen to what Jesus tells us in Luke 18:1-8, ***"Jesus told them a story showing that it was necessary for them to pray consistently and never quit. He said, "There was once a judge in some city who never gave God a thought and cared nothing for people. A widow in that city kept after him: 'My rights are being violated. Protect me!' He never gave her the time of day. But after this went on and on he said to himself, 'I care nothing what God thinks, even less what people think. But because this widow won't quit badgering me, I'd better do something and see that she gets justice—otherwise I'm going to end up beaten black-and-blue by her pounding.' Then the Master said, "Do you hear what that judge, corrupt as he is, is saying? So what makes you think God won't step in and work justice for his chosen people, who continue to cry out for help? Won't he stick up for them? I assure you, he will. He will not drag his feet. But how much of that kind of persistent faith will the Son of Man find on the earth when he returns?"*** (Message Bible).

It's time for us to exercise our faith and take the limits off of God. Then God is free to move in our lives far beyond what we can ask or think. There is no limit to God's plan, purpose and promise for our lives. Intercessory prayer under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit enables us to move into this limitless dimension. Through the power of intercessory prayer, provided through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we can be freed from all that entangles and frustrates our lives, and keeps us from reaching our full potential.

What our ministry needs more now than anything else is fearless intercessory prayer warriors. As the New Testament points out, there is a spiritual battle underway which requires each of us to **“put on the full armor of God”** we see this in Ephesians 6:10-18, 2 Timothy 2:1-7 and 1 Timothy 6:12. Clothed in the full armor of God and equipped with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, we are then able to intercede in prayer, assured of victory.

The question is, are your knees dirty? Have you woke up to the power and potential of prayer? Are you spending time in prayer? Prayer is communion with God. It acknowledges the ever-present reality of the Living God. Prayer is a privilege that, as we engage in it, our relationship with God grows.

Prayer is not just an option, for we are commanded in the scriptures to pray. In I Thessalonians. 5:17 we are told to, **“Pray without ceasing.”** In Colossians 4:2 we are told to, **“Devote yourself to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”** I Chronicles 16:11-12 declares, **“Look to the Lord and his Strength: seek His face always. Remember the wonders He has done, His miracles, and the judgements He pronounced.”** In I Samuel 12:23 we see that prayerlessness is sin.

Please engage in intercessory prayer at this time for New Life Evangelistic Center. Please pray for justice for the hurting and homeless, the sick and the despairing. Please intercede for our cities, our nation, and those in need around the world. Let your prayers be baptized in compassion. As E.M. Bounds wrote, *“Compassion is moved at the sight of sin, sorrow and suffering. It stands at the other extreme to indifference of spirit to the wants and woes of others, and is far removed from insensibility and hardness of heart, in the midst of want and trouble and wretchedness.”*

Few people realize the tremendous opportunity they have to change the world through prayer. Paul being awakened to this reality said, **“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every Family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith”** (Ephesians 3:14-17).

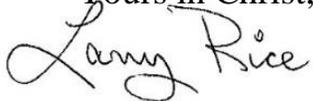
When I am strengthened with the power of God in my inner being and Christ is dwelling in my heart through faith, I am then able to believe God to perform the miraculous. I don't have to feel depressed and powerless in the midst of overwhelming need, because with God's power at work in me, **“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”** (Philippians 4:13).

Paul knowing from personal experience the power of prayer continues in Ephesians 3:17-19 to declare, ***“And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge that you may be filled to the measure of the fullness of God.”***

Being filled with the measure of the fullness of God stirs up the faith needed in us to pray the prayers that will change the world. Listen to this, ***“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory Amen”*** (Eph. 3:20-21).

There is no limit to what God can do through us if we pray in faith. As we do this we will see hopelessness and injustice disappear as the bright light of the resurrected Son of God shines throughout our lives.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry Rice". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Larry Rice