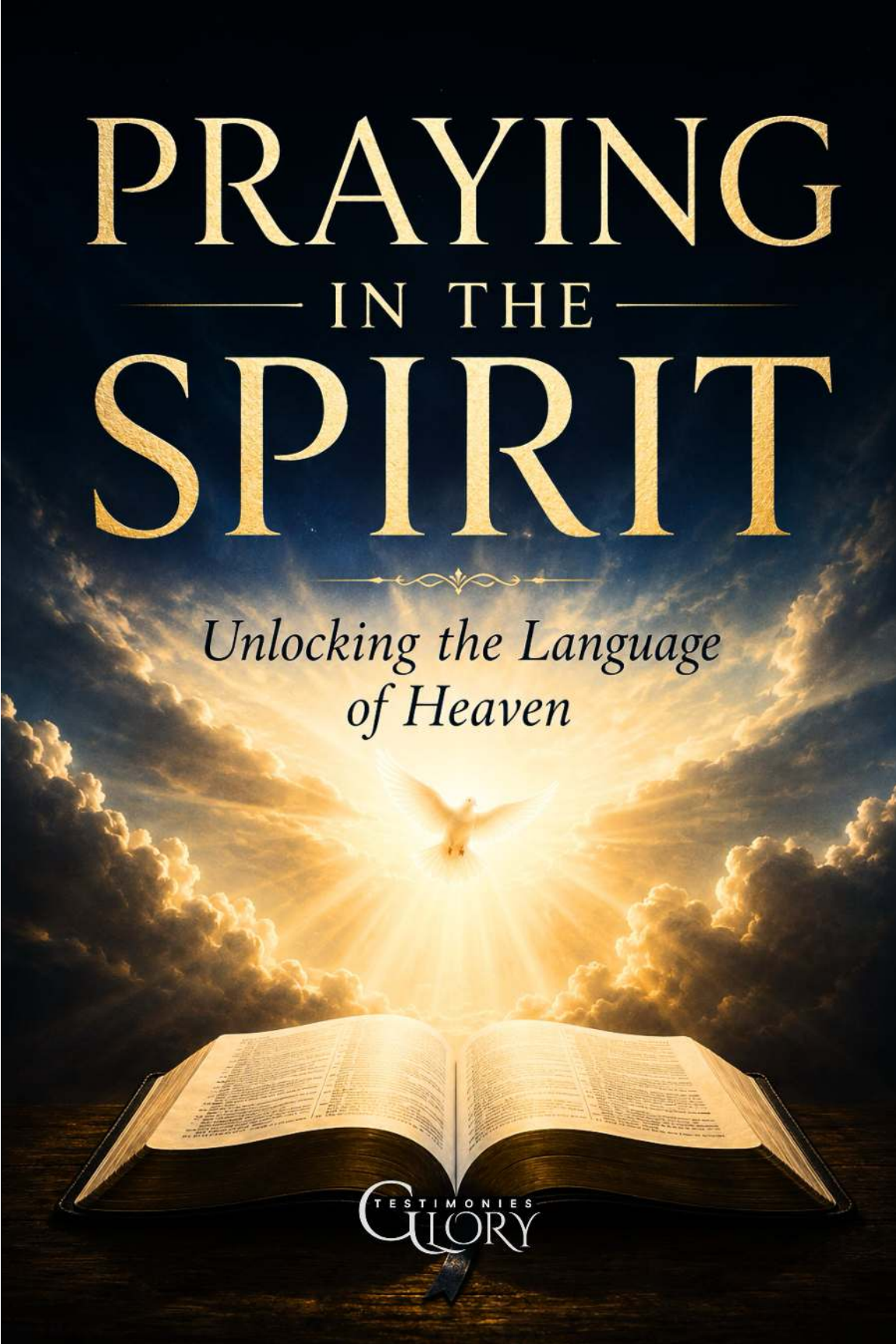
PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Unlocking the Language of Heaven



TESTIMONIES GLORY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GLORY

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Unlocking the Language of Heaven

By
Brian The Seer &
Pastor Naya Wanjiru

Praying in the Spirit: Unlocking the Language of Heaven

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Glory Testimonies Ministries

This book is dedicated to every believer who has ever knelt in a quiet room, opened their mouth, and felt nothing come out.

To the ones who have wondered if God was still listening.

To the ones who kept showing up anyway.

This book is for you. The door is open, and it has been open the whole time.

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FOREWORD

By Brian The Seer

I did not set out to write a book about prayer.

For years, my ministry has centered on prophetic teaching, on helping believers recognize the times and seasons we are living in, and on calling the body of Christ back to the altar of intercession. Along the way, I kept running into the same wall, over and over, in conversation after conversation with people from every background you can imagine.

The wall was this: people wanted to move in power. They wanted breakthroughs. They wanted to see strongholds fall, finances restored, families healed, callings activated. But when I asked them about their prayer lives, the honest answer, almost every time, was some version of, "I pray, but I don't think anything is really happening when I do."

That sentence broke something open in me. Because I had been there too. I had stood in services where the atmosphere was electric, where the music was loud and the altar calls were emotional, and I had walked out of those rooms feeling exactly the same as when I walked in. Something was missing, and for a long time I could not name it.

When Pastor Naya and I began working together on the Glory Testimonies platform, one of the first things that struck me about her was how differently she talked about prayer. She did not talk about prayer as a performance or a formula. She talked about it as a relationship, as a language, as something that had to be learned the way a child learns to walk, fall, and walk again.

Naya's journey is unusual. Before she came to Christ, she walked a very different spiritual path, one that involved real spiritual power, real intensity, real discipline, just from the wrong source. When the Lord saved her, He did not just give her a new belief system. He had to retrain her entire understanding of what spiritual communication even is. That retraining is, in many ways, the heart of this book.

What you are holding is not a quick-fix manual. It will not give you a formula that guarantees instant results, because that is not how the Holy Spirit works, and any book that promises that is selling you something other than the gospel. What this book will give you is a map, a clear, biblical, practical map of what it means to pray in the spirit, why so many of us have been praying without that dimension for years without realizing it, and how to begin walking into it, one day at a time.

Naya carries the bulk of the teaching voice in these pages, drawing from her own testimony and years of walking believers through this exact transition. I have contributed the framework, the prophetic context, and the structure that ties it all together into something you can actually live with, not just read once and forget.

My prayer for you as you begin is simple. I pray that somewhere in these pages, the same door that opened for Naya, and the same door that has opened for thousands of people in our community since, opens for you too. Not because of anything in this book. But because the Holy Spirit Himself has been waiting for you to understand how to move with Him.

Turn the page. Let's begin.

Brian The Seer

INTRODUCTION

By Pastor Naya Wanjiru

I want to start this book the same way I start almost everything I teach, with honesty about where I came from, because I think it matters for what is coming.

Before I knew Jesus, I knew how to "pray." I had grown up in a spiritual environment where invoking spirits, performing rituals, and speaking words with precision and intensity were a normal part of life. There was structure. There was discipline. There was a kind of power that responded when things were done correctly. By the time I was a teenager, I could lead rituals that other people in my community considered impressive.

So when I gave my life to Christ in my early twenties, and someone in my new church told me, gently, that I needed to "learn to pray in the spirit," I will be honest with you, I was almost offended. In my mind, I thought, "I already know how to be intense in prayer. I already know how to repeat words until something shifts in a room. What is this person trying to teach me that I don't already know?"

It took the Holy Spirit months, honestly longer than months, years, to dismantle that thinking in me. Not because intensity is bad, and not because discipline is bad,

but because I had spent my whole life believing that spiritual power was something you accessed through correct technique. The Lord had to show me, patiently, layer by layer, that prayer in His kingdom does not work that way. It is not a transaction. It is not a formula. It is not about how loud you are, how long you kneel, or how perfectly you say the words.

It is about who is leading.

That single shift, from technique to relationship, from performance to surrender, changed everything about how I prayed, and over time, it changed everything about my life. I went from someone who could manufacture spiritual intensity on command to someone who, for the first time, actually heard from God. Not in dramatic, cinematic ways every single time, though sometimes it was dramatic, but in the quiet, steady, daily ways that build a life.

When Brian asked me to put this teaching into a book, my first reaction was hesitation. There are so many books on prayer already. What could we possibly add? But the more I thought about it, the more I realized that most books on prayer are written by people who never had to unlearn anything. They grew up in the church, they were taught to pray a certain way from childhood, and that way worked reasonably well for them. They have never had to

confront the question I had to confront: what if everything I think I know about spiritual communication is built on the wrong foundation?

I think a lot of believers, even lifelong believers, are quietly asking that same question, even if they have never said it out loud. They go to church. They read their Bibles. They pray every day, sometimes for years. And yet there is a gap between what they read about in scripture, believers moving in power, hearing God's voice clearly, seeing dramatic answers to prayer, and what they actually experience. That gap creates a quiet ache that most people never talk about, because it feels almost shameful to admit, "I've been a Christian for fifteen years and I still don't really know how to pray."

If that's you, I want you to know, before we go any further, that there is nothing wrong with you. You have not failed. You have not missed some secret that everyone else has access to. You simply have not yet been shown the door, and that is what this book is for.

This book is organized in six parts. We will start with the foundation, because if that foundation is not in place, everything else will feel like decoration on an empty house. From there, we will look honestly at why so many prayers stall, even sincere ones. Then we will walk through four

dimensions of praying in the spirit, dimensions I have taught for years now and watched transform countless lives in our community. After that, we will deal honestly with the hard seasons, the dryness, the distraction, the doubt, because those seasons are real and pretending they don't exist helps no one. Then we will go deeper into corporate prayer, warfare, family, and grief. And finally, we will land on something practical, a way to actually build this into your daily life, including a twenty-one day journey you can walk through at your own pace.

Throughout this book, you will find stories, real stories, from our community and from my own life. Some names and details have been changed to protect privacy, but the substance is true. I share these not to entertain you, but because I believe stories carry truth in a way that bullet points cannot. The Bible itself is full of stories for exactly this reason.

One more thing before we begin. This book will mention spiritual warfare, tongues, deliverance, and other topics that some traditions are uncomfortable with, and other traditions over-emphasize to the point of imbalance. We have tried, throughout, to stay anchored to scripture rather than to any particular movement's culture. Where scripture is silent or where reasonable believers disagree, we

have tried to say so honestly, rather than presenting our own preferences as settled doctrine.

My hope for you, as you begin this journey, is the same hope I had for myself all those years ago, even before I knew to hope for it. That you would move from talking AT God to communing WITH Him. That your prayer life would stop being a performance, even a sincere one, and start being a relationship. And that somewhere in these pages, the door that opened for me would open for you too.

Let's begin.

Pastor Naya Wanjiru

SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITY & DISCERNMENT DISCLAIMER

— ✦ —

This book is intended for spiritual encouragement and educational purposes only. The teachings, testimonies, and prayer practices contained herein reflect the personal convictions and ministerial experience of the authors and are not intended to replace sound pastoral counsel, medical advice, or professional mental health care.

Readers are encouraged to exercise personal discernment in applying any teaching to their specific circumstances. Not every spiritual experience described in this book will be identical to your own, and differences in experience do not indicate spiritual failure or inadequacy. The Holy Spirit works uniquely in every believer's life according to God's sovereign purposes.

The authors affirm the supreme authority of Scripture in all matters of faith and practice. Any teaching in this book that the reader believes conflicts with the clear teaching of the Bible should be weighed carefully against God's Word and discussed with trusted, mature spiritual leaders within a healthy local church community.

The testimonies shared in this book are real accounts shared with permission. Names and identifying details have been changed where requested to protect privacy. These stories are offered as illustrations of spiritual principles, not as guarantees of identical outcomes for all who apply the same practices.

Regarding spiritual gifts, including but not limited to speaking in tongues, the authors hold that these are distributed by the Holy Spirit according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:11) and do not assert that any single gift is required for salvation, spiritual maturity, or acceptance before God.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, thoughts of self-harm, or a psychiatric emergency, please contact a licensed mental health professional or emergency services immediately. Prayer is not a substitute for appropriate clinical care.

Glory Testimonies Ministries and its representatives assume no liability for how readers apply the contents of this book. Read, pray, and proceed with wisdom.

The Word of God is the lamp to your feet and the light to your path. This book is a torch held up to illuminate what Scripture

already contains. If it leads you deeper into the Word and closer to Jesus, it has served its purpose.

— Brian the Seer

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book can be read straight through, cover to cover, the way you would read any book. Many readers find it helpful to do a first pass this way, simply absorbing the teaching before trying to apply it.

However, this book is also designed to be used as a working manual, something you return to again and again over months and years, especially Part Six, which includes a twenty-one day journey designed to be walked through slowly, one day at a time, with space for reflection and journaling.

At the end of most chapters, you will find a short section called "Going Deeper," which includes:

A key scripture to memorize or meditate on.

A reflection question to journal about.

A short prayer prompt to pray out loud, in your own words, not as a script to recite but as a starting point.

We encourage you to read this book with a journal nearby. Some of the most important moments in your walk with the Holy Spirit will not happen while you are reading. They will

happen afterward, in the quiet, when you put the book down and actually do what it describes.

Finally, if you are reading this as part of a small group or a prayer community, many chapters work well as discussion starters. Consider reading one chapter per week and using the "Going Deeper" sections as a basis for group prayer and conversation.

This is not a book to be rushed. Take your time. The Holy Spirit is patient, and so should we be, with ourselves and with each other.

PART ONE

THE FOUNDATION

CHAPTER 1

The Door You Must Walk Through First

Before we talk about praying in the spirit, we have to talk about something that most teaching on this subject skips entirely. And if we skip it here too, everything else in this book will feel like decoration on an empty house. It might sound nice. It might even inspire you for a day or two. But it will not produce lasting fruit, because the foundation underneath it was never laid.

Jesus said it plainly in John 3:6. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Read that again, slowly. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

There are two distinct realms being described here, and they operate by different rules entirely. You cannot operate in a realm you have never entered. You cannot navigate a country you were never admitted into. You cannot drive on roads you don't have a license for, no matter how confident you feel behind the wheel.

To pray in the spirit, you must first be born of the Spirit. You must be born again.

This is the starting line. Not religious effort. Not good behavior. Not how many candles you light, how many fasts you complete, or how many scriptures you can quote from memory. A genuine new birth, a real spiritual transaction in which your spirit, the part of you that was dead toward God, is made alive in Christ.

Pastor Naya's Story

I remember the night I prayed to receive Christ. I did not feel fireworks. I did not feel lightning come down from heaven. There was no dramatic moment where the room shook. But something in me, something I cannot fully put into words even now, shifted.

It was like a door that had been locked my entire life quietly clicked open, without me even fully realizing it had happened until days later, when I noticed how differently I was thinking, how differently I was feeling about things that used to consume me. The anger I had carried toward certain people in my life, anger I had nursed for years and even used as fuel for some of my old spiritual practices, started to feel

heavy in a new way, like something I no longer wanted to carry.

That door, that quiet click, is what gives you access to praying in the spirit. Without that door being opened, everything else we talk about in this book is just performance, even if it is sincere, well-meaning, heartfelt performance.

I want to be careful here, because I know some readers picking up this book have been Christians for decades. You were raised in church. You said a prayer of salvation as a child, or you have no memory of "becoming" a believer because you cannot remember a time when you weren't one. If that is you, this chapter is not meant to make you doubt your salvation. It is meant to help you examine, honestly, whether that new birth was real, whether there was ever a genuine transaction, even if it happened quietly, even if it happened gradually, even if you cannot point to a single dramatic moment.

The new birth does not always look the same from the outside. For some people, it is sudden and emotional. For others, it is quiet and almost imperceptible, a slow dawning rather than a flash of light. What matters is not the drama of the moment but the reality of what happened, a spirit that

was dead has been made alive, and a person who was operating purely in the natural realm now has access to the spiritual realm, the realm where the Holy Spirit dwells and moves.

Why This Matters for Prayer

Here is why this foundational truth matters so much for everything we are about to discuss. Praying in the spirit is not a technique that anyone, believer or unbeliever, can learn and apply. It is not like learning a language or a skill that exists independent of your spiritual condition. It is the natural overflow of a relationship that did not exist before, and now does.

Think of it this way. A person who has never been born of the Spirit might be able to imitate the outward forms of spirit-led prayer. They might raise their hands, speak with emotion, even use spiritual language they have heard from others. But there is a difference between imitating a language and speaking it natively, a difference between performing a role and living a life.

This is also why so many people who attend church for years, who go through all the motions, who can sing every worship

song and recite every prayer, still feel like something is missing. If the new birth never happened, no amount of religious activity will produce the reality that religious activity is supposed to point toward.

If you are reading this and you are not sure, if there is a nagging uncertainty in the back of your mind about whether you have truly been born again, I want to invite you to settle that right now, before we go any further. This is not complicated, and it does not require a special ceremony, a particular building, or anyone else's presence. It requires honesty before God.

If you sense that this applies to you, consider praying something like this, in your own words: "Lord, I acknowledge that I have lived according to my own understanding, separate from You. I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins and rose again. I ask You now to make me new, to give me a new birth by Your Spirit. I receive Christ as my Lord and Savior."

If you prayed that, whether for the first time or as a renewal of something that happened long ago but perhaps was never fully real to you, something has changed, even if you don't feel it immediately. The door has opened. Everything else in this book builds from here.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3*

Reflection Question: *Can you point to a time, dramatic or quiet, sudden or gradual, when something genuinely changed in your relationship with God? If you're not sure, what would it look like to settle that question honestly today?*

Prayer Prompt: *Spend a few minutes today simply being honest with God about where you are. Not performing, not using "correct" language, just honest. If you need to pray the prayer above, do so now, in your own words.*

CHAPTER 2

From Entry to Maturity: Growing into the Spirit

There is something many believers do not understand, and it confused Naya too when she was younger in the faith. Many believers ARE born again, genuinely, truly born again, and they are still trying to pray in the spirit with a mind that is still being renewed, and a spirit that is still carrying unprocessed junk from years before they knew Christ, or even from things that happened after they got saved that they never dealt with.

You don't "learn" your way into the spirit. You are born into it, and then you grow in it. There is a difference between entry and maturity, and a great deal of frustration in people's prayer lives comes from confusing the two.

The Confusion Between Entry and Maturity

Think about a newborn child. The moment a child is born, they are fully human, fully alive, with a complete genetic

identity, a beating heart, functioning lungs. Nothing about their humanity is partial or incomplete. And yet, that same newborn cannot walk, cannot speak, cannot feed themselves, cannot reason about complex ideas. Their humanity is complete, but their maturity is not.

