

THE 40 DAY  
PRAYER  
CHALLENGE™

*Unlocking the Power  
of Partnered Prayer*

SQUIRE RUSHNELL  
& LOUISE DUART

Official Guide to  
The 40 Day Prayer Challenge™

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This book supports a national movement led by Pray Together, Stay Together, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that is working in association with American churches to restore relationships and revitalize families through the supernatural power of Partnered Prayer.

The 40 Day Prayer Challenge also parallels the first-ever empirical study, conducted by Baylor University's Institute for Studies of Religion, measuring the phenomenal outcomes when two people pray together five minutes a day, for forty days.

## AUTHORS' NOTE

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THE 40 DAY PRAYER CHALLENGE . . .

is formed on the foundation of this challenge  
from the ancient Scriptures:

When my people humble themselves [**That's YOU**]—  
the ones who are called by my name—  
and PRAY and SEEK me [**That's YOUR challenge**],  
and turn away from their evil practices [**You can do that**],  
I MYSELF WILL LISTEN from heaven  
[**He's listening to YOUR PRAYERS**],  
I will PARDON their sins, and I will RESTORE their land  
[**That is YOUR PROMISE**].  
—2 Chronicles 7:14, ISV

Right now you are standing at the tipping point to the rest of your life! Join the movement of hundreds of thousands who are discovering that Partnered Prayer increases the power of prayer by many multiples—a supernatural phenomenon!

—Squire & Louise

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# INTRODUCTION

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## DEFINITION

Partnered Prayer [pärt'nər'd•prer] noun

1. The actions of two people—married or non-married couples; two family members; or two friends—who have agreed to pray together in partnership.

## THE 40 DAY PRAYER CHALLENGE

This book is designed to guide you and a partner through The 40 Day Prayer Challenge to develop your daily habit of *speaking together* with God. In so doing, you are unwrapping a special gift that has been awaiting you in these ancient words: “Whatever you ask for in prayer, *believe* that you have received it, and it will be yours.”<sup>1</sup>

The premise is this: if you and your spouse, family member, or friend are willing to commit to as little as five minutes a day, speaking with God about issues of concern to you, and praising Him for blessings you’ve experienced since yesterday—much the

same as two people would gather with a granddad over a cup of tea and a biscuit for a daily chat—the joy in your life will expand immeasurably.

Our beta-study evidence impressively demonstrates that when two people are willing to spend five minutes a day—as much time as you spend combing your hair and brushing your teeth—

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*“Change for the better forever.”* coming before the very Creator who has given you life on earth, *speaking* of concerns and matters from the heart, *believing* God will not let you down, and *expecting* the outcome you have asked for, your lives will change for the better forever.

Your prayer, particularly when you *speak it together* with a partner, will lift the veil between here and Heaven, and draw not only God’s attention, but His delight.

*In my distress . . . I prayed to my God for help.*

*He heard me from his sanctuary;*

*my cry . . . reached his ears.*

—PSALMS 18:6, NLT

## RARE RESEARCH ON PRAYER

In our earlier book, *Couples Who Pray*, we introduced Gallup data that was evaluated by Baylor University’s prestigious Institute for Studies of Religion. The rudimentary research provided evidence of surprising levels of improvement when two people went from “praying sometimes” to “praying a lot.”

Keeping in mind that most mates *never* pray together, you will see why George Gallup considered this cursory data astonishing:

- Happiness elevated by 18 percent
- Agreement on raising children up by 11 percent
- Agreement on financial matters increased by 11 percent
- Compromise rose 22 percent
- Communication went up by 11 percent
- Respect was higher by 19 percent
- Feelings of delight rocketed to 30 percent
- Lovemaking soared by 20 percent
- Marital stability became 16 percent greater
- The fear of divorce plummeted to zero

In concert with this book—and hopefully with you and your prayer partner—Baylor University’s Institute for Studies of Religion will evaluate the data from a new study—the first empirical study of its kind—which measures the outcome of two people praying together, for at least five minutes a day, for forty days. More information is available at [PrayStay.org](http://PrayStay.org).

The data will be gathered digitally on smartphones, tablets, and computers in a ten-minute survey that you and your partner will take on your first and fortieth days of praying together. Your private information will be unseen by anyone except social scientists at Baylor.

At the end of your forty days you’ll have a report card in the form of bar graphs on how well you have done in many of the same measurements that were indicated in the Gallup study above.

Are you willing to open your gift and take this wondrous journey with us? Are you prepared to wake up every day excited and energized to see what the God of heaven and earth has in store for you?

Get ready. It’s more than you could imagine.

## CHAPTER 1

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# HOW PARTNERED PRAYER WORKS

SPEAK IT! BELIEVE IT! EXPECT IT!

Everything that exists comes from God *speaking it* into existence.

He spoke, “Let there be light” . . . and there was.

He spoke, “Let us make mankind” . . . and He did.<sup>1</sup>

God began everything with the awesome power of the *spoken* word, and He beckons you to emulate Him through a magnificent gift that is delivered through your lips and the passion in your heart. His promise is in the Bible: “Whatever you *ask* in prayer, *believing*, you shall *receive*.”<sup>2</sup>

Let’s look at the key words to opening your gift: first, to *ask in prayer*—through the power of the *spoken* word; second, to *believe* that God is who He says He is and can do what He says He can do; and third, to *expect to receive* “whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer.”

How do you assure that your prayer reaches God’s attention?

You *speak* it!

When you learn to *speak* it, you hurtle every prayer through time and space directly to the ears of God. Like an arrow placed in the archer’s bow, when you *speak* it, your prayer gains trajectory and velocity to the Almighty. And when you engage with a

partner to pull back on the bowstring—to *speak it together*—the words of your prayer can move heaven and earth!

*The tongue has the power of life and death.*

—PROVERBS 18:21

## THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST WERE SPOKEN INTO BEING

When Jesus looked at the two blind men and said, “Do you believe I can do this?” they replied, “Yes, Lord.”

Jesus then *spoke* these words: “According to your faith, let it be done.” And the blind men were healed.<sup>3</sup>

When a great storm alarmed the disciples in the boat, Jesus said, “Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?”<sup>4</sup> Then He rebuked the winds and the sea . . . He *spoke* to them . . . and they became perfectly calm.

When Jesus came upon two violent, demon-possessed men, He *spoke* to them, saying, “Go!”<sup>5</sup> The demons came out, went into the swine, and perished in the sea.

Christ *spoke* miracles into being.

## THE THREE KEYS TO YOUR PRAYERS BEING ANSWERED

The first two keys to unlocking God’s promise to you are: *speaking* prayer fervently and *believing* that God hears your every request. But the third key is equally essential: *expecting* your prayer will be

answered, sometimes before you have even finished speaking or before your request has come into existence.

The Ancient Scriptures of Isaiah affirm “Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet *speaking*, I will hear.”<sup>6</sup>

In Romans we are assured that God “calls into existence things that don’t yet exist.”<sup>7</sup>

Christ confirmed those promises: “Whoever . . . does not doubt in his heart, but believes what God says is going to happen, it will be granted him.”<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, how does effective prayer work? *Speak it. Believe it. Expect it!*

Jesus reiterates: “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”<sup>9</sup>

## THE MIRACLES OF TODAY ARE SPOKEN INTO BEING

In this book you will see how *speaking* words of prayer, in faith, will plug you into the greatest power strip in the universe.

You will read how a mother *spoke* life over the body of her fourteen-year-old son, dead for nearly an hour, with the words, “Holy Spirit, give me back my son,” and suddenly a doctor shouted, “We’ve got a pulse!”

How an unseen voice spoke to a mother in Vermont, commanding her to stand during her pastor’s sermon and boldly *speak out* to ask for immediate prayer for her son, a soldier in Iraq, and for her to later learn that her son was supernaturally dodging a deadly bullet at that very moment.

How a woman forcefully *spoke* scripture to a man who was

holding her at gunpoint. He suddenly turned around, walked away, and subsequently said his getting caught was a “God thing.”

How a child’s daily prayers to have a pet bird, *spoken* in earnest, and with faith, were answered by a stranger, out of the blue.

How a dilapidated church of twenty people, about to close its doors, *spoke out together* in fervent prayer and, soon thereafter, crowds came through the doors, growing it into one of the largest, most prestigious churches in America.

Story after story will confirm that when you *speak* a prayer to God in faith—especially when you *speak it together* with a partner—you can tap into a limitless reservoir of spiritual promises.