The same is true spiritually. The moment you are born again, your spirit is fully alive, fully indwelt by the Holy Spirit, with complete access to everything God has for you in Christ. Nothing about your spiritual identity is partial. And yet, your capacity to walk in that identity, to recognize the Spirit's voice, to pray with power, to resist temptation, to love difficult people, all of that develops over time, the way a child develops over years.

The problem is that many believers think, "I got saved five years ago, I should be operating at a certain level by now," and then they feel guilty or discouraged when their prayer life doesn't feel as powerful as someone who has walked with God for thirty years. This guilt is misplaced. It is not a sign of failure. It is simply a sign of where you are in a process that is supposed to take time.

The Renewed Mind and the Grieved Spirit

Here is something important, and it is one of the more uncomfortable truths in this book. You can have someone with a remarkably renewed mind, someone who knows scripture inside and out, who can quote verses all day long, who can debate theology, who teaches Sunday school with confidence, but whose spirit is grieved.

Maybe it's bitterness toward a parent who hurt them decades ago, bitterness so old and familiar they don't even recognize it as bitterness anymore, they just think of it as "how things are" between them and that person. Maybe it's unconfessed sin, not necessarily something dramatic, but a pattern they've grown comfortable with, something they've stopped feeling convicted about because they've done it for so long. Maybe it's unforgiveness they have been carrying for years like a stone in their pocket, so familiar they don't notice the weight of it anymore, until they try to pray and something feels heavy, something feels stuck, and they can't figure out why.

You cannot separate your spiritual condition from your prayer life. The state of your inner man is always reflected in

the quality of your communion with God. Always. Two people can say the exact same words, word for word, in the exact same setting, and one prayer rises like incense while the other falls flat in the room, because what's happening on the inside is different.

This is not meant to discourage you. It is meant to free you from a false framework. If your prayer life feels stuck, the answer is not necessarily "pray more" or "pray louder." Sometimes the answer is, "what is happening in my inner man that needs attention?"

A Story of Slow Growth

There was a man in our community, I'll call him Joseph, who came to Christ in his late thirties after a difficult life that included addiction and a string of broken relationships. When he got saved, it was dramatic, he wept for hours, he felt an overwhelming sense of relief and joy that lasted for weeks.

But about six months in, Joseph came to one of our leaders, discouraged. "I don't feel anything anymore," he said. "When I pray, it's just words. I used to feel God so strongly,

and now I feel nothing. Did I do something wrong? Did God leave?"

What Joseph was experiencing was not God leaving. It was the natural transition from the dramatic entry experience, which is real and valuable, but is not designed to be permanent, into the slower, less dramatic work of growth. The initial flood of emotion was God's grace meeting Joseph in a moment of desperate need. But a life of faith cannot be sustained on emotional highs alone. It has to be built on something steadier, a daily, unglamorous, often unremarkable rhythm of walking with God.

Our leader encouraged Joseph not to chase the feeling he'd had at the beginning, but to focus on consistency, showing up, reading the Word, praying, even when it felt dry, especially when it felt dry. Over the following two years, Joseph's prayer life did deepen, but not in the way he expected. It wasn't a return to the dramatic emotions of his first weeks. It was something quieter, steadier, a settled confidence, an increasing sensitivity to the Spirit's promptings in everyday moments, a growing capacity to sit in silence with God without needing to fill the space with words or feel a particular emotion to know God was present.

Joseph is now one of the people in our community most often asked to pray for others, not because he is the most emotionally expressive, but because there is a weight, a substance, to his prayers that took years of quiet faithfulness to develop.

What Growth Actually Looks Like

If you are in a season where your prayer life feels less dramatic than it once did, or less dramatic than you've heard others describe, this chapter is for you. Growth from entry into maturity does not usually look like an upward line on a graph, where each day is more exciting than the last. It often looks more like roots growing underground, invisible, slow, unglamorous, but absolutely essential to whatever fruit will eventually appear above ground.

The fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5 tells us, includes patience. And patience with your own growth, refusing to compare your "chapter three" to someone else's "chapter thirty," is itself an exercise in the very fruit you're trying to grow.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby." 1 Peter 2:2*

Reflection Question: *Are you measuring your spiritual growth against your own journey, or against someone else's? What would change if you released the comparison?*

Prayer Prompt: *Thank God specifically for where you are right now, not where you wish you were. Ask Him to help you recognize the quiet, unglamorous growth happening in you even when you can't feel it.*

CHAPTER 3

Filled, and Kept Filled

Paul writes to the Ephesians and tells them to "be filled with the Spirit." That one word, "filled," carries so much more weight than we usually give it. It is not a suggestion. It is a command. And in the original language, the tense of that verb means "keep being filled, continuously, again and again." It is not a one-time event. It is not something that happened to you at one altar call years ago, where you fell down, cried, maybe spoke in tongues for the first time, and now you're set for life because of that one experience.

Ephesians 5:18 says it directly. "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

Think about that comparison for a moment. Being drunk with wine is something that requires ongoing consumption. You don't stay drunk from a drink you had last month. The effect fades, and if someone wanted to stay in that state, they would have to keep drinking. Paul is using that picture, not to glorify drunkenness in any way, but to show us that being filled with the Spirit works the same way in terms of frequency. It is something you keep coming back to, again and again, day after day.

The Lamp and the Oil

There's a picture that has helped Naya think about this for years, drawn from the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. In that parable, ten virgins waited for a bridegroom, each carrying a lamp. Five were wise and brought extra oil. Five were foolish and brought none. When the bridegroom was delayed and the night grew long, the lamps of the foolish virgins began to go out, because they had not planned for the oil to run low.

If you assume one filling of the Spirit will last forever, you will find yourself, weeks or months later, wondering why your light feels dim, why your prayers feel dry, why things that used to move you now feel routine. It's not that the Spirit left. It's that you stopped coming back for more oil.

This is not a guilt-inducing observation. It is simply how the spiritual life works, and understanding it removes a tremendous amount of confusion. If your "fire" feels lower than it once did, the question is not "what's wrong with me" or "did God withdraw from me." The question is simply, "when did I last come for more oil, and how can I build a rhythm of coming back regularly?"

The Connection That Cannot Be Unseen

There is a connection running through everything we've discussed so far, and once you see it, you cannot unsee it. You cannot pray effectively in the spirit if you are not full of the spirit. And you cannot stay full of the spirit if you are not walking in the spirit, which is the subject of our next chapter.

These three things, being filled, staying full, and walking, are all connected like links in a chain. Break one link, and the whole chain stops functioning the way it's supposed to.

Some believers focus heavily on the "filling" experience, seeking dramatic encounters, conferences, special services, anointed speakers, hoping that the next big experience will be the one that finally "fixes" their spiritual life. There is nothing wrong with seeking God in those settings, and God often does meet people powerfully in them. But if the filling is not followed by a walk, by daily, ordinary obedience and surrender, the effects of even the most powerful encounter will fade, just as the oil in a lamp burns down over time regardless of how dramatic the moment it was poured in.

Other believers, perhaps reacting against an overemphasis on emotional experiences, focus heavily on "walking," on

discipline, daily devotions, accountability, and good habits, but rarely seek fresh filling, fresh encounters with the Spirit's presence. Their spiritual lives can become dutiful but dry, technically correct but lacking the life and power that comes from regular, fresh encounter with God.

The healthiest pattern includes both: regular, ongoing encounters with the Spirit's presence, AND a daily walk of surrender and obedience that sustains and is sustained by those encounters.

A Practical Picture

Think about how this might look in an ordinary week. Maybe Sunday's gathered worship is a time of genuine filling, where you sense God's presence in a tangible way, where something shifts in your spirit as you worship alongside others. That filling is real and valuable.

But if Monday through Saturday is lived entirely disconnected from that experience, no time set aside for personal prayer, no attention to the Spirit's promptings throughout the day, no engagement with scripture, then by the time the following Sunday arrives, the "oil" from the previous week has often burned low, and the cycle repeats:

a weekly spiritual high followed by six days of spiritual flatness.

What if, instead, each day included even a small, intentional moment of seeking fresh filling, a few minutes of worship, a few minutes of quiet before God, a moment of consciously yielding to the Spirit before starting the day? This does not need to be elaborate. It does not need to replicate a Sunday service. But it changes the rhythm from "occasional flooding followed by drought" to "regular, sustained flow."

We will get much more practical about building this rhythm in Part Six. For now, the key truth to carry forward is simply this: filling is not a destination you arrive at once. It is a well you return to, again and again, for the rest of your life. And the good news is that the well never runs dry, even if your experience of it sometimes does, because the Spirit Himself is the well, and He is not going anywhere.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18*

Reflection Question: *When was the last time you intentionally sought to be "filled," not as a one-time*

dramatic experience, but as part of a regular rhythm? What would it look like to build that rhythm into your week, even in small ways?

Prayer Prompt: *Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you again today, right now, not because anything is wrong, but because this is how the spiritual life is designed to work. Thank Him that the well never runs dry.*

CHAPTER 4

Walking in the Spirit: The Hidden Life That Shapes the Praying Life

Paul makes the connection between filling and walking very concrete in Galatians 5:16. "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

"Walk in the Spirit" is not a feeling you chase. It is not some spiritual high you have to maintain by staying in worship music twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, or by constantly being in church activities so you never have a quiet moment to think or be alone with your own thoughts.

It is a moment-by-moment surrender. It is sensitivity to conviction, that small uncomfortable feeling when you're about to say something you shouldn't, or when you're scrolling through something you know you shouldn't be looking at. It is obedience to small promptings, like that thought to call someone, or to give something away, or to apologize first even when you feel you were right. It is alignment with the Word in the moments when nobody is watching. It is yieldedness in the tiny daily decisions that nobody else ever sees.

The Hidden Life

Here is a sobering but important truth: the person who walks in the spirit in private is the one who prays in the spirit in public. There is no shortcut around this. You cannot live one way Monday through Saturday and expect Sunday's prayer time, or your private prayer time, to suddenly transform into something powerful just because you raised your hands and closed your eyes.

This does not mean prayer is a reward for good behavior, as if God only listens to people who have earned it through a perfect week. That would contradict everything the gospel teaches about grace. Rather, it means that the same Spirit who empowers your prayer is the same Spirit you grieve or grieve not throughout your ordinary day. Your prayer life and your daily life are not two separate compartments. They are expressions of the same relationship.

Think about what you watch when you're alone in your room at night. Think about how you speak to your spouse or your children when you're tired and frustrated and your guard is down, when you assume no one important is watching or listening. Think about whether you forgive that coworker in your heart even before they ever apologize, maybe even if

they never apologize at all, maybe even if they never know they hurt you.

These small, hidden moments are not separate from your spiritual life. They ARE your spiritual life, in its most honest form. And they shape, more than almost anything else, the quality of your communion with God when you do set aside time to pray.

James 4:3 and the Roots of Unanswered Prayer

James 4:3 says, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." This verse is often quoted in isolation, as though it only applies to obviously selfish requests, like praying for a new car purely out of greed. But the principle goes deeper than that.

Some prayers don't get answered, not because God is withholding out of cruelty or indifference, but because the request itself was never aligned from the start. It was self-serving. It was about comfort, status, or escaping consequences rather than about God's purposes. And sometimes, the misalignment is not in the specific request, but in the broader pattern of a life that has not been walking

in the spirit, a life where the "asking" happens in isolated moments of prayer but the "walking" never followed.

A Story About Hidden Obedience

There was a woman in our community, I'll call her Grace, who had been praying for years for her marriage to be restored after a painful season of separation. She prayed fervently, often in tears, often for long stretches of time. And yet, year after year, nothing seemed to change.

During a season of deeper mentorship, one of our leaders gently asked Grace about a specific person, a family member with whom Grace had a longstanding conflict, someone Grace rarely mentioned but whose name had come up once, almost in passing. The leader asked, "Have you forgiven her?"

Grace's immediate answer was, "Of course. That's old news. This is about my marriage, not about her."

But over the following weeks, as Grace sat with that question honestly, she realized that "of course I've forgiven her" was something she had said many times without ever actually doing the work of forgiveness. The bitterness toward this family member was old, familiar, almost invisible to Grace

because it had been part of her inner landscape for so long. It had nothing to do, on the surface, with her marriage.

And yet, as Grace began the slow, painful, genuine work of forgiveness toward this family member, something Naya describes as "walking in the spirit in a hidden corner of her life that nobody else even knew about," something began to shift in Grace's prayer life more broadly. Her prayers for her marriage, the same words in many cases, began to carry a different weight. Within several months, a process of reconciliation with her husband began that had felt impossible for years.

We share this story carefully, because we do not want anyone reading this to think, "If my prayers aren't being answered, it must be because of some hidden sin I haven't dealt with," and then spend months anxiously hunting for what's "wrong" with them. That kind of anxious self-examination is not what walking in the spirit looks like, and it can become its own form of bondage.

Rather, we share it because sometimes, when we genuinely and honestly ask the Holy Spirit, "Is there anything in my hidden life that You want to address?", He is gracious enough to show us, gently, specifically, not to condemn us, but to free us. The walking and the praying are connected,

and sometimes growth in one area unlocks growth in another, in ways we would never have expected.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Galatians 5:16*

Reflection Question: *Is there a hidden area of your life, something only you and God know about, where the Holy Spirit has been gently prompting you toward something, and you've been putting it off?*

Prayer Prompt: *Ask the Holy Spirit, simply and without anxiety, "Is there anything You want to show me?" Then sit quietly for a few minutes and listen, without rushing to fill the silence.*

CHAPTER 5

What Praying in the Spirit Actually Means

We have spent four chapters laying a foundation: the new birth, the journey from entry to maturity, the ongoing filling of the Spirit, and the daily walk that sustains it. Now we are ready to ask the central question of this book directly. What does it actually mean to pray in the spirit?

Paul gives us the clearest picture in Ephesians 6:18, right after he describes the full armor of God for spiritual warfare. He ends that whole section with this: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

Notice where this verse sits. It comes immediately after Paul has described the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And then, almost as if it is the thread that ties the entire armor together, Paul adds praying in the Spirit. Not as an eighth piece of armor, separate from

the rest, but as the posture and activity through which the entire armor is put to use.

A Working Definition

Praying in the spirit is when your prayer is inspired, directed, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is not driven by your emotions, even though emotions can be present. It is not limited by your vocabulary, even when your vocabulary is rich and educated. It is not shaped only by your personal list of needs, even though God cares about your needs deeply. It is prayer where you are not the one leading. You are following the Holy Spirit.

Let's break this definition into its parts, because each part matters.

Inspired means the prayer originates, at least in part, from the Spirit's prompting, not purely from your own mental processing of a situation. This does not mean your mind is shut off or bypassed. It means your mind is being led, rather than leading.

Directed means the Spirit shapes where the prayer goes, sometimes in ways you did not plan. You might sit down intending to pray about one thing and find yourself, partway

through, praying about something entirely different, something the Spirit brought to your attention.

Empowered means there is a quality to the prayer, an authority, a weight, a sense of "rightness," that does not come from your own effort or eloquence. This is often described as an "unction," an anointing on the prayer itself.

How Do You Know When It's Happening?

We don't want this to stay theoretical. How do you know when this is actually happening, as opposed to simply praying sincerely but in your own strength?

A few signs to look for. Your prayers align with scripture, not loosely, but specifically, as if the Spirit is bringing particular verses or themes to mind that connect directly with what you're praying about. There is an inner witness, a peace underneath the words, even if the topic itself is heavy or difficult, even if you're praying about something painful. Sometimes you say things you didn't plan to say, things that surprise even you as they come out of your mouth, but they carry a weight you can feel in your chest or your gut. And, perhaps most importantly, you are not reacting to your circumstances. You are responding to the Father.

That last point deserves its own emphasis, because it is, in many ways, the heart of the matter. A prayer in the spirit responds to God. A normal, casual prayer reacts to problems and circumstances. That is the difference, not the topic, not even the sincerity behind it, but the source and the direction of the prayer.

Reacting vs. Responding

Imagine two people praying about the exact same situation, say, a frightening medical diagnosis received by a loved one.

The first person prays out of pure reaction: "God, please, please don't let this be bad. Please heal them. I can't lose them. Please, please, please." This prayer is sincere. It is heartfelt. There is nothing wrong with it, and God hears it, because God hears the cries of His children regardless of how "spiritual" those cries sound.

The second person, after some time of quieting their racing thoughts, begins to pray differently. They find themselves drawn to specific scriptures about God's faithfulness. They sense an unusual peace, even though the situation has not changed. They find themselves praying not just "heal them" but also things like, "Lord, whatever happens, keep our

family anchored in You. Use this situation, however it unfolds, to draw us closer to You and to each other. I trust You with the outcome, even though I don't understand it."

Both prayers come from love. Both prayers come from real fear and real pain. But the second prayer has moved from pure reaction into response, from being driven entirely by the circumstance to being shaped, at least in part, by something beyond the circumstance, the presence and perspective of the Holy Spirit.

This is not a formula where "if you pray the second way, the healing will definitely come, but if you pray the first way, it won't." God is not that mechanical, and we will address this more directly in a later chapter on what to do when nothing seems to change. But there is a real difference in the experience of prayer itself, and over time, in the fruit it produces in the person praying, between prayer that stays purely reactive and prayer that moves into response.

Not About Spiritual Topics, But About Spiritual Source

One final clarification that is easy to miss. Praying in the spirit is not the same thing as "praying about spiritual things." You can talk about spiritual topics in the flesh. Naya did this for years before she was saved, she could talk about spirits, about the spiritual realm, about power and authority, all in the flesh, all from a place of self-will and manipulation.

Praying in the spirit means the Holy Spirit is the source and the direction, regardless of the topic. You can pray in the spirit about something as mundane as a parking space or a misplaced set of keys, if the prayer genuinely arises from a posture of yieldedness and communion. And you can pray about something as weighty as national revival or generational deliverance entirely in the flesh, if the prayer is really about your own ambition, your own platform, your own desire to be seen as someone who prays about "big" things.