You will be astonished by evidence of how the supernatural comes into the natural, overcoming your most insurmountable obstacles, as it did with a Florida cardiologist who, after pronouncing a man dead of a heart attack, heard a voice from God telling him to *speak* specific words of prayer over the man.

## CHAUNCEY CRANDALL: A DOCTOR’S EVIDENCE THAT PRAYER WORKS

“I prayed for the dead man and today he’s alive.”

There was stunned silence throughout the medical conference as Dr. Chauncey Crandall, the noted cardiologist, unveiled compelling evidence that he had prayed for a patient who had just died and, as the man was being prepped for the morgue, came back to life.

The renowned Florida cardiologist was speaking to 120 physicians, representing fifty countries.

“The fifty-three-year-old man had had a massive heart attack. The medical team worked on him for over forty minutes . . . then declared him dead,” said Dr. Crandall.<sup>10</sup> Having been called in to evaluate the patient toward the end, Dr. Crandall confirmed the man was dead. The doctor turned and started to leave.

Then, something odd happened.

“The Holy Spirit told me, ‘Turn around and pray for that man.’”

Dr. Crandall walked back to the side of the bed, noting that the man’s face, feet, and arms were completely black with death. Aloud, he prayed, “Lord Father, how am I going to pray for this man? He’s dead. What can I do?”

Then, as if by supernatural means, words moved through the doctor’s lips: “I cry out for the soul of this man if he does not know you as his Lord and Savior: raise him from the dead now, in Jesus’ name.”

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*“The Holy Spirit told me . . . pray for that man.”*

Dr. Crandall told the spellbound audience at the conference that all of sudden a heartbeat showed up on the monitor. It was a perfect, normal beat, and then the man’s fingers and toes started to move and he began mumbling words!

The nurse was startled. “Doctor Crandall, what have you done to this patient?”

The doctor calmed the nurse, then rushed the patient to intensive care, where, he says, “after a couple of days, he had an amazing story to tell.”

The man told how he was in a dark place. There was no light. He felt as though he’d been thrown in the trash, worthless.

Dr. Crandall said he looked into the eyes of the man, explained the salvation message, and prayed with him. The man

held out his hand and accepted Christ as his savior, as tears rolled from his eyes.

The doctor added tenderly, “You will never be thrown into the trash, into total darkness. . . . The light of the kingdom of Heaven is on you now.”

Later, it was learned that the man had been estranged from his family for twenty years, yet they had never stopped praying for him. Even his ex-wife prayed for her ex-husband to come to know the Lord.

Everyone involved—the man, Dr. Crandall, the nurse, and most of the conference attendees—will all attest: prayer works!

*The Spirit helps us in our weakness.  
We do not know what we ought to pray for,  
but the Spirit himself intercedes . . .  
with the will of God.  
—ROMANS 8:26*

## THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Dr. Crandall said, “The Holy Spirit told me to ‘turn around and to pray for that man.’” What did he mean by that?

He was literally receiving what Jesus described to his disciples. “The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything.”<sup>11</sup>

“Even when you don’t know the right words to pray, the Holy Spirit prays with, and for you, and God answers,” explains a concordance of the Bible.<sup>12</sup> When that happens, “He will guide you . . . empower you, protect you and reveal things to you.”<sup>13</sup>

Evidence of that can be found in many of the stories in this book, stories about people who were guided, like Dr. Crandall, by the Holy Spirit.

It is comforting to know that the scriptures promise that the Holy Spirit is always with you to:

- warn you (Acts 20:23)
- assure you (Romans 8:16)
- convict you (John 16:8–11)
- direct you (Acts 20:22)
- guide you (Romans 8:14)
- strengthen you (Romans 8:26)
- empower you (John 16:12–15)

You can think of the Holy Spirit as your inner compass that keeps you from getting lost: your GPS—God’s Positioning System. He adjusts your position and points you in the right direction.

If you are wondering if you should take that job, marry that person, or move to a different location, the Holy Spirit is the manifestation of God within you providing guidance, sometimes with a “nudge.”

Some say that when they ask the Holy Spirit to speak to them, they will read the Bible and a particular passage will stand out as if the Bible had ears and was listening to them.

*What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard,  
and what no human mind has conceived . . .  
these are the things God has revealed to us  
by his Spirit.*

—1 CORINTHIANS 2:9–10, NIV

## WHY SHOULD I PRAY?

Consider these reasons:

- You have a deep-seated desire for something.
- You crave certainty and direction in your life.
- You secretly wish for a worry-free day.
- You've always wanted an incredible marriage.
- You yearn for a loving, trusting relationship with your children and family.
- Your quest to live longer and have financial security seems unattainable.
- You have a constant hurt—physical or emotional—that just won't go away.

If you identified even one of the above, you have just given yourself abundant grounds to *speak* to God in prayer.

## IS THERE PROOF PRAYER WORKS?

There is massive evidence—biblical and scientific—that prayer not only works, but also elevates happiness and contentment in wondrous ways.

Prayer is so important that the Bible mentions it 512 times.

Prayer is so important that Jesus did nothing without it.

Prayer is so important that it's a command in the Ancient Scriptures.

*Pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

—1 THESSALONIANS 5:16, NIV

The Bible also promises that when you enter into Partnered Prayer, supernatural power expands.

*Where two or three are gathered in my name*

*I am there among them.*

—MATTHEW 18, NIV

Words take flight when *spoken* sincerely, *believing* that they will “not come back void”<sup>14</sup> from God, and with the *expectation* that what you have just asked for is already done.

*So shall my word be that goeth forth*

*out of my mouth:*

*it shall not return unto me void,*

*but it shall accomplish that which I please,*

*and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

—ISAIAH 55:11, KJV

Jesus said that a speck of faith—the mere size of a mustard seed—is all you need to *speak out* at the mountains of worry and uncertainty that loom over you. And when you say, “Move from here to there,”<sup>15</sup> they will move!

When you *speak it* into existence, your prayer takes off with a supernatural lifting force, defying all reasoning of the human mind that might otherwise say that your prayers will fall to the ground. But when you *expect it* to be fulfilled, you can have Christ’s promise: “Nothing will be impossible to you.”<sup>16</sup>

*Louise*

## THE WONDER-WORKING POWER OF FAITH

The Bible tells us that God *spoke* things into being. But we're told that *we* also have the power in us to *speak* things into being.

Really? We have that much power?

Yes. But our power isn't in ourselves, it's in God. Jesus tells us that there is wonder-working power when we have the faith to call upon God by *speaking* His words into a situation. He's always got you covered as long as you're resting not "on human wisdom, but on God's power."<sup>17</sup>

As mentioned above, Christ talked about having the faith to move mountains—meaning all the mountains in each of our lives—firmly *believing* that they will move when you *speak* to them. But this is an important distinction: so often we pray for *God* to move our mountains. However, the Bible tells us that God has given *us* the power to move mountains.

We are told, "It is with your heart that you *believe* . . . and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith"<sup>18</sup> and *speak* your prayer.

Jesus said, "You will receive whatever you ask for in prayer, if you believe."<sup>19</sup> But He's not going to do what He's already asked *you* to do. And if he's asked you to do it, He will give you His power to accomplish it.

Wow!

This sheds new revelation on *speaking* to our problems, doesn't it? It brings new meaning to that old hymn that says, "There is pow'r, pow'r, wonder-working pow'r . . ."<sup>20</sup>

It also confirms that we must study the Word to be enlightened about God's plan for our lives.

When you reach out to hold the hand of another—a spouse, a family member, or a friend—doubling the power of the prayers you *speak*, astonishing outcomes will flow down upon you. Following are two stories that help illustrate that.

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*Jeff Winter: A Pastor's Confession—  
We Didn't Pray Together*

Several years ago I became the pastor of a small, nondenominational church on the island of Martha's Vineyard off the coast of Massachusetts. Within days, my wife, Judy, and I met SQUIRE and Louise. A friendship began.

As we got to know them, we learned of their passion to encourage married couples to pray with one another. They had been challenging couples all across the country to take The 40 Day Prayer Challenge. SQUIRE and Louise believe that if a married couple covenants to pray with each other for five minutes a day, for forty days, it will develop a habit that can last a lifetime.

Knowing the importance of prayer, I decided that the members of my church, FaithMV, ought to participate in The 40 Day Prayer Challenge. I felt in my heart that if the married couples of this tiny congregation were praying with each other, their lives would be enriched and so would the church.

But . . . as a pastor, I was facing a sizable issue. Leading The 40 Day Prayer Challenge would mean that I also needed to get off the fence in my prayer life with Judy. *Yikes*, I said to myself, *I'm a pastor and I rarely pray with my wife.*

For too many years, our prayer life had been hit-or-miss. We

generally prayed together only when there was a crisis or a major decision to be made. Otherwise, we prayed individually.