Your role is to stay yielded, not to stay impressive. This is, in many ways, the thesis statement of this entire book, and we will return to it again and again in the chapters ahead.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." Ephesians 6:18*

Reflection Question: *Think of a recent time you prayed about something difficult. Looking back, would you describe that prayer as primarily "reacting" or primarily "responding"? What might it look like to move toward response, without judging the reaction as wrong?*

Prayer Prompt: *Before you bring your requests to God today, pause and simply ask, "Holy Spirit, lead this time. I don't want to just react to my circumstances. Show me how to respond to You."*

PART TWO

WHY MOST PRAYERS STALL

CHAPTER 6

Loud Is Not the Same as Led

Now we want to step on some toes gently, the way Naya's spiritual mother used to step on hers when she was younger in the faith and full of energy but lacking discernment.

A lot of believers are praying hard. They're praying long. They're loud. They're consistent. They show up to every prayer meeting, every all-night vigil, every fasting program. And somehow, things are still not moving. Can we be honest for a moment? The question nobody wants to ask out loud is, what is going wrong?

Two Rooms

Naya once sat in a prayer meeting where the volume was so high you could feel it in your chest, like standing too close to a speaker at a concert. People were shouting, jumping, the sound system was maxed out, and the leader kept saying, "Louder, louder, God is not deaf." And she remembers sitting there thinking, "This is powerful. This must be what spiritual breakthrough feels like."

But afterward, when everyone went home, she left the same way she came. Nothing in her spirit had shifted. She was just tired, and her ears were ringing.

A few months later, she was in a small room with maybe four people, sitting on plastic chairs, no instruments, no microphones. They were barely speaking above a whisper. And the atmosphere in that room was shaking, she could feel it in the walls, in her own bones, in a way that is difficult to explain to someone who hasn't experienced it.

Intensity is not the same as alignment. You can be loud without being led. You can be emotional without being in the spirit.

This is not an argument against loud prayer, against passionate, emotional, expressive prayer. Scripture is full of believers crying out loudly, weeping, even shouting. David danced before the Lord with such abandon that it embarrassed his wife. The point is not that loud prayer is wrong and quiet prayer is right. The point is that volume itself, in either direction, is not the measure.

Two Sources

Prayer that is driven by anxiety is just noise with religious words attached to it. But prayer driven by revelation carries authority. The difference between the two is not effort. It is the source. One comes from trying hard. The other comes from being surrendered.

Anxiety-driven prayer often has certain characteristics, even when it is loud and passionate. It tends to circle the same requests repeatedly, without any sense of progression or peace. It often escalates in intensity the longer it goes on, as if the person praying is trying to convince themselves, or God, through sheer force of repetition and volume. And afterward, there is often a crash, a sense of exhaustion or even emptiness, rather than peace.

Revelation-driven prayer, by contrast, even when it is intense, even when there are tears or raised voices, tends to have a different shape. It often moves, from one theme to another, as the Spirit directs. It tends to settle, becoming quieter or more focused as it continues, rather than escalating indefinitely. And afterward, even if the situation prayed about hasn't changed, there is often a sense of peace, of having "released" something, rather than having "performed" something.

A Question to Replace Another Question

So stop asking, "Am I praying enough?" Start asking, "Am I praying from the spirit, or from anxiety? Am I responding to God's word and His promises, or am I just reacting to my problems, my fears, my deadlines?"

The volume of your prayer does not determine its power. The source does. Where is your prayer originating from? And that's why we keep coming back to the foundation laid in Part One, being full of the spirit, walking in the spirit.

A Practical Diagnostic

Here is something practical you can try, not as a rigid rule, but as a tool for self-awareness. After a time of prayer, especially an intense one, pause and ask yourself a few questions.

How do I feel right now, compared to before I started? Exhausted and drained, or peaceful and settled, even if the situation is still unresolved?

Did the prayer move, or did it loop? Did I find myself returning to new themes, new scriptures, new aspects of the

situation, or did I say essentially the same thing over and over with increasing intensity?

Was I trying to convince someone, even God, or was I aligning myself with something I already believe to be true?

These questions are not a test you pass or fail. They are simply a way of building self-awareness over time, so that you can recognize, in your own experience, the difference between the two sources Paul and Naya are describing.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Ephesians 5:18-19*

Reflection Question: *Think of a recent intense prayer time, whether loud or quiet. Looking back, would you describe it as more anxiety-driven or more revelation-driven? What clues led you to that conclusion?*

Prayer Prompt: *Before your next significant prayer time, ask the Holy Spirit, "Lead this time. I don't want to just*

generate intensity. I want to follow You, wherever that takes me, whether that's loud or quiet, long or short."

CHAPTER 7

Vain Repetition and the Anatomy of Empty Words

Jesus addressed the issue of empty prayer directly. He told His disciples not to use "vain repetitions" when they pray, like people who think they'll be heard because of the volume or length of their words.

Matthew 6:7 says, "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words."

Here is something important, and it is easy to misunderstand. The phrase "vain repetition" is not about words that are empty in content. It's about words that are empty in the spirit.

Jesus Repeated Himself

Jesus was not banning repetitive prayer. The Psalms themselves are full of repetition. Phrases like "His mercy endures forever" repeat dozens of times in Psalm 136, once for every single verse. Even Jesus Himself repeated the same

prayer three times in the garden of Gethsemane, almost word for word, in His most desperate hour, recorded in Matthew 26.

So repetition itself is not the issue. What Jesus was addressing in Matthew 6 was prayer that has no spirit behind it, prayer where the words have become a kind of performance, a kind of incantation, where people believe that simply saying something enough times, loudly enough, in the correct formula, will force a result, almost as if prayer were a magic spell rather than a relational communication with a personal God.

This connects directly back to Naya's testimony from before she knew Christ. In the spiritual practices she grew up with, precise repetition mattered enormously. Saying the right words, the right number of times, in the right tone, was understood to be what activated the desired spiritual response. The "spirit" of the practitioner was almost beside the point, what mattered was correct execution.

When Naya came to Christ, she had to confront the uncomfortable possibility that she might unconsciously bring that same framework into Christian prayer, treating scripture verses, declarations, or prayer formulas the same

way, as incantations to be repeated correctly rather than truths to be communed with.

The Heathen vs. The Believer

Jesus' comparison in Matthew 6:7 is specifically to "the heathen," meaning people who do not have a relationship with the living God, and whose religious practices therefore default to transactional, performance-based models, because that is the only framework available to them. Without a relational foundation, religion almost always drifts toward formula, because formula is something you can control, measure, and feel confident about, while relationship requires trust, uncertainty, and surrender.

This is why vain repetition can creep into Christian practice too, not because Christians intend to abandon relationship for formula, but because formula is simply easier. It requires less vulnerability. It is more predictable. And when prayer doesn't seem to be "working," the natural human instinct is to try harder, to say it more times, more loudly, more precisely, rather than to examine whether the relational dimension has quietly drained out of the practice.

What Empty Words Sound Like

Let's get specific. What does vain repetition actually sound like in a modern church context? It might sound like a worship leader repeating the same phrase forty times, not because the Spirit is leading the congregation into a deeper place, but because the band needs to fill time before the next song, and repetition is the easiest way to do that.

It might sound like someone praying the exact same prayer, word for word, every single day, for years, without ever pausing to consider whether the words still reflect what is genuinely in their heart, or whether they have become background noise, said on autopilot while the mind wanders elsewhere.

It might sound like a prayer chain or prayer list that has become so familiar that names and situations are recited mechanically, with no actual engagement, no actual lifting of those people and situations before God in any meaningful sense, just the recitation of a list.

None of these scenarios necessarily mean the person praying is insincere or far from God. Often, these patterns develop precisely because someone was sincere and consistent for so long that the practice became automatic,

and automatic is not the same as empty, but it can become empty if it's never refreshed.

Refreshing What Has Gone Automatic

If you recognize some of these patterns in your own prayer life, the solution is not necessarily to abandon the practice. Repetition, as we've established, is not the problem. The solution is to occasionally, intentionally, refresh the practice, to pause and ask, "Do these words still reflect what's in my heart? Is there something the Spirit wants to add, change, or remove?"

For some people, this might mean occasionally praying the Lord's Prayer not as a recitation, but phrase by phrase, slowly, pausing after each phrase to actually consider what it means and whether it's true in their life right now. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Pause. Is there anyone I'm holding a debt against right now?

For others, it might mean periodically reviewing a prayer list, not to add more names, but to ask, "Is there a name on this list that I've been praying for so long I've stopped actually believing anything will change? What would it look

like to bring that name to God freshly, today, as if for the first time?"

The goal is not to eliminate routine. Routine, as we'll discuss in Part Six, is actually essential to a sustainable prayer life. The goal is to ensure that routine remains a vessel for relationship, rather than becoming a replacement for it.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words." Matthew 6:7*

Reflection Question: *Is there a prayer, a list, or a routine in your life that has become so familiar it might have gone "automatic"? What would it look like to bring fresh attention to it this week?*

Prayer Prompt: *Take one familiar prayer, the Lord's Prayer, a grace before meals, a bedtime prayer, anything you say often, and pray it slowly today, phrase by phrase, pausing to actually consider each part.*

CHAPTER 8

Reacting vs. Responding: The Prayer of Faith

We touched on this distinction in Chapter 5, but it is important enough to deserve its own fuller treatment, because it may be the single most practical diagnostic tool in this entire book for understanding why prayers stall.

A prayer in the spirit responds to God. A normal, casual prayer reacts to problems and circumstances. That is the difference, not the topic, not even the sincerity behind it, but the source and the direction of the prayer.

What Reaction Looks Like

Reaction is automatic. It doesn't require thought, reflection, or any spiritual process. If you touch a hot stove, your hand pulls back before your brain even fully registers what happened. That is reaction, fast, instinctive, and entirely focused on the stimulus.

Spiritually, reaction looks like this: something happens, a bill arrives, a diagnosis is given, a relationship fractures, a

fear surfaces, and prayer immediately becomes about that thing, framed entirely in terms of that thing, focused entirely on making that thing go away or resolve in the desired direction.

Again, there is nothing wrong with this as a starting point. The Psalms are full of exactly this kind of prayer. "Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck" (Psalm 69:1). This is raw, immediate, reactive prayer, and God receives it, because He is a Father who wants to hear from His children in their distress, not a distant judge who only accepts properly formatted petitions.

The issue is not that reactive prayer is wrong. The issue is when prayer never moves beyond reaction, when every prayer time, regardless of the topic, follows the same pattern: circumstance arises, prayer reacts to circumstance, circumstance either resolves or doesn't, and the cycle repeats, with no deepening, no widening of perspective, no encounter with anything beyond the immediate problem.

What Response Looks Like

Response, by contrast, requires a pause, even if that pause is brief. It requires something to enter the equation beyond the

immediate stimulus, in this case, the presence and perspective of the Holy Spirit.

Imagine the same bill arriving, the same diagnosis being given, the same relationship fracturing. The initial reaction might still happen, fear, worry, grief, these are human responses and the Spirit does not ask us to bypass our humanity. But somewhere in the process of prayer, something shifts. A scripture comes to mind, unbidden, that speaks to the situation from an angle the person hadn't considered. A sense of peace settles, not because the situation has changed, but because something about how the person is holding the situation has changed. The prayer moves from "fix this" to something more like "whatever happens here, keep me anchored to You, use this for Your purposes, and help me trust You with what I cannot control."

This is the prayer of faith, not faith defined as "believing hard enough that the outcome you want will happen," but faith defined, as Hebrews 11:1 describes it, as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is a confidence that is rooted in who God is and what He has promised, rather than in the immediate appearance of circumstances.

A Story of Moving from Reaction to Response

There was a young man in our community, I'll call him David, who lost his job unexpectedly after a company restructuring. For the first several weeks, his prayers were entirely, understandably, reactive. "God, please send me a new job. Please, I have bills due. Please, I can't tell my family how bad this is. Please, please, please."

This continued for about a month, with increasing desperation, and, David admits, increasing anger toward God, a quiet, simmering "why are You doing this to me" that he didn't fully voice but that colored everything.

During this time, a mentor in our community didn't tell David to stop praying this way, and didn't tell him his prayers were "wrong." Instead, the mentor simply prayed with David, and in those shared prayer times, something different began to happen. The mentor would often pause, mid-prayer, and simply sit in silence for a moment, before continuing. At first this felt strange to David, almost like an interruption. But over several weeks, David found himself, in his own private prayer times, beginning to do the same

thing, pausing, not rushing through his list of requests, allowing space for something else to surface.

One evening, during one of these pauses, David found himself thinking, unexpectedly, about a conversation he'd had years earlier with a friend who worked in a field David had always been curious about but had never pursued, because his previous job had felt "safe" and he hadn't wanted to take a risk. The thought seemed to come from nowhere, and David almost dismissed it.

But it kept returning, in the days that followed, during these pauses in prayer. Eventually, David reached out to that old friend, somewhat hesitantly, mostly out of curiosity rather than expectation. That conversation led to an introduction, which led to an interview, which led, several months later, to a job in a field David had never seriously considered before, a job that, two years later, David describes as "the best thing that ever happened to me professionally, and I would never have found it if I'd gotten what I was originally praying for."

We share this story carefully, again, not as a formula, "pause in prayer and you'll get a better job than the one you lost." That is not the point, and treating it that way would simply create a new formula to replace the old one. The point is that

David's prayer life shifted from pure reaction, focused entirely on restoring what was lost, to response, which created space for something David could not have asked for, because he didn't know it existed, to enter the picture.

The Prayer of Faith Is Not the Absence of Request

One final clarification. Moving from reaction to response does not mean you stop asking God for specific things. Philippians 4:6 tells us to make our requests known to God, specifically, "by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving." Specific requests are not the problem.

The shift from reaction to response is less about WHAT you pray and more about the posture FROM WHICH you pray. You can pray a very specific request, "Lord, please provide a job within the next thirty days," from a place of reaction, anxious, demanding, narrow. Or you can pray that same specific request from a place of response, trusting, open-handed, anchored, "Lord, I'm asking for this specifically, and I'm trusting You with how and when, and I'm trusting You even with the possibility that Your plan looks different than my request."

Same words. Different posture. And it is the posture, more than the words, that determines whether a prayer is "in the spirit."

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7*

Reflection Question: *Think of something you're currently praying about reactively, urgently, with a specific desired outcome. What would it look like to bring that same request to God, but from a posture of response rather than pure reaction?*

Prayer Prompt: *Bring your most pressing current concern to God. State your request specifically and honestly. Then pause, in silence, for at least sixty seconds, before continuing. Notice what, if anything, surfaces in that pause.*

PART THREE

THE FOUR DIMENSIONS

CHAPTER 9

Dimension One — Praying in Tongues

We now arrive at four chapters that form the practical heart of this book. We want to be clear about something before we begin. These four dimensions, praying in tongues, praying with authority, praying according to the Word, and praying through surrender, are not four separate techniques you mix and match depending on your mood, like choosing between different apps on your phone. They are four dimensions of the same reality. Think of it like light passing through a prism. One light, four colors, all coming from the same source.

We begin with praying in tongues, because for many readers, this is the dimension that carries the most discomfort, curiosity, confusion, or even painful history, depending on your background. Some traditions emphasize this gift heavily, sometimes to the point of making it a litmus test for "real" spirituality, which can create guilt and exclusion for sincere believers who have never experienced it. Other traditions are deeply suspicious of it, sometimes for understandable reasons, having witnessed abuses or

excesses associated with it. We want to approach this dimension the way we hope to approach every topic in this book: anchored in scripture, honest about complexity, and free of both hype and dismissiveness.

What Scripture Actually Says

First Corinthians 14:2 says, "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries."

And Jude verse 20 says, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."

Notice what these verses do and do not say. They describe a form of prayer directed to God, not to other people, which involves speaking in a way that is not understood by the speaker's natural mind, and which is described as "building up" the one praying. They do not describe tongues primarily as a public performance gift, though Paul does address that context separately in 1 Corinthians 14, with significant cautions about order and interpretation in corporate settings. The dimension we are focused on in this book is the

personal, private use of this gift as part of an individual's prayer life.

Bypassing Limitation

When you pray in tongues, it bypasses your limitation. Your mind may not know what to pray, but your spirit does. When you're going through something so heavy that words cannot carry it, the Spirit prays through you with a language that goes beyond what your brain can construct, beyond your education, your vocabulary, your cultural background.

This is one of the most practically useful aspects of this gift, and it is also one of the most misunderstood. People sometimes assume that praying in tongues is primarily about accessing "more power" in some abstract sense, as though it were a spiritual upgrade that makes prayers more likely to be answered. But the picture in 1 Corinthians 14:2 is different. It describes someone speaking mysteries to God, communicating at a level that transcends ordinary language, precisely because the situation, or the spiritual reality being addressed, transcends what ordinary language can capture.

Think about moments in your own life when words have genuinely failed you, not as a figure of speech, but literally.

Standing at the bedside of someone you love who is dying. Receiving news so devastating that your mind goes blank. Witnessing something so beautiful that "wow" feels like an insult to the moment. In all of these situations, human language reaches its limit. Praying in tongues, in the framework Paul describes, is a gift that allows communication with God to continue past that limit, when your spirit has something to say that your mind cannot articulate.

Mama Joy's Story

There was a woman in our community, we'll call her Mama Joy, because that's what everyone affectionately calls her. Her son had been missing for almost two weeks. He had gone to visit a friend in another town and simply stopped answering his phone. The police had no leads, the family had checked everywhere they could think of, and the not knowing was eating her alive.

She came to the prayer room one evening, and she said, "I don't have words. I don't know what to ask for. I'm afraid that if I ask for the wrong thing, or if I say 'bring him home' and he's already..." and her voice trailed off. She couldn't finish the sentence.

We sat with her for a while, not rushing her, not trying to fix the moment with quick words. Eventually, Naya told her, "Mama Joy, you don't need English right now. You don't need the right words. Let the spirit pray." And she began to pray in tongues, quietly at first, almost hesitantly, like she was testing whether it was okay, and then it built, it grew in intensity, not louder necessarily, but deeper, more from her gut. She prayed like that for almost forty minutes, with tears running down her face the entire time, but it wasn't a desperate crying, it was something else, something releasing.

Three days later, her son was found, alive, about sixty kilometers away. He had gotten into some trouble, had been afraid to come home, had been hiding out with people who weren't good for him, but he was alive and he came home.

We share this story honestly, including its outcome, because we know that not every story like this ends this way, and we will address that directly in Chapter 16. But the principle Mama Joy's story illustrates stands regardless of outcome: when you don't have words, that does not mean you cannot pray. It means it's time to let your spirit take over, because your spirit already knows what your mind cannot process.