Of course, Judy and I prayed with our flock. We prayed at meals. But praying together was a rare experience.

I felt guilty. Although Judy and I had become one in the eyes of God when we were married, we were not becoming one in our spiritual life together. So I asked God to help me lay aside any matters of personal pride, and we accepted The 40 Day Prayer Challenge.

Almost immediately I began to experience a positive change in our relationship as we entered into the presence of God on a daily basis. I also learned that just as physical intimacy reaffirms my oneness with Judy, so does praying together.

When we pray as a couple, we are stripped bare emotionally. There is little room for pretense; we are not only communicating with God, but also with each other. I have discovered so much more about Judy as we share our prayer requests, and as I listen to her pray out loud, I hear her heart.

Many years ago, I learned that I couldn't change Judy and she couldn't change me. But God can change each of us if we invite Him to do so through prayer. No matter what struggles we encounter, if we keep praying together, I am certain that we'll see circumstances turn around.

That was evident when our younger son was experiencing the consequences of a number of wrong choices. Our prayer time not only bonded Judy and me closer together, but we saw God move mightily in our son's life, helping him reclaim his relationship with Jesus Christ.

Praying with Judy has brought God into the center of our marriage. He is the glue that holds us together, in the good

times and the bad. When we are fresh out of love and patience with each other, God has an inexhaustible supply of each, ready and waiting for us to ask.

God's grace, power, and forgiveness have helped us to make a good marriage great. Praying together has made the difference.

—JEFF WINTER

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### *Judy Winter: The View from the Pastor's Wife*

Through the ups and downs of forty years of marriage, Jeff and I have changed a lot for the better. We're far from perfect—but we are living proof that by praying together, a married relationship can change.

The most obvious outcome of daily devotions and praying with each other is how wonderful our relationship has grown; it's better than ever. We really miss it when something comes up and we can't meet for this time.

Prayer also encourages conversation. We are more up to date with each other, individually and spiritually. As we pray, it is like we are *speaking* to God as well as ourselves. It's definitely a three-way experience.

Then there is the effect we have on others because of our visible excitement and enthusiasm about prayer. We've started a prayer ministry in our church. A novel idea? An oxymoron? Well, even if we should have done it before, we recognize the need to get others involved and committed.

Finally, I would say that practice makes perfect. Prayer is

easier and more spontaneous because we find it to be second nature.

—JUDY WINTER

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*Since we know he hears us . . .  
he will give us what we ask for.*  
—1 JOHN 5:15, NIV

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### *Tim and Kathy Keller: The Day of Wide Awakening*

The highly respected founder and pastor of the Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, Tim Keller, was brought to a life-changing insight by a request spoken by his wife, Kathy.<sup>21</sup>

For weeks after two planes collided with the World Trade Center on 9/11 and lowered a surreal darkness over Manhattan, Tim and Kathy—like most of us—lived in a bubble of depression. But for New Yorkers, it was much too close to home. The twisted rubble, the loss of lives, and the endless search for the remains of loved ones was but a cab ride away. Kathy's struggle was intensified by her affliction with Crohn's disease.

Initially, Kathy's proposal didn't seem nearly as momentous as it turned out to be. With almost childlike sincerity, she spoke to Tim but with the wisdom of a wife.

"My wife asked me to do something we had never had the self-discipline to do regularly. She asked me to pray with her every night. *Every* night," he said.

A pastor's busy life—like yours—is filled with people to see, things to do, problems to solve.

As Tim looked into Kathy's eyes, unidentifiable feelings of guilt—or perhaps reluctance—streamed through his consciousness.

Kathy then supported her proposition with Godly insight. “Imagine you were diagnosed with a lethal condition and the doctor told you that you would die unless you took a particular pill every night.”

Tim was beginning to see where she was going.

“Would you forget?” she continued. “Would you not get around to it some nights? No—it would be so crucial, you wouldn't forget, you would never miss a dose.”

Kathy's reasoning and unpretentious logic were so clear, he was left to wonder, *How could this have escaped me, a professional man of the cloth?*

Kathy's voice grew with fervor: “If we don't pray together to God . . . we're not going to make it. I'm certainly not. We *have* to pray; we can't just let it slip our minds.”

Perhaps that moment for Tim Keller was like this very moment is for you. “The penny dropped.” He admitted anything that was “a nonnegotiable necessity” was something they could do.

That was more than thirteen years ago. Tim and Kathy now can't recall a single day when they have missed praying together—sometimes, if necessary, by telephone. Their relationship, daily lives, and very existence have benefited from a simple concept that is redundantly uttered in the Bible and *spoken* by a fervent wife: pray together.

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## WHAT IS THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR PRAYER?

Two British researchers, Alex Bunn and David Randall,<sup>22</sup> set out to evaluate the efficacy of prayer and faith. There had been many

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*“The average person of faith had a life expectancy seven years longer than that of those who didn’t have faith.”*

studies done on prayer, but it was nearly impossible to arrive at a collective conclusion. Thousands of research documents were scattered across the globe, among scholarly books, reports, and papers.

Bunn and Randall rounded up every scientific study they could get their hands on, narrowed them down to those on faith and health, and cross-referenced the results. They analyzed sixteen hundred documents, including one American study that evaluated twenty-one thousand people over a nine-year period.

The outcome was definitive: the average person of faith had a life expectancy *seven years longer* than that of those who didn’t have faith.

Bunn and Randall found that the majority of studies also linked faith to the following beneficial outcomes:

- well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction
- hope and optimism
- purpose and meaning in life
- higher self-esteem
- better adaptation to bereavement
- greater social support and less loneliness
- lower rates of depression
- lower rates of suicide

- less anxiety, less psychosis, and fewer psychotic tendencies
- lower rates of alcohol and drug abuse
- less delinquency and criminal activity
- greater marital stability and satisfaction

Even skeptics have to admit that sixteen hundred research documents—81 percent of which point to positive outcomes from the application of faith and prayer—are pretty compelling evidence.

## SCIENTISTS WHO SURPRISE US WITH THEIR BELIEFS

Sir Isaac Newton, one of the world's most prominent scientists of the 1600s, was also one of the most distinguished students of the Bible.

Newton's Law of Gravity explained to the world the principle behind motion of the planets, but it was his faith that led him to conclude, "This most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being."<sup>23</sup>

Some said Newton actually spent more time studying theology than science. That was difficult to confirm until massive writings on his extensive study of the Bible were uncovered only seventy-five years ago.

While Newton would caution that books of science and theology must not be intermingled, he firmly believed both were "bound together," as did other scientists, such as Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Pascal.<sup>24</sup>

In fact, it may be surprising to learn the number of highly

accredited scientists who concur with those legendary pioneers—science and faith go hand in hand.

Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, is best known as the leader of the team who mapped the entire DNA sequence of the human body, the Human Genome Proj-

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*“We have caught the first glimpse of our own instruction book, known previously only to God.”*

ect, about which he said, “It is humbling to me . . . to realize we have caught the first glimpse of our own instruction book, known previously only to God.”<sup>25</sup>

Once an atheist, like some of his peers in the scientific community, Collins was challenged by a grandmother who asked him, “What do you believe?”<sup>26</sup>

He admitted, “I found myself with a combination of willful blindness and . . . arrogance, having avoided any serious consideration that God might be a real possibility.” After picking up the challenge—exhaustively researching theology versus science—he concluded, “Faith in God now seemed more rational than disbelief.”<sup>27</sup>

Today Collins believes that if God has created all things, including science, one does not have to choose between the two of them—they are compatible.

“I found great joy in being both a scientist studying the genome and a follower of Christ,” he says.<sup>28</sup>

Collins believes that perhaps 40 percent of the scientific community now travels a similar path of coexistence between science and theology.

Frank Tipler, professor of mathematical physics, says, “Twenty years ago I was a convinced atheist. I never in my wildest dreams imagined that one day I would be writing a book purporting to

show that the central claims of Judeo-Christian theology are in fact true; that these claims are straightforward deductions of the laws of physics as we now understand them.”<sup>29</sup>

NASA’s space pioneer Wernher von Braun observes, “The knowledge that man can choose between good and evil should draw him closer to his creator.”<sup>30</sup> Braun, a WWII German rocket scientist who surrendered to America after the war because its people were “guided by the Bible,”<sup>31</sup> believes that man’s “survival here and hereafter depends on his adherence to the spiritual rather than the scientific.”