Building Yourself Up

Jude's description of this gift as "building yourselves up on your most holy faith" points to another dimension that is sometimes overlooked. Praying in tongues is not only for crisis moments. It is also described as a regular practice that strengthens the believer over time, the way physical exercise strengthens a body over time, not primarily through dramatic single sessions, but through consistent, ordinary practice.

Many believers who have this gift describe using it during ordinary activities, while driving, while doing housework, while walking, as a way of maintaining a kind of background communion with God throughout the day. This is not about constantly speaking in tongues out loud in public settings, which Paul specifically addresses with caution in 1 Corinthians 14, but about a private practice that becomes part of the rhythm of an individual's life with God.

If You Don't Have This Gift

We want to address something directly and gently. If you have never experienced praying in tongues, this chapter may bring up feelings of exclusion, inadequacy, or even

resentment, especially if you have been in environments where this gift was treated as a prerequisite for being taken seriously spiritually.

First Corinthians 12 is clear that the Spirit distributes different gifts to different believers, and that no single gift is given to everyone, nor is any single gift, including tongues, the measure of spiritual maturity or value in the body of Christ. Paul, who clearly valued and practiced this gift himself, also wrote that love is greater than any gift, including tongues, in 1 Corinthians 13.

If you don't have this gift, the other three dimensions we're about to discuss, authority, the Word, and surrender, are fully available to you, and are not "lesser" forms of praying in the spirit. At the same time, if you sense a genuine desire to receive this gift, scripture does present it as something that can be sought, 1 Corinthians 14:1 says to "earnestly desire" spiritual gifts. We would encourage you, if this is something you desire, to bring that desire honestly to God, without anxiety, without comparing your timeline to anyone else's, and to seek out mature believers in a community you trust who can walk alongside you in that desire, rather than pursuing it in isolation or through pressure-filled environments.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries." 1 Corinthians 14:2*

Reflection Question: *Have you ever been in a situation where words genuinely failed you, where you wanted to pray but had no idea what to say? How did you navigate that moment?*

Prayer Prompt: *If you have the gift of tongues, spend a few minutes today using it, not in crisis, just as part of your ordinary prayer time, and notice what it feels like to "build yourself up" in this way. If you don't have this gift, bring your desires and questions about it honestly to God, without pressure, and ask Him to lead you.*

CHAPTER 10

Dimension Two — Praying with Authority

The second dimension of praying in the spirit is praying with authority.

This dimension addresses a posture, a stance, from which prayer is offered, and it stands in contrast to a posture that, while sincere, can sometimes drift into something scripture does not actually describe as the normal Christian experience: begging, in the sense of pleading with an uncertain, possibly reluctant God to do something He has not yet decided to do.

What the Cross Accomplished

Jesus gave His disciples authority over all the power of the enemy. Paul tells us in Colossians that through the cross, principalities were disarmed, stripped of their power publicly, like a defeated army being marched through the streets in humiliation. Colossians 2:15 says, "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."

That means when you pray, you are not begging God to deal with something He has already dealt with. You are enforcing, declaring, standing on, what has already been settled in the courts of heaven through the finished work of Christ.

Luke 10:19 says, "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

Begging vs. Commanding

There is a difference between a prayer that begs and a prayer that commands. Both can be sincere. Both can come from a place of genuine faith. But one comes from a person who knows who they are and what Christ has already accomplished on their behalf. The other comes from someone still trying to earn a response from God, still operating from a place of uncertainty about their standing before Him.

We want to be careful here, because this distinction can easily be misused to create a kind of spiritual machismo, where "real" believers command and "weak" believers beg, and where people who are going through genuinely

desperate situations are made to feel that their honest cries to God are somehow spiritually inferior.

That is not what we mean. The Psalms are full of pleading, of crying out, of "how long, O Lord" prayers that are raw and desperate and entirely appropriate. The issue is not that pleading is forbidden. The issue is a particular kind of pleading, one rooted in uncertainty about whether God is willing, whether the situation has truly been addressed by the cross, whether the believer has any standing to do anything other than ask and hope.

Authority-based prayer does not eliminate emotion, urgency, or even desperation. What it changes is the underlying assumption about what has already been accomplished and who the person praying is in relation to it.

A Story of Shifting from Begging to Commanding

There was a brother in our community who had been dealing with what he described as constant nightmares, the kind that left him exhausted every morning, for months on end. He would wake up at three or four in the morning, heart pounding, unable to remember exactly what he'd dreamed

but carrying this heaviness all day, affecting his work, his relationships, his health.

He was praying every night, "God please, please, please make it stop." Someone asked him, "Have you ever told it to stop? In Jesus' name?" He looked confused, genuinely puzzled by the question, because in his mind, prayer was only ever asking, never commanding. He had never considered that he had any authority to exercise himself.

That night, instead of begging, he stood in his room before bed and said, out loud, with his Bible open in his hand, "In the name of Jesus, by the authority I have through the finished work of the cross, I command every assignment of darkness against my sleep to cease now." He told us later it was the first peaceful night he'd had in months. Not because the words were magic, not because there was some special formula in that exact phrasing, but because he finally prayed from a place of identity instead of desperation. He prayed as a son with authority, not as a victim hoping to be noticed.

Identity Is the Foundation of Authority

Identity and authority in prayer is not about volume, and it's not about confidence in yourself, in your own strength or

willpower. It is about knowing who God is, knowing who you are in Christ, and knowing what the cross finished, completely, once and for all. Prayer changes when your identity changes.

This is why authority-based prayer cannot simply be copied as a technique. If someone hears the story above and thinks, "I'll just say those words, 'in the name of Jesus, by the authority I have, I command,'" without any underlying shift in how they understand their identity in Christ, the words become just another formula, another vain repetition, the very thing Chapter 7 warned against.

The shift has to happen at the level of belief, of self-understanding. This often comes through time spent in the Word, particularly passages that describe the believer's position in Christ, seated with Him, given authority by Him, made a new creation. Ephesians 2:6 describes believers as already "seated together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." That is not a future hope. According to this verse, it is a present reality, even though it doesn't always feel like one.

The Binding and Loosing Language

Matthew 16:19 records Jesus telling Peter, "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

That binding and loosing language is the language of authority, not the language of begging. It's the language of someone who has been given keys, and keys aren't something you ask permission to use every single time. Once they're given to you, you use them, as needed, according to the situation.

This does not mean believers operate with unlimited, unaccountable power, free to "bind" and "loose" anything they personally desire. The context of Matthew 16 is significant, this authority is given in connection with the church, the community of believers, and is exercised in alignment with God's purposes, not as a personal weapon for individual ambition. James 4:3, which we discussed earlier, applies here too. Authority misused for selfish ends is not the picture scripture presents.

But within that context, properly understood, believers are not meant to live as spiritual orphans, uncertain whether God will respond to their cries, hoping that enough pleading might eventually move Him. We are meant to live as sons

and daughters, with a standing, an identity, and yes, an authority, that flows from being in Christ.

A Closing Prayer for This Chapter

Lord, teach me to pray beyond my mind, beyond my emotions. Let Your Spirit take over my prayer life. Where I am weak, be my strength. Where I have been full of noise, bring holy stillness. I don't want to pray powerless prayers anymore. I step into alignment with You, in Jesus' name.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Luke 10:19*

Reflection Question: *Is there an area of your life where you have been "begging" God for a long time, with an underlying sense that He might or might not respond? What would it look like to bring that same situation before God from a place of settled identity rather than uncertainty?*

Prayer Prompt: *Spend time today reading Ephesians 1 and 2, specifically noting every phrase that describes who you are "in Christ." Let these truths settle before you bring any requests to God.*

CHAPTER 11

Dimension Three — Praying According to the Word

The third dimension of praying in the spirit is praying according to the Word of God.

John 6:63 tells us the words of Jesus are spirit and life. And First John tells us that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. First John 5:14 says, "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

This dimension functions almost as a built-in safeguard for the other three. The Holy Spirit will never contradict scripture. So if your prayer is not word-based, it is not spirit-led, it is being led by something else. Maybe fear. Maybe assumption. Maybe just habit, just words you've heard other people pray and repeated without thinking about whether they're even true, or whether they apply to your situation.

Turning Scripture into Prayer

A practical way to engage this dimension is to turn scripture directly into prayer. If you are going through financial pressure, you don't just ask God for help in vague terms, "God please help me, please help me financially." You remind Him of what He has already said. "Lord, You said You are my Shepherd. I shall not lack. I stand on that today."

There's something about praying God's own words back to Him that aligns your spirit with His promises in a way that generic requests simply don't. This is not because God needs to be reminded of His own promises, as if He might forget. It's because the act of praying scripture shapes the one praying, anchoring their faith in something objective, something outside their own fluctuating feelings and circumstances.

A Story of Praying Scripture Over Eviction

There was a young couple in our ministry who were behind on rent, three months behind, with an eviction notice already posted on their door. They came to us distressed,

almost in panic, asking for prayer, for a miracle, for anything.

Instead of just crying out "help us, help us" together, which is what they had been doing on their own for weeks, we sat with them and went through scripture together, slowly, deliberately. We prayed Philippians 4:19 back to God, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory." We prayed Psalm 23, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Every night for two weeks, they prayed scripture, not just requests, speaking these promises out loud over their situation, even when nothing visible was changing, even when, by the calendar, the eviction date was getting closer rather than further away.

On the fourteenth day, a man from their old church, someone they hadn't spoken to in over a year, someone they weren't even close with, called them out of nowhere and said, "I don't know why, but I felt like I needed to bless you financially, and I've been putting it off for weeks but I can't shake the feeling anymore." It covered the full three months, plus extra for the following month as well.

That is not coincidence. That is what happens when your prayer is anchored to the Word, because the Word carries the promise, and the Spirit honors the Word.

The Word as a Living Force

Isaiah 55:11 says, regarding God's word, "It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

When you pray the Word, you are releasing something that has its own built-in purpose and momentum, something that does not depend entirely on your own emotional state or eloquence to be effective. This is part of why praying scripture can be so valuable during seasons of spiritual dryness, which we'll address in Part Four, because even when you don't "feel" anything, the Word itself carries weight, independent of your feelings.

Hebrews 4:12 describes the Word of God as "living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

This is not poetic exaggeration. It describes something active, something that does work, in the spiritual realm and in the human heart, when it is engaged with, including when it is prayed.

A Note on "Claiming" Verses

We want to address a potential misuse of this dimension, because it is common enough to deserve direct attention. Praying according to the Word does not mean treating the Bible as a catalog of promises that can be "claimed" individually, out of context, as guarantees of specific personal outcomes, regardless of broader biblical context or wisdom.

For example, Philippians 4:19, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory," is a genuine promise, and praying it in the context of financial need, as the couple in our story did, is a legitimate application of this dimension. But this verse does not mean that every specific financial desire, regardless of wisdom, timing, or alignment with God's broader purposes, will be granted simply because the verse was recited.

The difference lies in posture, again, the same theme that has run throughout this book. Praying scripture from a place of genuine alignment, trust, and surrender is different from using scripture as a tool to manipulate outcomes, even when the words used are identical. First John 5:14 itself contains the key qualifier: "if we ask anything according to His will." Praying according to the Word includes praying according

to the Word's broader testimony about wisdom, timing, and God's purposes, not just isolated promise verses extracted from their context.

Building a Personal Library of Promises

One practical exercise that many in our community have found valuable is building a personal collection of scriptures that speak to recurring areas of need or struggle, not as a magic list, but as a resource for praying according to the Word in those areas.

For example, someone walking through chronic anxiety might compile verses like Philippians 4:6-7, Psalm 56:3, Isaiah 41:10, and 2 Timothy 1:7, not to recite mechanically whenever anxiety strikes, but to have readily available, so that when anxiety does strike, instead of defaulting purely to reactive prayer ("God please make this feeling stop"), there is a reservoir of scriptural truth to draw from, truth that can shape the prayer from the inside.

We will return to this idea of building practical tools for prayer in Part Six, but we mention it here because it connects directly to this dimension. Praying according to the

Word is not primarily about having the right verse memorized for the right moment, like a magic password. It's about having spent enough time in scripture that, when you pray, scripture naturally becomes part of the language you pray in, the way a person who has spent years around someone they love naturally picks up that person's expressions and ways of speaking.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." 1 John 5:14*

Reflection Question: *Is there a recurring area of need or struggle in your life where you could begin building a small collection of relevant scriptures, not to recite mechanically, but to have available as a resource for prayer?*

Prayer Prompt: *Choose one promise from scripture, Philippians 4:19, Psalm 23, or another that speaks to a current need, and spend time today praying it slowly, out loud, in your own words, allowing it to shape how you bring this need before God.*

CHAPTER 12

Dimension Four — Praying Through Surrender

We come now to the fourth dimension, and we want to say at the outset that this is the one most people miss entirely, and it might be the most important one of all.

It's praying through surrender.

What Romans 8 Describes

Romans 8:26 says, "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

That is not a metaphor. That is a real spiritual experience where the Holy Spirit is praying through you, using your body, your breath, your tears, but the source is not coming from your own understanding.

Sometimes praying in the spirit is not even speaking. It's sitting quietly before God and letting Him move through you. It's the groaning you cannot explain, a sound that

comes from somewhere deep, not performed, not planned. It's the tears that come with no clear cause, when you're not even thinking about anything sad but suddenly you're crying and you don't know why. It's the heavy burden that settles on you for someone you weren't even thinking about five minutes ago, someone whose face just appears in your mind along with this weight on your chest.

That is not weakness. That is spirit-led intercession, and it is some of the most powerful prayer that can ever happen, even though, from the outside, it might look like nothing is happening at all.

A 2am Story

Naya remembers a night, and she won't go into all the details out of respect for the people involved, but she woke up at around two in the morning with a deep, heavy weight on her chest, like something was sitting on her. Not anxiety about her own life, nothing she could connect to anything going on with her personally. Something else. Something that felt like grief, but it wasn't hers.

She started praying, but no words came. Just groaning. Just tears, streaming down her face onto her pillow in the dark.

She prayed like that, on and off, for almost two hours, until the weight lifted as suddenly as it had come, like a switch being turned off.

The next morning, she got a message from a friend in another country. There had been a tragedy in that friend's family that same night, around the same time.

She doesn't share that to make anyone afraid of going to sleep, or to suggest that every strange feeling at two in the morning is a sign of something happening somewhere. She shares it because sometimes the Spirit prays through us for things our mind doesn't even know are happening, for people on the other side of the world, for situations we have no natural way of knowing about. Sometimes you just feel something, in your chest, in your belly, something you cannot explain. But it's a groaning, and it's real, and it deserves to be honored, not dismissed as random emotion.

Surrender as the Common Thread

We described this as the fourth "dimension," but in many ways, surrender is not so much a fourth category alongside tongues, authority, and the Word, as it is the underlying

posture that makes the other three genuinely "in the spirit" rather than merely religious activity.

Praying in tongues, without surrender, can become a performance, something done to demonstrate spirituality to oneself or others. Praying with authority, without surrender, can become presumption, declaring things based on personal desire rather than genuine alignment with God's purposes. Praying according to the Word, without surrender, can become the "claiming" misuse we addressed in the last chapter, using scripture as leverage rather than communing with the God who gave it.

Surrender is what keeps all of these grounded. And surrender, by its nature, is the dimension that is hardest to "do," because the moment you try to "achieve" surrender through effort, you've reintroduced the very self-direction that surrender is meant to release.

Galatians 2:20 and the Heart of It

Paul writes in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

This is the heart of surrender. It's not about losing yourself in some scary way, becoming a blank space with no personality, no will, no individuality. It's about your will being so aligned with His that when He moves, you move, without resistance, without you constantly checking in to make sure you're still "in control."

This kind of surrender is not achieved once and then permanently maintained. It is, like the filling we discussed in Chapter 3, something returned to again and again, often many times within a single prayer session, let alone across a lifetime.

What Surrender Looks Like in Practice

Practically, surrender in prayer might look like beginning a prayer time with a specific request in mind, and being willing for that request to change, or even disappear entirely, as the Spirit leads. It might look like sitting in silence, genuinely silence, not filling the time with words, even when silence feels uncomfortable or unproductive. It might look like noticing an unexpected emotion arise during prayer, sadness, joy, even physical sensations, and staying with that,

rather than immediately trying to interpret it, explain it, or move past it.

It might also look like something much smaller and less dramatic: praying, "Lord, I don't know what to pray about this. You know what's needed here better than I do. I'm just going to sit here with You for a while."

This kind of prayer can feel, especially to those who are used to more structured or active forms of prayer, like "doing nothing." And in a sense, that's exactly right, surrender involves doing less, not more, making space for the Spirit to do what only the Spirit can do.

A Word of Caution

We want to add an important caution here, because surrender, like every other dimension, can be misunderstood or misused.

Surrender does not mean passivity in the rest of life. It does not mean, "I'll just surrender in prayer and then make no effort, no decisions, no plans, and expect everything to simply happen to me." The same Paul who wrote about being crucified with Christ also wrote extensively about working hard, making plans, and taking responsibility.

Surrender in prayer is about the posture of the heart before God; it does not eliminate the need for wisdom, effort, and action in daily life.

Additionally, surrender does not mean ignoring discernment. Romans 8:26's "groanings which cannot be uttered" describes something real, but not everything that feels intense or emotional during prayer is automatically "the Spirit." We will address discernment directly in Chapter 15, but we mention it here because surrender, rightly understood, includes surrendering even our interpretations of our own spiritual experiences to the Spirit's leading and to the wisdom of scripture and trusted community, rather than assuming every strong feeling during prayer carries automatic spiritual authority.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Romans 8:26*

Reflection Question: *When was the last time your prayer time included genuine silence, not as a pause*

between requests, but as the main substance of the time? What made that easy or difficult?

Prayer Prompt: *Set aside at least five minutes today for prayer with no agenda. Don't bring a list. Don't try to "accomplish" anything. Simply be present before God, and notice what happens, or doesn't happen, without judging either outcome.*

PART FOUR

WHEN PRAYER GETS HARD

CHAPTER 13

The Wilderness of Spiritual Dryness

Up to this point, this book has described what praying in the spirit looks like when it is working, when the dimensions are flowing, when there is a sense of connection, even in difficult circumstances. Now we need to talk honestly about what happens when none of that is your experience, when you sit down to pray and there is simply nothing there.

You sit down to pray, and nothing comes. You open your mouth, and it's quiet inside, like there's nothing there. You feel like you're just talking to a ceiling. You feel like you're talking to yourself, and you wonder if you're even doing this whole Christian thing right.