In making a case for a designer of the universe, Braun posited the two most powerful forces shaping our culture are science and religion. “It is as difficult for me to understand a scientist who does not acknowledge the presence of a superior rationality behind the existence of the universe as it is to comprehend a theologian who would deny the advances of science.”<sup>32</sup>

*Apollo 14* astronaut Edgar Mitchell looked back from the moon and said, “When I saw the planet Earth floating in the vastness of space, the presence of divinity became almost palpable, and I knew that life in the universe was not just an accident.”<sup>33</sup>

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*“Life in the universe was not just an accident.”*

Nobel Laureate Arno Penzias, codiscoverer of the radiation afterglow, remarks, “In the absence of an absurdly improbable accident, the observations of modern science seem to suggest an underlying, one might say, supernatural plan.”<sup>34</sup>

Astronomer Allan Sandage comments, “God, to me, is a mystery, but is the explanation for the miracle of existence—why there is something instead of nothing.”<sup>35</sup>

*The Bible shows the way to go to heaven,  
not the way the heavens go.*<sup>36</sup>

—GALILEO

## *Squire*

### HOW DOES PRAYER WORK?

I have a very simple acceptance of the merits of prayer: I've seen it work in the lives of my family, over and over again. I can recount many times when God answered my prayers affirmatively against the few times I perceived Him not answering.

I know He *does* answer prayers, I just don't know *how* He does it.

Put simply, prayer *works*.

Of course, when we stop to think of it, we are surrounded by countless conveniences that work for us, every day, yet we haven't a clue *how* they work.

For example, you put a cup of water in the microwave for tea, push the buttons 1-3-0, and one minute and thirty seconds later, the machine dings. It's ready.

Do you know *how* that contraption made your beverage the perfect temperature?

An engineer could explain it, but most of us don't know how. It just works.

I spent forty years making network television programs. Do I know *how* television sends images of people flying invisibly through the air, causing them to show up on my TV?

No. TV just works. That's all the evidence I need.

And while I know that God *causes* prayer to work, I remain clueless as to *how* He goes about doing it.

When my life hung in the balance, as I talk about in chapter 2, prayer worked. That's all that matters.

## *Squire*

### WHEN YOU PRAY, GODWINKS HAPPEN

It had never occurred to me that there was no word in the English language for “answered prayer.”

Yet in her letter, one of my readers was using the term “godwink”—a word coined in my first *When God Winks* book for those “little coincidences that aren't coincidence”—to describe her own experience of an answered prayer.

Instead of saying, “I had my prayer answered,” she simply said, “I had a godwink.”

*How perfect*, I thought; God was *speaking* to me again—this time, through my readers to help shape our understanding of the concept of godwinks.

A few days later, a confirmation—a divinely aligned godwink—entered into my awareness. I came across this quote from a famous seventeenth-century theologian and scholar:

*When I pray, “coincidences” happen,  
and when I don't, they don't.<sup>37</sup>*

—SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE (1628–1699)

Sir William Temple, a highly influential and respected theological leader in his day, was validating that there indeed is a clear connection between “so-called coincidences” and prayer.

So the new word was birthed into our language and is finding its way into everyday speech and soon into dictionaries. It has two meanings:

god•wink

1. An event or experience, often identified as a coincidence, so astonishing that it could only have come from God.
2. Another term for answered prayer.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.: WORDS ARE INVISIBLE YET INVINCIBLE

The Bible tells you, “Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”<sup>38</sup>

Your words, delivered with sincerity and faith, are the greatest weapons in your arsenal as you put on your armor. When *spoken* to the Almighty, they can heal a body and pull you from the depths of despair.

Words, when passionately *spoken*, can also lift hearts and alter the course of a nation.

Think about the extraordinary impact of words *spoken* by leaders that have resonated through the years. “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country,”<sup>39</sup> in the inaugural address of President John F. Kennedy, ignited encouragement. A few years later his brother Robert Kennedy inspired us with, “There are those who look at things the way they are, and ask why . . . I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?”<sup>40</sup>

Then there were the first words *spoken* from the moon by Neil Armstrong, ushering in a new era of space exploration: “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”<sup>41</sup>

Yet no words more deeply pierced the hearts of millions and raised the hopes of everyone committed to freedom and equality

than those that were improvised by Martin Luther King Jr. from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in the summer of 1963.