That feeling is more common than most Christians admit, far more common, even among people who look very put-together on the outside, people leading ministries, people who others look up to. And it does not mean something is wrong with you. It means you need a different entry point, a different door into the same room.

God Did Not Design Prayer to Depend on Feelings

God never designed prayer to depend on your vocabulary, or your emotional state on any given day. Some days you'll feel everything intensely, other days you'll feel like a robot going through motions, and both can still be genuine prayer if your heart is positioned correctly.

This is worth sitting with, because so much of contemporary Christian culture, especially worship culture, is built around emotional experience. Songs are designed to evoke feeling. Sermons are often structured to build toward an emotional response. None of this is inherently wrong, emotions are part of how God made us, and scripture is full of emotional worship and prayer. But when emotional experience becomes the unspoken measure of whether prayer is "working," seasons of dryness can feel like spiritual failure, even when they're not.

Three Doors for Dry Seasons

When you don't have words, you pray in tongues, if that is a gift you carry, letting your spirit pray when your mind has nothing to offer.

When you don't have words, you sit in His presence and let your heart express what your mouth cannot, even if that just looks like sitting in silence for ten or fifteen minutes, feeling nothing, but choosing to stay there anyway.

When you don't have words, pick up the Bible and let His words become your words, reading slowly, maybe out loud, letting the scripture itself become the prayer.

None of these "doors" are dramatic. None of them promise to immediately resolve the dryness. But each of them offers a way to remain in relationship, to remain present, during a season when the usual signs of connection aren't visible.

The Most Powerful Prayer Is Not the Most Articulate

Sometimes the most powerful prayer you'll ever offer is not the most articulate one. It's the most authentic one. A groan from a heart that is genuinely surrendered reaches God just as clearly as a beautifully constructed intercession, maybe even more clearly, because there's nothing performed about it.

This is a hard truth for people who are naturally articulate, people who are good with words, who can write, speak,

teach, and who might unconsciously equate the quality of their prayers with the quality of their language. Dryness can be especially disorienting for these people, because the tool they're most used to relying on, words, seems to have stopped working.

What Dryness Might Actually Be For

Spiritual dryness is not God being distant. We want to repeat that, because it is so important. Spiritual dryness is not God being distant.

Sometimes it's God removing the scaffolding of your usual prayer habits, the routines, the formulas, the familiar phrases you've said so many times they've become automatic, so that something deeper can grow underneath, something that isn't dependent on the scaffolding anymore.

Think about scaffolding on a building under construction. Scaffolding is essential during certain phases of construction. It provides support, access, structure. But scaffolding is also, by design, temporary. At some point, the scaffolding has to come down, not because it failed, but because the building has reached a point where it can stand

on its own, and the scaffolding would actually obscure the building if left in place permanently.

Spiritual practices, routines, even gifts, can function like scaffolding. They support growth during certain seasons. But if a person's entire spiritual life remains dependent on the scaffolding indefinitely, never developing the capacity to stand without it, something has gone wrong, even if the scaffolding itself was never the problem.

Dryness can be one of the ways God removes scaffolding, not to leave a person without support, but to reveal and strengthen something underneath that the scaffolding had been obscuring, a deeper, less feeling-dependent capacity for faith and communion.

When the Words Stop, Don't Stop

When the words stop, don't stop. Just shift, from speaking, to yielding.

This is perhaps the single most important sentence in this chapter. The temptation during dry seasons is often to either force words, to keep talking, keep performing the outward shape of prayer even though it feels hollow, hoping that eventually the feeling will return, or to stop altogether, to

quietly drift away from prayer because "it's not working" and there seems to be no point.

There is a third option, neither forcing nor stopping, but shifting. Shifting from the active, verbal mode that most people default to, toward a more receptive, yielded mode. This might look like simply sitting, breathing, being present, without trying to generate anything.

A Season That Lasted Longer Than Expected

We want to be honest that dry seasons do not always resolve quickly, and we don't want to give the impression that if you just "shift to yielding" for a few days, the dryness will lift and everything will return to how it was.

There was a woman in our community who walked through a season of spiritual dryness that lasted nearly two years. She describes it as "going through the motions" for most of that time, attending church, reading her Bible, praying, but feeling almost nothing, and at times wondering whether her faith itself had been real in the first place.

What she describes from that season is not a dramatic breakthrough moment where everything suddenly felt

vibrant again. Instead, she describes a slow, almost imperceptible shift, looking back after the fact and realizing that her faith, while it had felt dead for those two years, had actually been operating on a different level the entire time, a level not dependent on feeling. She had kept showing up. She had kept being honest with God, even when "honest" meant saying, "I don't feel anything, and I don't understand why."

When the dryness eventually did lift, gradually, not suddenly, she describes her faith afterward as fundamentally different than before, less dependent on emotional experience, more rooted in something she describes as simply "knowing," even when she couldn't fully explain what she knew or how she knew it.

We share this not to suggest that two years is a "normal" length for dry seasons, there's no such thing as normal here, every person's journey is different, but to be honest that dryness can last longer than we'd like, and that the absence of a quick resolution does not mean something has gone wrong.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm 42:1-2*

Reflection Question: *Are you currently in, or have you recently been in, a season of spiritual dryness? What has your response to that dryness looked like, forcing, stopping, or shifting?*

Prayer Prompt: *If you're in a dry season right now, don't try to force feeling. Simply sit before God for a few minutes and say honestly, "I don't feel anything right now, and I'm choosing to stay here anyway." That honesty is itself a form of prayer.*

CHAPTER 14

The Wandering Mind: Drift, Yieldedness, and Re-Surrender

Let's be honest about something. You start praying in the spirit, and three minutes in, you're thinking about what you need to do later that day. Your mind drifts to a conversation from two days ago that's still bothering you. You get halfway through intercession and realize you've been mentally re-planning your week for the last five minutes, completely unaware you'd even stopped praying.

Your mind will try to drift. It will happen. This is not a sign that you're not spiritual. It is a sign that you're human, with a brain that's wired to wander, to plan, to worry, to remember.

It's a Yieldedness Problem, Not a Focus Problem

Here's what's actually happening when prayer drifts. It is not primarily a focus problem, even though it feels that way. It's a yieldedness problem. The moment you unconsciously

take back control of the prayer session, even without realizing it, the spirit-led flow stops, and your mind rushes in to fill the silence with its own agenda, because silence makes the mind uncomfortable.

This distinction matters because it changes how you respond to drift. If drift is purely a "focus problem," the natural response is willpower, trying harder to concentrate, perhaps through sheer effort, gritting your teeth and forcing your attention back, again and again, in a way that can become exhausting and discouraging.

But if drift is a "yieldedness problem," the response looks different. It's not about gripping tighter. It's about releasing again, returning to the posture of surrender, gently, without frustration, as many times as needed.

The Remedy: Notice, Pause, Realign, Re-yield

The remedy is not to shame yourself and start over from scratch in frustration, beating yourself up, saying, "I can't even pray for five minutes without getting distracted, what is wrong with me." The remedy is much simpler than that.

Notice the drift, without condemnation, just notice it. This first step is more important than it might seem. The moment you notice your mind has wandered is itself a moment of awareness, of presence, even if the content of your thoughts had wandered far away. Don't let that moment of noticing become an occasion for self-criticism. Simply notice, the way you might notice a cloud passing overhead, without judgment.

Pause. Don't immediately rush to "fix" anything. Just pause, for a moment, in the awareness that your mind had wandered.

Realign, return to the Word, or to tongues, or to a simple phrase like "Lord, I'm here, lead me." This realignment doesn't need to be elaborate. Its purpose is simply to re-anchor your attention, gently, in the direction of God.

And re-yield, hand the steering wheel back, again, as many times as you need to in a single prayer session, even if that's twenty or thirty times.

Twenty or thirty times. We want to emphasize that number, because many people assume that if their mind wanders more than once or twice during a prayer time, something has gone seriously wrong, that "real" prayer involves sustained,

unbroken focus for extended periods. For most people, most of the time, this is simply not realistic, and expecting it sets up a cycle of failure and discouragement.

If drift happens twenty times during a twenty-minute prayer time, and each time it is noticed, gently realigned, and re-yielded, that twenty-minute prayer time has involved twenty small acts of surrender. That is not a failure. In a very real sense, that IS the prayer, the repeated, humble return to yieldedness, over and over, which is itself a posture the Spirit honors.

Staying Anchored in the Word

Practically, this looks like staying anchored in the Word so your mind has something to come back to when it wanders. If you can pray in tongues, use that to reset your focus when your mind drifts off, like a rope you can grab onto.

Some people find it helpful to have a specific verse or short phrase from scripture that they return to, repeatedly, throughout a prayer time, not as the entire content of the prayer, but as an anchor point. For example, someone might choose Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God," and

whenever they notice their mind has drifted, they simply return to that phrase, slowly, a few times, before continuing.

This is different from the "vain repetition" we discussed in Chapter 7, because the purpose here is not to generate spiritual power through repetition, but simply to provide a consistent anchor point for re-yielding attention, the way a compass needle, even when it swings wildly due to movement, always settles back toward north.

Slowing Down

Slow down, you are not racing through prayer like it's an item on a to-do list that needs to be checked off before you move on to the next thing.

Much of the anxiety around mind-wandering during prayer comes from an underlying sense of urgency, "I only have fifteen minutes, and I need to get through my prayer list, and now I've wasted three of those minutes thinking about my grocery list." This urgency itself contributes to the problem, because urgency is itself a form of un-yieldedness, a clinging to a particular outcome, agenda, or timeline.

Slowing down doesn't necessarily mean praying for longer, though it might. It means releasing the sense that prayer is

a task to be efficiently completed. Remember, prayer is not a speech you're delivering, with a beginning, middle, and end that needs to be performed correctly. It is a relationship you are in, and relationships have quiet moments, distracted moments, moments where you have to bring your attention back, just like any conversation with someone you love.

A Practical Exercise

Here is an exercise that some in our community have found helpful for building the "notice, pause, realign, re-yield" pattern into a tangible habit.

Set aside a specific, short amount of time, even just five minutes. During this time, your only goal is to practice the pattern, not to "accomplish" any particular prayer agenda. Begin with a simple phrase of surrender, something like "Lord, I'm here, lead me." Then sit in silence.

When your mind wanders, and it will, simply notice it, without judgment, and gently return to the phrase, "Lord, I'm here, lead me," before returning to silence.

Do this for the full five minutes, regardless of how many times your mind wanders. The goal is not to achieve a

wander-free five minutes. The goal is to practice noticing and returning, gently, as many times as needed.

Over time, many people find that this practice, done regularly, begins to change the quality of their longer prayer times as well, not because their minds wander less, necessarily, but because the pattern of noticing and gently returning becomes more natural, less frustrating, more woven into the fabric of how they pray.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10*

Reflection Question: *When your mind wanders during prayer, what is your typical internal response, frustration, self-criticism, giving up, or something else? What would it look like to respond with gentle noticing instead?*

Prayer Prompt: *Try the five-minute exercise described above today. Don't judge the outcome. Simply practice noticing and returning, as many times as needed.*

CHAPTER 15

Discerning the Spirit: Is This Really God or Just Me?

This is the question almost nobody asks out loud, but almost everyone has thought at some point. "How do I know the Holy Spirit is actually directing my prayer, and I'm not just talking to myself, making things up, convincing myself something is from God when it's really just my own desires?"

We want to answer this honestly, because the way people usually answer it isn't very helpful. They say, "You'll just know." And for someone who has never felt that clarity, who has spent years wondering if they're doing this right, that answer means nothing. It can even feel dismissive, like you're being told there's a secret club and either you're in it or you're not.

Discernment Markers, Not Vague Feelings

Jesus said the Spirit of truth will guide us into all truth. John tells us the spirit that confesses Christ is from God. And Paul

tells us the fruit of the Spirit includes peace. Those are not vague spiritual feelings that only certain special people get to experience. Those are discernment markers, and you can actually test for them, like checking a recipe against the ingredients you used.

John 16:13 says, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

Four Markers

When the Holy Spirit is directing your prayer, a few things will be true.

First, what you're praying aligns with scripture, not around it, not despite it, in line with it. If what you're praying contradicts what God has clearly said in His Word, that's a red flag, no matter how strongly you feel it.

Second, there is a peace underneath the prayer, not performance anxiety, not the feeling that you need to keep going because you're afraid of what happens if you stop.

Third, what you're saying glorifies Jesus, not yourself, not your own reputation, your own comfort, your own image in front of others.

Fourth, there is an authority in the words that surprises even you, because it's not from you, it feels like it's coming through you rather than from you.

The flesh is loud and anxious. It's always pushing, always driving, always trying to make something happen right now, on its own timeline. But the Spirit is firm and peaceful, even when addressing urgent or serious matters.

And prayer in the spirit always transforms, it always leads you into revelation, always gives you clarity and vision, even if that clarity comes slowly, and always leaves you with peace rather than agitation, even if the situation itself hasn't changed yet.

Three Questions After Prayer

So after you pray, ask yourself three questions. Did what I prayed align with scripture? Did it glorify Jesus? Did I feel peace, or performance?

The Spirit always produces all three, consistently, over time. The flesh rarely produces any of them honestly, even when it mimics the language of spirituality.

We want to be careful with the word "always" here, because we don't want to create a new anxiety, where someone, after every prayer time, anxiously runs through this checklist, worried that if even one item doesn't perfectly check out, their entire prayer time was somehow invalid or "just them."

These markers are meant to be used over time, as a general pattern, not as a pass-fail test applied to every single moment of prayer. A single prayer time that ends with mixed feelings, some peace, some uncertainty, doesn't mean that prayer time was worthless or "not from God." Discernment is a skill that develops with practice, the way a musician develops an ear for whether a note is in tune, gradually, through repeated exposure, not through a single rigid test applied in isolation.

When Strong Feelings Aren't Necessarily the Spirit

We touched on this in Chapter 12, but it deserves more attention here. Not every strong feeling, impression, or

sense of certainty during prayer is automatically "the Holy Spirit speaking." Human beings are capable of generating intense emotional experiences for many reasons, physical tiredness, group dynamics, personal desires, even simple suggestibility.

This doesn't mean every emotional experience during prayer should be treated with suspicion, as though feeling anything is dangerous. But it does mean that the four markers above, scriptural alignment, peace, glorifying Jesus, and a sense of authority "not from you," are meant to function as checks, especially for experiences that carry significant weight, that might lead to major decisions or declarations.

A Story of Discernment Over Time

There was a man in our community who, during a particularly emotional prayer meeting, felt a strong sense that he was supposed to leave his job immediately and start a ministry. The feeling was intense, accompanied by tears, and several people around him in the meeting affirmed it enthusiastically in the moment.

Rather than acting immediately, this man brought the experience to a small group of mature believers he trusted,

people who knew him well over a long period of time, and who were not present at the emotional meeting itself. He described what he'd felt, honestly, including how intense it had been.

The group didn't dismiss his experience, but they also didn't immediately affirm it as a directive to act. Instead, they asked questions. Did this align with patterns they'd observed in his life over time, gifts, burdens, conversations he'd had previously? Did it align with his current responsibilities, a family that depended on his income, commitments he'd made? Was there peace as he sat with the idea over the following days and weeks, or did the peace seem to depend entirely on recreating the intensity of that original moment?

Over the following months, as he continued to pray about this and discuss it with this trusted group, a clearer picture emerged, not a simple "yes, do it" or "no, don't," but a more nuanced direction: there were ministry gifts in him that had been underused, and there were practical steps he could take, starting small, alongside his current job, rather than an immediate, dramatic departure.

Two years later, that small beginning had grown into something significant, but it had grown gradually, with

wisdom, community input, and ongoing discernment, rather than from a single emotional moment treated as an unquestionable directive.

We share this story not to discourage believers from acting on strong impressions during prayer, sometimes God does lead through sudden, clear, even dramatic impressions, and scripture contains examples of this. But discernment, as the word itself suggests, involves discerning, weighing, testing, often over time and often in community, rather than treating every intense experience as automatically self-validating.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." John 16:13*

Reflection Question: *Have you ever had a strong impression during prayer that you weren't sure how to evaluate? Who are the people in your life you could bring something like that to, for honest, loving feedback?*

Prayer Prompt: *If you're currently sitting with an impression or sense of direction from a recent prayer time,*

don't rush to act on it or dismiss it. Bring it honestly before God again today, and ask Him to confirm it over time, through scripture, peace, and trusted community.

CHAPTER 16:

When Nothing Seems to Change: Waiting, Daniel 10, and Paul's Thorn

We need to address something that comes up constantly, in our messages, in our community, in our own lives. What if you pray in the spirit, genuinely, sincerely, engaging all four dimensions we've described, tongues, authority, the Word, surrender, and the situation stays exactly the same? What if nothing changes?

We honor this question, because it is real, and we've asked it ourselves, more than once, about more than one situation.

Not a Vending Machine

Praying in the spirit is not a vending machine. It's not "insert correct prayer, receive correct outcome." If it worked that way, prayer would just be a more sophisticated form of manipulation, the very thing Naya left behind when she came to Christ, just with Christian vocabulary attached to it.

What praying in the spirit guarantees is alignment, not always immediate visible change. It guarantees that you are connected to the source, that you are being shaped, that your spirit is being strengthened, even in situations where the external circumstances take longer to shift, or shift in ways you didn't expect, or don't shift at all in the way you originally hoped.

Daniel's Three Weeks

Daniel chapter 10 describes Daniel praying and fasting for three weeks before an answer came. During that time, it turns out, there was a battle happening in the unseen realm the entire time, completely outside of Daniel's awareness. The angel who eventually appeared to Daniel explained that he had been "withstood" for those three weeks, and that the answer Daniel had been praying for had actually been set in motion from the very first day, even though Daniel experienced nothing visible for three full weeks.

Daniel didn't stop praying because the first few days, or even the first two weeks, produced no visible result. He stayed in it.

This passage doesn't give us a formula, "if you pray for exactly three weeks, you'll get your answer." What it gives us is a picture, a glimpse behind the curtain, of a reality that is often hidden from us: that delay, from our perspective, does not necessarily mean absence of activity, from God's perspective.

Paul's Thorn

Paul prayed three times for a thorn in his flesh to be removed, described in 2 Corinthians 12. And the answer wasn't removal. The answer was, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

That was still an answer. It was still the Spirit responding. It just wasn't the answer Paul initially asked for.

This is, for many people, the hardest truth in this entire book. We have been taught, often implicitly, that "real" answers to prayer look like the removal of the difficulty, the healing of the diagnosis, the restoration of the relationship, the provision of the finances. And often, God does answer in exactly those ways, scripture and our own community's testimonies are full of such stories.

But sometimes, the answer is something else. Sometimes the answer is strength to endure what cannot, in this season, be removed. Sometimes the answer is a reframing, a new understanding of the situation that doesn't change the situation itself but changes what it means, what it's for, how it's carried.

Has Something Happened That Doesn't Look Like What You Expected?

If you've been praying in the spirit and you feel like nothing has happened, we want to gently challenge that.

Has nothing happened, or has something happened that doesn't look like what you expected?

Has your heart softened toward someone? Has fear lost some of its grip, even slightly? Has a thought pattern that used to dominate you started to lose its power, even if the actual circumstance hasn't resolved yet?

Sometimes the answer comes first on the inside, and the outside catches up later, sometimes much later, in ways that connect back to that season of prayer in ways you won't even recognize until you look back on it.

We are not saying this to minimize genuine, severe, unresolved suffering. There are situations, illnesses that don't heal, relationships that don't reconcile, losses that don't reverse, where "your heart softened a little" can feel like a painfully small consolation compared to what was actually being asked for. We don't want to paper over that reality with a tidy spiritual explanation.

What we are saying is that the absence of the specific outcome you were praying for does not automatically mean your prayer "didn't work," as though prayer were a mechanism that either produces the requested output or fails. Something is always happening in the spiritual realm, in your own heart, in ways that may not be visible or measurable, when you pray in the spirit.

What Long Waiting Does to a Heart

We want to talk for a moment about seasons where you've been praying about the same thing for years. Years, not months. We don't want to give a quick answer that minimizes how hard that is.

What we've observed, in our own lives and in the lives of many in our community, is that praying in the spirit changes

what the waiting does to you. Waiting in the flesh hardens you, makes you bitter, makes you compare your life to others, makes you start bargaining with God or pulling away from Him out of disappointment.

Waiting in the spirit, and we want to be honest, it doesn't make the waiting feel good, it's still hard, but it does something different to your heart during that time. It keeps you tender instead of hardened. It keeps you hopeful instead of cynical. It keeps you connected instead of distant.

And often, by the time the answer comes, if it comes, you're not the same person who started praying for it, and in some ways, that transformation in you was part of the answer all along, maybe even a necessary part, preparing you for what was coming, or preparing you to carry what you're still carrying, in a way you couldn't have before.

Holding Both Truths

This chapter holds two truths in tension, and we don't want to resolve that tension artificially, because we don't believe scripture resolves it artificially either.

The first truth is that God does answer prayer, often in ways that change circumstances directly, healing, provision,

restoration, breakthrough. These are not rare exceptions; they are part of the normal testimony of scripture and of countless believers throughout history and in our own community.

The second truth is that sometimes, for reasons we cannot always understand, the answer is not the removal of the difficulty, but something else, grace, strength, transformation, a different kind of breakthrough than the one originally requested.

Praying in the spirit does not eliminate this tension. What it does is keep you in relationship through it, responsive rather than merely reactive, surrendered rather than merely demanding, anchored in the Word rather than merely in your own expectations, regardless of which of these two truths is unfolding in your particular situation, at this particular time.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Corinthians 12:9*

Reflection Question: *Is there something you've been praying about for a long time without the outcome you're hoping for? Setting aside the specific outcome for a moment, has anything changed in you, in how you carry this, in how you relate to God about it, during this season of praying?*

Prayer Prompt: *Bring your long-standing request before God again today, honestly. Then add something like this: "Lord, I'm still asking for this. And I'm also asking You to do whatever needs to be done in me, in the meantime, regardless of when or how this resolves."*

PART FIVE

GOING DEEPER

CHAPTER 17

Worship as a Doorway, Not a Warm-Up

There's one more thing we want to share before moving into the more practical sections of this book, because it ties everything together, and it's something that took Naya years to discover even after she understood all four dimensions intellectually.

Praise and worship are not just the warm-up act before the "real" prayer begins. Naya used to think of worship as something you do for ten minutes to get yourself in the mood, and then the actual prayer, the requests, the intercession, that's where the real work happens. But she's come to see it differently now. Worship is often the doorway itself. It's not preparation for praying in the spirit, it often IS praying in the spirit, in its purest form.

What Happens When You Worship

Think about it this way. When you worship, genuinely, not just singing along to a track but actually fixing your attention on who God is, His character, His faithfulness, His holiness,

something happens to your perspective. Your problems don't disappear, but they shrink in proportion to who He is. And from that posture, when you do move into intercession, into requests, into warfare, it comes from a completely different place than if you had jumped straight into asking.

This connects directly to the discussion of reaction versus response in Chapter 8. Worship, by directing attention toward God's character and faithfulness before addressing specific requests, naturally shifts prayer from a purely reactive mode into a responsive one. It's difficult to remain purely panicked about a situation while simultaneously, genuinely, contemplating God's faithfulness across generations, His power over creation, His track record of covenant-keeping. Not impossible, the two can coexist, but worship tends to recalibrate the proportions.

A Season of Worship Instead of Asking

Naya remembers a season, a few years ago now, when she was carrying a lot, financial pressure, a relationship that had just ended badly, and some health concerns with a family member that had everyone on edge.

She sat down one evening to pray and had this whole list, mentally organized, almost like an agenda for a meeting. But she started with worship first, just because that's the rhythm she'd built into her routine. And about ten minutes in, she just stopped. She wasn't asking for anything anymore. She was just there, aware of how big God is compared to everything on her list, and aware, almost uncomfortably at first, of how small her list actually was in comparison, not unimportant, He cares about every item on it, but small in the sense of, He's not overwhelmed by any of it the way she was.

She ended up spending almost the entire time she had set aside just worshiping, and barely touched her list of requests. And yet, over the following weeks, every single thing on that list moved, in one way or another. Not all in the direction she expected, the relationship didn't get back together, and honestly looking back she's grateful it didn't, but there was peace about it that hadn't been there before. The financial pressure eased through an opportunity she hadn't anticipated. The health situation with her family member resolved better than the initial reports suggested it might.

Not a Formula, a Recalibration

We are not saying worship is a formula either, where if you worship "correctly" for the right amount of time, things will work out. That would just be another version of the vending machine thinking we addressed in Chapter 16.

What we are saying is that worship recalibrates you. It puts you back in right relationship with the size of God versus the size of your situation, and from that recalibrated place, your prayers, whether in tongues, in authority, in the Word, or in surrender, carry a different weight, because they're coming from someone who has just remembered who they're talking to.

If you find that your prayer times feel heavy, like you're dragging yourself into God's presence carrying all your burdens on your back, try beginning with worship, real worship, not as a technique but as an actual shift in attention, away from yourself and onto Him, even if it's just for a few minutes before you move into anything else. See what happens to the rest of your time after that.

We want to address something practical here. For many people, "worship" is associated almost exclusively with music, songs, instruments, a worship team. And music can

absolutely be a powerful vehicle for worship. But worship, at its core, is the act of ascribing worth to God, declaring or contemplating who He is, and music is one expression of that, not the only one.

If you don't have access to music, or if music isn't part of your personal prayer practice for whatever reason, worship can also look like reading aloud a psalm of praise, Psalm 145 or Psalm 103, for example, slowly, letting each phrase land. It can look like simply naming, out loud or in writing, specific things you know to be true about God's character, His faithfulness, His patience, His power, His love, not as an abstract theological exercise, but as genuine acknowledgment, the way you might genuinely acknowledge the qualities of someone you deeply respect and love.

It can also look like gratitude, specific, detailed gratitude, not generic "thank you for everything" but "thank you for this specific thing that happened this week, thank you for this specific person in my life, thank you for this specific provision." Gratitude and worship are closely related, both involve turning attention away from what's lacking and toward what's present, away from need and toward goodness already received.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." Psalm 103:1-2*

Reflection Question: *When you think of your prayer time, do you think of worship as a "warm-up" or as part of the substance? What would change if you gave worship more time and attention, even at the expense of your list of requests?*

Prayer Prompt: *Begin your prayer time today with at least five minutes of worship, music, scripture, or simply naming truths about God's character, before bringing any requests. Notice what, if anything, shifts by the time you do bring your requests.*

CHAPTER 18

Praying Together: The Power of Corporate Spirit-Led Prayer

Everything we've described so far can sound very individual, just you and God in a quiet room, and that is so important, but it's not the whole picture. There is something that happens when believers pray together in the spirit that doesn't happen the same way alone, not because God is more present with more people, He's not limited like that, but because something is released corporately that builds and strengthens each person present.

Acts 2 and the Gathered Believers

Acts chapter 2 describes the believers gathered together in one place, in one accord, when the Holy Spirit came in a way that affected the entire group at once, not just individuals scattered in their own rooms. There's a unity that prayer in the spirit creates, and that unity itself becomes part of the testimony.

This pattern isn't limited to the dramatic events of Acts 2. Throughout the New Testament, prayer is frequently

described as something the early believers did together, not exclusively, but significantly, as a regular part of their shared life. Acts 1:14 describes the disciples continuing "with one accord in prayer and supplication" before Pentecost. Acts 4:31 describes the place where believers were gathered being shaken as they prayed together.

If You Have Even One or Two People

If you have people around you who also understand this, even just one or two people, we'd encourage you to pray together sometimes, not performing for each other, but genuinely surrendering together, taking turns, sitting in silence together, praying in tongues together if that's part of your experience. There's a strengthening that happens there that's hard to describe until you've experienced it.

We recognize that for many readers, this might feel like the most difficult dimension to access. Praying privately is something you can do regardless of your circumstances, your church situation, your geographic location. Praying with others requires others, people who are willing, available, and ideally, at least somewhat aligned in their understanding of what spirit-led prayer looks like.

If you don't currently have this in your life, we want to gently encourage you not to give up on it, while also not feeling that your prayer life is somehow incomplete without it. Individual prayer, as we've described throughout this book, is fully legitimate and powerful. Corporate prayer adds something, but its absence does not subtract from what individual prayer is.

What Corporate Prayer Looks Like When It's Working

When corporate prayer is functioning in the spirit, rather than as a series of individual prayers happening to occur in the same room, sequentially, with no real connection between them, there's often a quality of "building," where one person's prayer seems to pick up and extend a theme from another person's prayer, sometimes without any verbal coordination, as though everyone present is being led by the same Spirit toward the same general direction, even while each person's contribution is unique.

There's also often a quality of "carrying," where someone who is struggling, who perhaps cannot find words themselves in a particular moment, is carried by the prayers

of others present, not in the sense of being passive or absent, but in the sense that the corporate prayer creates a kind of spiritual environment that supports each individual within it.

And there's often, though not always, a quality of unusual unity, sensed afterward more than during, where people who came into the prayer time with different concerns, different emotional states, even different opinions about unrelated matters, leave with a sense of connection to each other that wasn't manufactured by anyone's effort, but emerged from the shared experience of surrendering together.

A Caution About Performance in Group Settings

We want to add a caution here, because group settings, more than individual prayer, can create pressure toward performance, the very thing this entire book has been trying to move readers away from.

In a group setting, there can be subtle (or not so subtle) social pressure to pray "well," to demonstrate spirituality to others present, to match the intensity or style of others, or

to avoid silence because silence in a group can feel awkward in a way that silence alone does not.

If you are part of a group that prays together, it can be valuable, occasionally, to name this directly, not in a heavy-handed way, but simply as a reminder: "Let's not worry about how this sounds. Let's just be honest with God together, even if that means silence, even if that means someone's prayer sounds different than usual."

Groups that can hold this kind of permission, permission for silence, permission for prayers that don't sound "impressive," permission for someone to simply say, "I don't have words today, but I'm here," tend to develop a depth over time that performance-oriented groups, even very passionate ones, often struggle to reach.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Acts 1:14*

Reflection Question: *Do you have people in your life with whom you pray, not just alongside, but together, in the sense described in this chapter? If not, is there someone you could invite into this, even just occasionally?*

Prayer Prompt: *If you have the opportunity this week, pray with at least one other person, not a formal "prayer meeting" necessarily, just a shared moment of prayer. Before you begin, agree together to release any pressure around how it "should" sound.*

CHAPTER 19

Strongholds, Authority, and Spiritual Warfare in Prayer

We touched on the dimension of praying with authority in Chapter 10, addressing the difference between begging and commanding, rooted in identity in Christ. In this chapter, we want to expand on this in the specific context of what scripture calls spiritual warfare, addressing strongholds, patterns, and influences that resist the purposes of God in a person's life, family, or community.

We approach this topic carefully, because it is an area where excess and imbalance are common, in both directions. Some traditions see spiritual warfare behind every difficulty, attributing illness, financial struggle, relational conflict, or even bad weather to direct demonic activity requiring aggressive "warfare" prayer. Other traditions are so wary of this framework that they avoid the topic almost entirely, even though scripture itself uses this language directly.

What Scripture Actually Describes

Ephesians 6:12 says, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

This verse establishes that there is a dimension to human struggle that is not purely explained by visible, natural causes, people, circumstances, biology, alone. At the same time, the same letter that contains this verse also contains extensive, practical instruction about everyday relationships, marriage, parenting, work, speech, suggesting that "spiritual warfare" is not meant to replace attention to these ordinary, practical dimensions of life, but exists alongside them.

2 Corinthians 10:4 says, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds."

A "stronghold," in this context, is often understood as an entrenched pattern, a way of thinking, believing, or behaving that has become deeply fortified, resistant to ordinary efforts at change. This can apply to individuals, families (generational patterns), and even communities or nations.

Authority Applied to Strongholds

Building on Chapter 10's discussion of authority, praying against strongholds is not primarily about generating spiritual force through intensity, the "louder is more powerful" misconception we addressed in Chapter 6. It's about applying the authority that already belongs to believers in Christ, specifically, intentionally, to areas of entrenched resistance.

This might look like identifying a specific pattern, a cycle of addiction that has affected multiple generations of a family, a recurring relational dynamic, a persistent area of fear or shame that doesn't respond to ordinary effort, and praying specifically about that pattern, not generically ("God help our family") but specifically ("In the name of Jesus, I declare that the cycle of [specific pattern] that has affected our family does not have authority over [specific person or the family as a whole]. I stand on the finished work of the cross, which has already dealt with every power contrary to God's purposes for us.")

A Story of Generational Prayer

There was a family in our community with a documented pattern, across at least three generations that they were aware of, of early, difficult divorces, marriages that began with hope and ended, often within the first five years, in painful separation, despite no single, consistent "cause" that family members could identify, infidelity in some cases, financial conflict in others, simple incompatibility in others still.

A member of the youngest generation, recently married herself, became aware of this pattern and felt a strong sense, during a time of prayer, that this was an area to specifically address, not out of fear, but as an act of intentional authority.

Over a period of months, she began praying specifically about this pattern, not with anxiety, "please don't let my marriage fail like the others," but with declaration, acknowledging the pattern, acknowledging that Christ's authority extends over generational patterns, and declaring that her marriage, and her household, would walk in a different inheritance than this particular pattern represented.

We want to be careful with how we present the outcome here, because we do not want to suggest that this kind of prayer functions as a guarantee, "pray this way and your marriage definitely won't end in divorce." Marriages involve two people, ongoing choices, and many factors beyond any single prayer practice. What we can say is that this woman describes a noticeable shift, not in circumstances initially, but in her own posture toward her marriage, a kind of vigilance and intentionality about patterns that, in her words, "I don't think I would have noticed or addressed if I hadn't first recognized them as something to specifically bring before God, rather than just hoping things would be different this time."

Several years later, her marriage remains intact, navigating its own challenges as all marriages do, but without, so far, repeating the pattern she had identified.

A Necessary Balance

We want to close this chapter with an important balance. Praying with authority against strongholds is not a substitute for wisdom, counseling, accountability, and practical action. If the family in the story above had relied solely on prayer, without the woman and her husband also

engaging in healthy communication practices, seeking counseling when needed, and making practical decisions about their marriage, prayer alone would not have been a magic shield against the very real, practical factors that contribute to relational breakdown.

Spiritual warfare, rightly understood, addresses a real dimension of reality, but it does not replace the other dimensions, physical, emotional, relational, practical, that scripture also takes seriously. James 1:5 tells us that if anyone lacks wisdom, they should ask God, who gives it generously. Sometimes the answer to "warfare" prayer is not a dramatic confrontation in the spiritual realm, but practical wisdom for the natural realm, a phone call to make, a conversation to have, a counselor to see, a boundary to set.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds." 2 Corinthians 10:4*

Reflection Question: *Are there any patterns, in your own life or your family's history, that feel "entrenched," resistant to ordinary effort at change? How might you*

bring these specifically before God, with authority rooted in Christ's finished work, while also remaining open to practical wisdom and action?

Prayer Prompt: *If a specific pattern comes to mind, name it specifically before God today. Declare, in your own words, that Christ's authority extends over this pattern, and ask for both spiritual breakthrough and practical wisdom regarding any natural steps you might need to take.*

CHAPTER 20

Praying for Your Family and Household

Much of what we've discussed in this book applies to personal, individual prayer, but the dimensions of praying in the spirit, tongues, authority, the Word, and surrender, also apply powerfully to praying for others, and particularly for those closest to us, our families and households.

The Unique Challenge of Praying for Family

Praying for family members carries a unique emotional weight that praying for strangers, or even for ourselves, often does not. We carry history with our family members, hopes for them, fears about them, and often, complicated feelings, love mixed with frustration, hope mixed with disappointment, that can make prayer for family feel especially fraught.

This is precisely why the dimensions we've discussed matter so much in this context. Praying for family purely out of

reaction, "God, please make my son stop doing this," "God, please make my marriage feel the way it used to," "God, please fix my relationship with my mother," is understandable and not wrong, but it can also become a cycle of frustration if it never moves into response, into the kind of prayer that engages tongues, authority, the Word, and surrender.

Praying According to the Word for Family

One of the most practical applications of Dimension Three, praying according to the Word, is in praying scripture over family members. Rather than only praying about specific behaviors or situations, "please make him stop," praying scripture invites a broader, often less anxious, framework.

For example, praying Isaiah 54:13 over children, "All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children," shifts the prayer from a specific behavioral demand to a broader declaration of God's purposes for that child's life, a declaration that can be prayed consistently regardless of the child's current behavior or season.