The four words that provided a nation with a promissory note for healing were, “I have a dream.” But those words were not written into Dr. King’s prepared address handed out to the press.

That phrase had been uttered without prominence by MLK in two prior speeches, but on that day in DC, he had no plan to use it. How it got there, however, is quite a godwink.

As Martin Luther King Jr. looked out upon a sea of faces that were searching desperately for hope, he came to the end of a sentence that didn’t quite feel right. At that very second, he heard the voice of Mahalia Jackson rise above the crowd.

“Tell them about the dream, Martin!” she shouted out to him.<sup>42</sup>

The words left her lips and, in a millisecond, triggered something in his mind. He said in a later interview that her comment instantly reminded him of that phrase, “I have a dream,” and he said, “I just felt that I wanted to use it here.”

Without missing a beat, his next line was: “I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream.”

Then he began punctuating several sentences with those words, his voice rising in a slight tremor.

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

He stirred emotions by concluding, “This will be the day when all God’s children will be able to sing, ‘From every mountainside, let freedom ring.’” And he closed with inspiring words from an

old spiritual, “Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.”

That speech was judged to be the very top speech of the twentieth century by a poll of public speaking scholars in 1999.

Perhaps Mahalia Jackson is but a footnote in history, but her shouting out “Tell them about the dream, Martin!” at that divinely aligned moment caused her to be a “Godwink Link” for MLK, connecting him with the words God wanted him to *speak*. At the end of the day, we have to wonder, was that *her* motivation, or was that the voice of God speaking through her?

*The God of glory thunders . . .  
the voice of the Lord is powerful;  
the voice of the Lord is majestic.*

—PSALMS 29:3–4, NIV

## CHAPTER 2

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# HOW TO PRAY

### A MAN WITH A SIMPLE QUESTION

A large man in his fifties moved toward the platform. We had just wound up our presentation on what happens when two people pray together regularly.

As we have seen many times, couples, family members, and friends are fascinated with this concept that is so simple, yet so foreign to many. They always look astonished as they hear the stories of marriages revitalized by praying together.

They often wonder, *Why isn't this talked about more?*

The big man was now standing close by, waiting for someone to stop talking with us. Then he saw his opportunity.

Speaking tentatively, the man introduced himself as Ron, an Oklahoma City fireman who volunteered at the church.

"May I ask you a question?"

We nodded and leaned closer.

"How do you do it?"

Perhaps the blank looks on our faces were the clues he needed to tell us more.

“I pray alone . . . my wife prays alone . . . but how do you pray with somebody else? Are there special words you say? A place you should go?”

Those questions, almost childlike from a grown man—a churchgoer—led us to understand that we cannot take for granted that everyone knows *how* to pray *with another person* in Partnered Prayer.

But, before tackling that, there’s a more basic question: Do you know how to pray by *yourself*?

That may seem like an elementary inquiry if you assume everyone knows how to pray, the way you know how to breathe or walk.

So, let’s begin our discussion about Partnered Prayer by evaluating what we know about praying alone. You’ll see that many of the same principles apply to both.

## DO YOU RECALL WHEN SOMEONE *TAUGHT* YOU TO PRAY?

Was it a parent who tutored you?

A pastor? A teacher? A friend?

Like many of us, your answer might be, “No. I can’t recall anyone *ever* teaching me *how* to pray.”

That is a sad fact. We are often self-taught, emulating others who may speak out at group gatherings or someone we’ve seen on TV.

As result, like the man who approached us in Oklahoma City, there is an innocent uncertainty about Partnered Prayer and even praying alone. What words do I speak to the Almighty God? Do I

have to use formal language? And isn't He much too busy dealing with all the other matters in the universe to have time for me?

When I pray with someone else, do I need to talk out loud or can I pray silently? What are the guidelines?

Suddenly all these questions make you feel inhibited.

The aim of this chapter is to deal with the basics: how to pray with a *partner*. But in most cases, these principles apply to praying *alone*, too.

## DO YOU FEEL EMBARRASSED FOR EVEN ASKING HOW TO PRAY?

Don't beat yourself up. Even the disciples didn't know how to pray. One of them said, "Lord, teach us to pray."<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, Jesus demonstrated what we now know as The Lord's Prayer.<sup>2</sup> He replied, "When you pray, say this . . ."

*Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.  
Amen.*