Similarly, praying Joshua 24:15 over a household, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," is less a request and more a declaration, an alignment of the household's direction with God's purposes, prayed by one member on behalf of the whole, even when not every member of the household shares that alignment in the moment.

Surrender in Praying for Family

Dimension Four, surrender, is often the most difficult to apply when praying for family, precisely because we tend to have the strongest attachments, and therefore the strongest desires for specific outcomes, when it comes to those we love most.

Surrender in this context does not mean lowering our hopes for our family members, or pretending we don't care deeply about specific outcomes, a child's choices, a spouse's wellbeing, a parent's health. It means holding those hopes before God honestly, while also remaining open to the reality that we cannot control other people, that they have their own will, their own relationship (or lack of one) with God, and that our prayers, while powerful, operate within that reality, not as a override of it.

A Story of Praying for an Adult Child

There was a mother in our community whose adult son had walked away from his faith in his early twenties, and had also become distant from the family more broadly, not hostile, but disengaged, difficult to reach, unwilling to discuss anything related to faith or family expectations.

For years, this mother's prayers for her son followed a familiar pattern: pleading with God to "bring him back," to "open his eyes," to "make him see." These prayers were sincere, and we don't want to suggest there's anything wrong with this kind of prayer, especially in the early stages of a painful situation.

Over time, through her own engagement with the dimensions described in this book, her prayers for her son began to change, not in frequency, she prayed for him just as often, but in shape. She began praying scripture over him, often without his knowledge, declarations about God's pursuit of him, about seeds planted in his childhood not being wasted, about God's patience and timing. She began praying with authority, not against her son, but on his behalf, declaring that whatever was keeping him distant did not have the final word over his life.

And she began practicing surrender, specifically, around her own anxiety and need for control. This looked like, in her words, "praying for him and then actually letting go of the outcome for that day, not in the sense of giving up, but in the sense of not carrying it around all day, turning it back over to God instead of replaying it in my mind."

She describes this shift as having changed her relationship with her son even before, and regardless of, any change in him. Their interactions, when they did occur, carried less tension, because she was no longer, even subtly, treating every conversation as an opportunity to "get through to him." Several years into this practice, her son did begin to re-engage, slowly, with both faith and family, though she's careful to say this took years, and she doesn't present it as a quick result of "praying the right way."

A Note on Boundaries and Wisdom

We want to add an important note here. Praying for family members does not mean ignoring healthy boundaries, or continuing to expose oneself or others to genuinely harmful situations under the guise of "spiritual warfare" or "standing in faith." If a family situation involves abuse, addiction that endangers others, or other serious harm, prayer is not a

substitute for appropriate practical action, including, where necessary, professional help, legal protection, or physical separation for safety.

Surrender, in these situations, includes surrendering the idea that prayer alone, without practical wisdom and action, is sufficient or appropriate. Praying in the spirit and taking wise, practical action are not in tension; they work together.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children." Isaiah 54:13*

Reflection Question: *Think of a family member you regularly pray for. Has your prayer for this person tended to follow a particular pattern, pleading for specific behavior change, for example? What would it look like to engage some of the four dimensions, scripture, authority, surrender, in praying for this person?*

Prayer Prompt: *Choose one family member. Pray a scripture over their life today, not as a demand for specific behavior, but as a declaration of God's purposes for them. Then practice surrender: after praying, intentionally*

release your anxiety about this person back to God for the rest of the day.

CHAPTER 21

Praying Through Grief, Loss, and Unexplained Burdens

This chapter addresses something that does not fit neatly into the four-dimension framework we've described, not because grief and loss are outside the scope of praying in the spirit, but because grief often resists the kind of structured approach this book has otherwise encouraged.

Grief Doesn't Follow a Formula

If you are walking through grief right now, the loss of a loved one, the loss of a relationship, the loss of a season of life that will never return, we want to say clearly: nothing in this book is meant to suggest that "praying in the spirit correctly" will make grief disappear, or that grief itself is a spiritual problem to be solved.

Grief is not the absence of faith. Jesus Himself wept at the tomb of Lazarus, even knowing, moments later, that He would raise Lazarus from the dead. John 11:35, the shortest verse in many English translations, simply says, "Jesus

wept." If grief had no place in a life of faith, this moment would not be in scripture.

What Dimension Four Offers in Grief

Of the four dimensions described in this book, surrender is often the one that has the most to offer during seasons of grief, not because surrender removes grief, but because surrender, as Romans 8:26 describes it, includes "groanings which cannot be uttered."

Grief often is exactly this: groaning that cannot be uttered, at least not in ordinary words. The deep ache of missing someone, the disorientation of a life that has fundamentally changed, the waves of emotion that arrive unpredictably, often have no adequate verbal expression.

This means that, during grief, the absence of articulate prayer is not a spiritual failure. The tears themselves, the silence, the inability to "pray properly," can be, in the framework of Romans 8:26, exactly the kind of prayer the Spirit is described as offering on our behalf, when we cannot.

The Burden That Isn't Yours

We described, in Chapter 12, an experience of waking at 2am with an inexplicable heaviness that turned out to correspond to a tragedy happening elsewhere. We want to return to this kind of experience here, because it relates to grief in a way that's worth exploring further.

Sometimes, believers carry burdens, in prayer, that are not directly their own. A sudden, unexplained sadness for no apparent reason. A persistent sense of needing to pray for a specific person or situation, without knowing why. A heaviness that lifts as suddenly as it arrived, sometimes corresponding, as in the story we shared, to events the person praying had no natural way of knowing about.

This is not something to seek out, or to treat as a "gift" to be cultivated for its own sake. But for those who experience this, it can be helpful to know that it is a real, biblically-grounded phenomenon, intercession through the groanings of the Spirit, rather than something strange or concerning to be dismissed or feared.

If you experience this, the appropriate response is usually simply to pray, in whatever form that takes, tears, silence, groaning, tongues, without needing to identify exactly what

or whom you're praying for. The Spirit, as Romans 8:27 continues, "searches the hearts" and knows "what is the mind of the Spirit," even when we don't.

A Story of Communal Grief

There was a season in our community when several families experienced significant losses within a short period of time, not related to each other, but close together, creating a kind of collective weight over the community as a whole.

During this season, our regular prayer gatherings changed in character, not by anyone's deliberate decision, but organically. There was less structured prayer, fewer specific requests being voiced, and more shared silence, more simply sitting together, sometimes with tears, sometimes with worship music playing quietly in the background, without anyone leading in a traditional sense.

Looking back, several people from our community describe this season as one of the most spiritually significant periods they've experienced, not because anything dramatic "happened" in the sense of visible breakthroughs, but because of the quality of presence, both with God and with

each other, that emerged during a time when words genuinely failed everyone.

This connects back to Chapter 18's discussion of corporate prayer. Sometimes, the most powerful thing a community can do together is not to generate intensity or solutions, but to simply be present together, in grief, allowing the Spirit to minister in ways that don't require anyone to have the right words.

When You Don't Want to Pray

We want to address something directly, with care. Sometimes, grief, or other forms of deep pain, can lead to a season where someone doesn't want to pray at all, where prayer feels impossible, or even where there's anger toward God that makes prayer feel dishonest if it doesn't include that anger.

The Psalms, again, give us permission here. Psalm 88 is widely noted as a psalm that ends without resolution, without the turn toward praise or hope that most other psalms eventually make. It simply ends in darkness: "You have put me far from my acquaintances; you have made me an abomination to them... darkness." And yet, this psalm is

part of scripture, part of the prayers God's people have offered and that God has received.

If you are in a season where you cannot pray "normally," where anger, numbness, or simply the absence of any desire to pray is your honest experience, we want to gently say: that honesty, even when it doesn't look like what we typically think of as prayer, is not outside the reach of a God who included Psalm 88 in His Word, and who wept at a tomb even with resurrection power in His hands.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Jesus wept." John 11:35*

Reflection Question: *If you are walking through grief or loss right now, what has your relationship with prayer looked like during this season? Is there anything in this chapter that offers permission for where you actually are, rather than where you feel you "should" be?*

Prayer Prompt: *If words feel impossible right now, don't force them. If you can, simply sit in God's presence, even in silence, even in tears, even in anger if that's honest. If even that feels like too much, know that this chapter itself, read honestly, can be a form of prayer.*

CHAPTER 22

The Father Heart of God: Praying Like a Child

We want to close Part Five with a picture that has stayed with Naya for years, and that she comes back to often when she feels like she doesn't fully understand what's happening in her own prayer life.

A Child in a Parent's Lap

Think about how a small child relates to a parent they trust completely. A young child doesn't come to a parent with perfectly formed sentences, careful arguments, or polished requests. Sometimes they just climb into a lap and sit there. Sometimes they cry without being able to explain why, and the parent doesn't demand an explanation before offering comfort. Sometimes they babble in sounds that don't form words at all, and the parent still delights in it, still responds with warmth, because the relationship isn't built on the child's verbal performance.

Jesus told us to come to Him like children, recorded in passages like Matthew 18:3, where He says, "Unless you are

converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." This is often discussed in terms of humility, and that is certainly part of it. But we believe it's also, in many ways, a picture of exactly what this book has been describing.

Praying in the spirit, in many ways, is us relating to the Father the way a securely attached child relates to a parent, without the pressure of getting it "right," without needing to perform competence, without needing to have it all figured out before we show up. The Spirit within us groans, babbles in tongues, sits in silence, cries without explanation, and the Father isn't frustrated by any of it. He delights in it, because it's real, and because it's ours, coming from a place of trust rather than performance.

Releasing the Pressure

If, by this point in the book, four dimensions, multiple chapters on what can go wrong, scripture references, practical exercises, you're feeling a little overwhelmed, like you need to go take notes and build a whole new system before you can pray "correctly," we want to release you from that pressure right now.

You don't need a system. You need a relationship. The dimensions described in this book aren't a checklist to complete before God will listen to you. They're descriptions of what happens naturally, over time, as that relationship deepens, the way a child naturally grows in how they relate to a parent without anyone handing them a manual.

Securely Attached vs. Anxiously Attached Prayer

We want to introduce a concept here, borrowed loosely from how psychologists describe attachment between children and caregivers, because we think it offers a helpful lens for understanding the difference between prayer that flows from fear and prayer that flows from trust, themes that have run throughout this book.

A child with secure attachment to a caregiver explores confidently, knowing the caregiver is a safe base to return to. When upset, they seek comfort and are soothed by it. They don't need to constantly check whether the relationship is intact; they trust it, even during separations or conflicts, because the overall pattern of the relationship has proven trustworthy.

A child with anxious attachment, often due to inconsistency in a caregiver's responses, may have a harder time being soothed, may seek constant reassurance, or may, in some patterns, withdraw and avoid seeking comfort at all, having learned that seeking it doesn't reliably work.

We share this not as a clinical framework for diagnosing anyone's relationship with God, but because many of the patterns described throughout this book, vain repetition rooted in trying to "get it right," anxious prayer driven by fear that God might not respond, exhausting cycles of pleading, can resemble what an anxious attachment pattern might look like, applied to prayer.

And the alternative, prayer that can rest in silence, that doesn't need to perform, that can bring half-formed groans and trust they'll be understood, that can take a break from "results" and just be present, resembles what secure attachment looks like.

If you recognize anxious patterns in your own prayer life, we want to be clear: this is not a character flaw, and it's certainly not something to feel ashamed of. Often, these patterns develop honestly, from genuine past experiences, theological frameworks we were taught, or simply from not

yet having experienced what a different kind of relationship with God could feel like.

But we also want to offer hope: just as attachment patterns between humans can change, through new experiences of safety and consistency over time, so too can our patterns of relating to God, through the same kind of repeated experience, over time, of a Father who delights in us even in our groaning, our silence, our imperfect, unfinished prayers.

Start Tonight

Start tonight, or whenever you next have a quiet moment, not by trying to do everything we've discussed in this book so far, but just by showing up, honestly, however you're feeling, and letting the Spirit lead from there. That's it. That's the whole invitation, and it's the invitation we'll return to as we move into the final, most practical section of this book.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." Mark 10:15*

Reflection Question: *Does your current relationship with prayer feel more like "securely attached" trust, or more like anxious performance? What experiences, past or present, might be shaping that?*

Prayer Prompt: *Tonight, or at your next quiet moment, simply show up before God, honestly, without an agenda. If words come, let them come. If they don't, that's okay too. Just show up.*

PART SIX

A LIVING PRACTICE

CHAPTER 23

Building a Daily Rhythm of Spirit-Led Prayer

We've spent twenty-two chapters building a theological and experiential foundation. Now we want to get practical, very practical, about how to actually build this into your daily life, because we believe inspiration without rhythm fades quickly, while rhythm, even imperfect rhythm, sustains over the long term.

Start Small

We cannot stress this enough. Don't try to go from praying five minutes a day to suddenly doing two-hour prayer marathons because you heard someone else does that. Start with a rhythm you can actually sustain, even if it's just ten or fifteen minutes, but make those minutes intentional.

The temptation, especially after reading a book like this one, is to feel inspired and to immediately attempt something dramatic, an all-night prayer vigil, a multi-hour daily commitment, as a way of "proving" that this teaching has landed. We've seen this pattern many times, and we've seen,

just as many times, how quickly it tends to collapse, leading not to a sustained new rhythm, but to discouragement and a return to whatever the previous pattern was, often with an added layer of guilt.

Sustainable change tends to come from small, consistent commitments, more than from dramatic, unsustainable ones. If ten minutes a day, every day, for a year, sounds less impressive than two hours a day for two weeks before burning out, consider which one actually produces more cumulative time in prayer, and more importantly, which one actually builds a lasting pattern of relationship.

A Suggested Structure

Here is a structure that many in our community have found helpful, not as a rigid formula, but as a starting framework that can be adjusted to fit your own life, schedule, and personality.

Begin with worship, even just humming a song or putting on a worship track, because worship softens the heart and shifts your attention off yourself, as we discussed in Chapter 17. This doesn't need to be long, even two or three minutes can shift the posture of the time that follows.

Then spend time in the Word before you start asking for things. Read a passage slowly, maybe just a few verses, and let it settle. Ask the Holy Spirit, "What do You want to say to me through this?" Sometimes a verse will suddenly feel like it's speaking directly to your situation, and that's often a doorway into spirit-led prayer, because now you're praying from something He highlighted, not just something you came up with on your own.

Then move into prayer itself, but hold it loosely. Don't come with a rigid script. Bring your list, yes, bring your requests, God cares about the details of your life, but be willing to let the Spirit redirect you mid-prayer. You might start praying about your finances and find yourself suddenly weeping over a family member you hadn't planned to mention. Follow that. That redirection is often exactly where the Spirit wants to take you.

If you have the gift of tongues, weave it in naturally, not as a separate "section" of your prayer time, but as something you flow into when words run out, or when you sense there's something deeper that needs to be prayed that your mind can't articulate. If you don't have that gift yet, that's okay, keep praying in your understanding, keep praying scripture, and stay open.

End with stillness. This is the part most people skip, because we're so used to prayer being about us talking. Spend the last few minutes just being quiet, not asking for anything, not even praying in tongues, just sitting there, present, the way you'd sit with someone you love without needing to fill every silence with words. Sometimes that's when the deepest things happen, the groanings, the impressions, the peace that doesn't make sense given your circumstances.

Adjusting for Your Life

This structure assumes a relatively uninterrupted block of time, but we recognize that for many people, especially parents of young children, people with demanding jobs, or those caring for family members with significant needs, an uninterrupted fifteen or twenty minutes can feel like an impossible luxury, not a modest commitment.

If this is your situation, we want to encourage you not to give up on the principles in this chapter, but to adapt them. The "structure" described above doesn't need to happen in a single sitting. Worship might happen during a commute, in a car, with headphones, or while doing dishes. Time in the Word might happen in fragments, a few verses read on a phone during a break, returned to later in the day. Prayer

itself might be woven into the day in shorter moments, rather than concentrated into a single block.

What matters more than the specific structure is the underlying pattern: some engagement with worship (shifting attention to God's character), some engagement with the Word (anchoring prayer in scripture), some space for prayer that includes both speaking and listening, and some moments, however brief, of genuine stillness.

When You Miss a Day (or a Week)

We want to address something that almost everyone who attempts to build a new rhythm experiences: missing days, sometimes many days in a row, due to illness, travel, crisis, or simply life getting overwhelming.

The temptation, when this happens, is often one of two extremes. Either give up entirely, "I missed three days, I've failed, there's no point trying to maintain this," or try to "make up" for missed time through an intense, compensatory session, which can reintroduce the very performance-oriented anxiety this book has tried to address throughout.

Neither response reflects the heart of what we've been describing. If you miss a day, or a week, or even longer, the appropriate response is simply to begin again, without drama, without an extended period of self-flagellation, and without an attempt to "catch up" through intensity.

This is, in many ways, a microcosm of the larger theme of surrender that has run throughout this book. A rhythm of prayer is not a debt that accumulates when missed, requiring repayment. It's a relationship, and relationships can be picked back up, simply, after a gap, without needing an elaborate reconciliation process every time.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving." Colossians 4:2*

Reflection Question: *What is a realistic amount of time you could commit to, daily, starting this week, not your ideal, but something you're confident you could sustain even on a difficult day?*

Prayer Prompt: *Choose your starting time commitment, and choose a specific time of day, even if approximate, when you'll engage in it. Begin tomorrow, using the*

structure described in this chapter as a loose guide, adjusting as needed.

CHAPTER 24

Common Blockages and How to Clear Them

Throughout this book, we've described what praying in the spirit looks like, why it matters, and how to build it into a daily rhythm. In this chapter, we want to address some common things that quietly block spirit-led prayer, things that aren't always obvious, and that often operate beneath the level of conscious awareness.

Unforgiveness

Unforgiveness is one of the biggest blockages, and we touched on this in Chapter 4 through Grace's story. If there's someone you're holding something against, even something small, even something you think you've "moved past" but still feel a sting when you think about them, that can create static in your spirit, like interference on a radio signal.

This doesn't mean God stops loving you, or that He withholds His presence as a punishment for unforgiveness. But it can muffle your sensitivity to His voice, create a kind

of background noise that makes the quieter dimensions of prayer, surrender especially, harder to access.

Identifying unforgiveness isn't always straightforward, because, as Grace's story illustrated, it can be so familiar that it doesn't register as "unforgiveness" anymore, it just feels like "how things are" with a particular person. One practical approach is to ask the Holy Spirit directly, during a time of stillness, "Is there anyone I need to forgive?" and then simply wait, without forcing an answer, noticing whether any names or faces surface.

If a name does surface, forgiveness is not the same as saying what happened was okay, or that the relationship needs to be restored to what it was before, or even that reconciliation is appropriate or safe in every situation. Forgiveness, at its core, is releasing the claim you've been holding, the sense that this person "owes" you something, whether that's an apology, an explanation, or simply suffering in proportion to what they caused. It's an internal transaction, between you and God, that doesn't necessarily require the other person's involvement or even awareness.

Hidden Sin

Hidden sin is another blockage, not necessarily dramatic sin, sometimes it's small patterns we've grown comfortable with, things we've stopped feeling convicted about because we've done them so long.

The Holy Spirit is gentle, but He is also honest, and sometimes prayer feels distant because there's a conversation He's been trying to have with us that we've been avoiding.

We want to be careful here, because this can easily become a source of anxiety, where every instance of prayer feeling "distant" is immediately attributed to some hidden, unaddressed sin, leading to anxious self-examination that itself becomes a barrier to the kind of restful surrender this book has described.

The key word is "hidden," in the sense of something we know about, on some level, but have been avoiding bringing into the light, not something we need to anxiously hunt for. If, during a time of stillness, something specific does come to mind, a pattern, a habit, a choice, that you know doesn't align with how you want to live, and that you've been avoiding addressing, this is worth bringing honestly before

God, not with the goal of generating guilt, but with the goal of honesty, the same honesty Naya described in her own testimony at the start of this book, as the foundation of real relationship.

Busyness and Noise

Busyness and noise is such a quiet thief. Not necessarily sinful busyness, just a life so full of input, phones, conversations, media, that there's no actual quiet space left for the Spirit to even get a word in.

This blockage is particularly relevant in the world many of us live in, where silence is increasingly rare, and where many people, if they're honest, find silence uncomfortable, even slightly anxiety-inducing, because we've become so accustomed to constant input.

You can be doing all the "right" Christian activities, attending services, listening to sermons, reading devotionals, and still be so full of noise that prayer becomes just another item competing for attention rather than a place of rest.

Addressing this blockage doesn't necessarily mean dramatic lifestyle changes, although for some people it might. It might

simply mean being intentional about creating small pockets of genuine quiet, not filled with anything, not even "spiritual" content, as part of each day, even just a few minutes, as practice for the kind of stillness that prayer, particularly Dimension Four, surrender, depends on.

Comparison

Comparison, comparing your prayer life to someone else's testimony, someone else's gifting, someone else's experiences, is a blockage we touched on in Chapter 2, but it deserves mention here too, because it can operate in both directions, and both are traps.

If comparison leads you to feel "behind," discouraged that your prayer life doesn't look like someone else's, dramatic experiences, vivid impressions, a gift of tongues you don't have, this can lead to discouragement, even giving up, "I guess this just isn't for me."

If comparison leads you to feel "ahead," pride that your prayer life seems more developed, more disciplined, or more dramatic than others around you, this can lead to a subtle but corrosive spiritual pride, the very opposite of the surrender this book has emphasized throughout.

Your walk with the Holy Spirit is yours, shaped by your story, your personality, your journey, including everything you went through before you knew Him. There is no "standard" prayer life that everyone is supposed to be progressing toward at the same pace, in the same way.

A Self-Assessment

We want to offer a brief, non-anxious self-assessment, not as a diagnostic tool to identify what's "wrong" with you, but simply as a way of bringing awareness to these four areas.

For each of the four blockages described, unforgiveness, hidden sin, busyness and noise, and comparison, simply ask yourself: "Is this something I recognize in my own life right now, even a little?" If so, you don't need to immediately "fix" it. Simply bringing awareness to it, and perhaps mentioning it honestly to God during a time of stillness, "Lord, I notice this might be present in my life, I'm not sure what to do about it, but I wanted You to know I see it too," is itself a meaningful step.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23-24*

Reflection Question: *Of the four blockages described in this chapter, unforgiveness, hidden sin, busyness and noise, comparison, which one, if any, do you recognize most in your own life right now?*

Prayer Prompt: *Pray Psalm 139:23-24 slowly, as your own prayer, today. Don't rush to "fix" anything that comes to mind. Simply bring it honestly before God, and let Him lead from there.*

CHAPTER 25

A 21-Day Journey Into Praying in the Spirit

This chapter is different from the chapters that came before it. It is not meant to be read in a single sitting. It is meant to be lived with, one day at a time, over the course of three weeks.

We have built this 21-day journey as a way of taking everything covered in this book, the foundations, the four dimensions, the obstacles, the deeper practices, and translating it into daily, bite-sized encounters with the Holy Spirit. Each day includes a short theme, a Scripture to sit with, a brief reflection, and a prayer prompt to guide your time of praying in the Spirit.

You don't need any special equipment for this journey. A journal or notebook is helpful, but not required. What matters most is consistency, showing up each day, even on the days when you don't feel like it, even on the days when nothing seems to "happen."

If you miss a day, don't restart from Day 1 out of guilt. Simply pick up where you left off. This is not a performance.

It is a relationship, and relationships are not ruined by an off day.

Some days will feel rich and full. Other days will feel ordinary, even dry. Both are part of the journey. What you are building, over these 21 days, is not a peak experience but a rhythm, a pathway your spirit learns to walk again and again, until it becomes part of who you are.

Let's begin.

Day 1: Starting Where You Are

Theme: You don't need to clean yourself up before you come to God. You come as you are, and He meets you there.

Scripture: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

Reflection: Before you begin today's time of prayer, take a moment to notice your own state, tired, anxious, hopeful, distracted, whatever it is. There is no need to push that aside or pretend you feel something you don't. God already knows, and He is not waiting for you to arrive in a better condition.

Prayer Prompt: *Begin by simply telling God how you are, in your own words. Then, however that looks for you right now, whether through words, through groaning, through tongues, or through quiet, give Him a few minutes of your honest attention. Don't aim for anything. Just come.*

Day 2: The Spirit Within You

Theme: If you have trusted in Jesus, the Holy Spirit already lives in you. Today is about remembering that truth.

Scripture: "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you?" 1 Corinthians 6:19

Reflection: It is easy to relate to the Holy Spirit as something far away, something you need to "reach" through enough effort or emotion. But Scripture describes Him as already present, already within you. Today's practice is less about reaching and more about noticing what is already there.

Prayer Prompt: *Sit quietly for a moment and simply acknowledge, "Holy Spirit, You are here, in me, right now." Let that truth settle before you ask for anything. Then pray, in whatever way feels natural, tongues, ordinary words, or silence, from that place of awareness rather than searching.*

Day 3: Asking for More

Theme: Even those who have the Holy Spirit are invited to ask for more of His presence and activity in their lives.

Scripture: "If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone?... how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask!" Luke 11:11-13

Reflection: Asking for more of the Spirit is not a sign that something is missing in your salvation. It is simply an invitation Jesus Himself extended, an open door that

remains open for as long as you want to keep walking through it.

Prayer Prompt: *Today, simply ask. "Holy Spirit, I ask for more of Your presence, more of Your leading, more of Your fullness in my life." Then spend a few minutes praying in the Spirit, in tongues if you have that gift, or in whatever form of Spirit-led prayer is available to you, and let that asking become an ongoing posture, not a one-time request.*

Day 4: Praying Without Performing

Theme: The Holy Spirit is not impressed by performance. He responds to honesty.

Scripture: "But when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites… they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place." Matthew 6:5-6

Reflection: Even in private prayer, it's possible to slip into "performing," using language or a tone of voice that feels more like what prayer is supposed to sound like than what is actually true for you. Today's invitation is to notice that tendency, gently, without shame, and to let it go.

Prayer Prompt: *Begin today's prayer time by speaking to God exactly as you would speak to someone you trust completely, no special voice, no special vocabulary. Then transition into praying in the Spirit, in tongues or through whatever expression is available to you, carrying that same honesty into that form of prayer.*

Day 5: The Spirit and Your Weakness

Theme: The Holy Spirit's role in prayer is connected directly to our weakness, not despite it.

Scripture: "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us." Romans 8:26

Reflection: If you are aware today of not knowing how to pray about something, a situation, a person, a feeling you can't name, that awareness is not a problem to solve before you pray. It is, according to this verse, the very condition the Holy Spirit's help is designed for.

Prayer Prompt: *Bring to mind something you genuinely don't know how to pray about right now. Don't try to figure it out. Simply name it briefly to God, "I don't know how to*

pray about this," and then give space to the Holy Spirit to intercede, through tongues, through groaning, or through quiet surrender, on your behalf.

Day 6: Praying According to His Will

Theme: Praying in the Spirit aligns our prayers with God's will, even when we don't consciously know what that will is.

Scripture: "Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Romans 8:27

Reflection: One of the quiet comforts of praying in the Spirit is this: even when your own understanding is limited, even when you're not sure what to ask for or how to ask for it, prayer in the Spirit is not limited by your understanding. It flows from a deeper place.

Prayer Prompt: *Today, instead of trying to direct your prayer time toward a specific outcome, simply yield it to the Holy Spirit's direction. "Holy Spirit, pray through me according to the Father's will, even in places I can't see." Then pray in the Spirit for an extended time, resisting the urge to steer.*

Day 7: A Day of Rest and Reflection

Theme: Rest is part of the rhythm, not a break from it.

Scripture: "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God." Hebrews 4:9

Reflection: As you complete your first week, take today as a day to rest from "trying" and simply reflect. Look back over the past six days. What did you notice? Were there moments of peace, dryness, surprise, resistance? There's no right answer, just honest noticing.

Prayer Prompt: *Spend a shorter time today, just a few minutes, thanking God for the past week, however it went. Then rest in quiet for a few minutes, without an agenda, simply allowing the Holy Spirit's presence to be enough for today.*

Day 8: Tongues as a Gift, Not a Performance

Theme: If you pray in tongues, today is about remembering what this gift is for.

Scripture: "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself." 1 Corinthians 14:4

Reflection: Praying in tongues is, among other things, a way the Holy Spirit builds up your inner life, your spirit, even when your mind doesn't understand what is being said. This is not a strange byproduct of the gift. It is one of its central purposes.

Prayer Prompt: *If you pray in tongues, spend an extended time doing so today, not asking for interpretation, not analyzing, simply allowing your spirit to be built up. If you do not currently pray in tongues, spend this time asking the Holy Spirit, with openness, whether this is a gift He wants to give you, and rest in whatever response or lack of response comes, without pressure.*

Day 9: Praying With Authority

Theme: You have been given authority in Christ, not as a means of control, but as a means of standing firm.

Scripture: "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy." Luke 10:19

Reflection: Today's focus is on the authority that belongs to you as someone in Christ, not authority to demand things from God, but authority to stand against fear, discouragement, and spiritual opposition in your own life and the lives of those you pray for.

Prayer Prompt: *Bring to mind one area where you have felt fear, oppression, or discouragement recently. In prayer, speak directly to that fear or discouragement, not to God about it, but to it, declaring, in Jesus' name, that it does not have authority over you. Then continue in prayer in the Spirit, asking the Holy Spirit to reinforce that declaration in your heart.*

Day 10: Praying According to the Word

Theme: Scripture gives shape and confidence to our prayers.

Scripture: "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." 1 John 5:14

Reflection: Today's practice involves bringing a specific Scripture into your prayer time, not to "use" it as a formula, but to let it shape what you ask for and how you ask.

Prayer Prompt: *Choose one verse from this book, or one that has been meaningful to you, and read it slowly several times. Then pray it back to God in your own words, as a request, a thanksgiving, or a declaration. Allow this to flow into a time of praying in the Spirit, carrying that Scripture's themes with you.*

Day 11: Surrendering a Specific Burden

Theme: Surrender is not giving up. It is placing something into hands stronger than your own.

Scripture: "Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

Reflection: Today, rather than a general time of prayer, bring one specific burden, a relationship, a financial concern, a health issue, a fear about the future, into focus.

Prayer Prompt: *Name the burden honestly to God. Then, physically if it helps, open your hands as a symbol of releasing it, and say, "I'm placing this in Your hands, not because I no longer care, but because I trust You with it." Continue in prayer in the Spirit, allowing the Holy Spirit to*

minister to you regarding this burden, even if no immediate answer or feeling comes.

Day 12: Praying for Someone Else

Theme: Praying in the Spirit is not only for your own needs. It extends outward, toward others.

Scripture: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." Ephesians 6:18

Reflection: Today, shift the focus of your prayer time toward someone else, a family member, a friend, someone you know who is struggling, even someone you find difficult to pray for.

Prayer Prompt: *Bring that person to mind. You don't need to know exactly what they need. Simply hold them in your awareness and pray in the Spirit on their behalf, trusting that the Holy Spirit knows what they need even better than they do.*

Day 13: When Prayer Feels Dry

Theme: Dryness is not the absence of God. It can be part of His presence in a different form.

Scripture: "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God." Psalm 42:1

Reflection: If today's time of prayer feels dry, distracted, or empty, that is not a sign of failure. It may simply be one of the seasons every person who prays in the Spirit moves through at different times.

Prayer Prompt: *If you're experiencing dryness today, don't try to manufacture feeling. Instead, pray Psalm 42:1 as your own honest cry, "This is how I feel right now, God, and I'm still here." Then continue in prayer in the Spirit for whatever time you can, even if it feels like "nothing is happening." Presence does not require sensation.*

Day 14: A Day of Rest and Reflection

Theme: Halfway through this journey, pause again to notice what's shifting, and what isn't, without judgment.

Scripture: "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

Reflection: Look back over the past week. Are there any patterns, certain times of day that work better, certain themes that have stayed with you, certain resistances that keep showing up? There's no need to fix anything you notice. Simply notice.

Prayer Prompt: *Spend today's time mostly in stillness. Begin with a brief acknowledgment of God's presence, then sit quietly for several minutes, returning gently to stillness whenever your mind wanders, without frustration.*

Day 15: Praying Through Discomfort

Theme: Sometimes prayer surfaces things we'd rather not look at. This, too, can be part of the Spirit's work.

Scripture: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties." Psalm 139:23

Reflection: If, during this journey, something uncomfortable has surfaced, an old wound, an unresolved conflict, a pattern you'd rather not examine, today's invitation is not to avoid it, but to bring it gently into the light of God's presence.

Prayer Prompt: *If something uncomfortable has come to mind during this journey, name it honestly to God today, without minimizing it and without spiraling into shame. "God, this is here. I don't fully understand it, but I'm bringing it to You." Then pray in the Spirit, allowing the Holy Spirit to minister into that place, however slowly that ministry unfolds.*

Day 16: Worship as the Doorway

Theme: Sometimes the most direct way into deep prayer is through worship, not asking, but adoring.

Scripture: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!" Psalm 103:1

Reflection: Today, before any requests, any intercession, any declarations, begin with worship, simply acknowledging who God is, His goodness, His faithfulness, His character.

Prayer Prompt: *Spend the first portion of today's time in pure worship, thanking and praising God for who He is, not for what He's done or might do. Then allow this to flow naturally into prayer in the Spirit, letting worship be the doorway rather than a separate activity.*

Day 17: Praying Against Spiritual Opposition

Theme: Some struggles are not purely natural. Praying in the Spirit equips us to stand against opposition that is spiritual in nature.

Scripture: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:12

Reflection: If there is an area of your life that has felt unusually resistant, persistent cycles, recurring conflict, a sense of heaviness that doesn't match the circumstances, today's prayer time addresses that area directly.

Prayer Prompt: *Identify, if you can, one area that has felt spiritually resistant. Pray against the spiritual dimension of that resistance, not against people, but against the spiritual forces at work, declaring God's authority over that area. Then continue in prayer in the Spirit, asking the Holy Spirit to bring breakthrough in His timing.*

Day 18: Praying With Gratitude

Theme: Gratitude shifts the posture of prayer, even when circumstances haven't changed.

Scripture: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Reflection: Today's focus is gratitude, not as a denial of difficulty, but as a deliberate practice of naming what is good, even in the midst of what is hard.

Prayer Prompt: *Begin by naming, specifically, three things you're grateful for today, however small. Then let gratitude carry into your time of prayer in the Spirit, allowing thankfulness to be the tone of your prayer rather than only request or struggle.*

Day 19: Praying for Breakthrough

Theme: It's appropriate to pray boldly for breakthrough, while remaining surrendered to God's timing.

Scripture: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Reflection: Today, give yourself permission to pray boldly, for healing, for breakthrough, for change, in a specific area of your life or someone else's, while holding that boldness alongside surrender to God's timing and wisdom.

Prayer Prompt: *Name a specific breakthrough you're asking for. Pray for it boldly and specifically. Then, in the same prayer time, surrender the timing to God, "I'm asking boldly, and I trust You with when and how." Continue in prayer in the Spirit, holding both boldness and surrender together.*

Day 20: Praying for the Days Ahead

Theme: This journey is ending, but the rhythm doesn't have to.

Scripture: "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Galatians 6:9

Reflection: As this 21-day journey nears its end, today's focus shifts toward what comes next. Not in a way that creates pressure, but in a way that prepares you to carry this rhythm forward.

Prayer Prompt: *Spend time asking the Holy Spirit to help you build a sustainable rhythm of prayer moving forward, one shaped by what you've learned about yourself and about Him during these 21 days. Then pray in the Spirit, asking for continued grace, not for a perfect record, but for faithfulness.*

Day 21: A Beginning, Not an Ending

Theme: Today is not a finish line. It is the doorway into an ongoing relationship.

Scripture: "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it." Philippians 1:6

Reflection: Take time today to reflect on the entire journey, the 21 days, and the book as a whole. What has shifted, even slightly? What questions remain? What do you want to continue exploring?

Prayer Prompt: *Spend extended time today in prayer in the Spirit, without rushing, allowing this time to be both a thanksgiving for the journey and an opening toward what continues beyond it. Close by simply telling God, in your own words, that you want to keep walking in this rhythm, one day at a time, for as long as He leads.*

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6*

Reflection Question: *Looking back over these 21 days, what is one specific change, however small, that you noticed in your prayer life or your awareness of the Holy Spirit?*

Prayer Prompt: *Before moving on to the rest of this book's closing chapters, take a moment to thank God not for arriving somewhere, but for the journey itself, and ask Him to help this rhythm continue, day by day, beyond these 21 days.*

CHAPTER 26

Testimonies from the Glory Testimonies Community

Throughout this book, we've shared stories, some from Naya's own life, some from people we've walked alongside over the years. In this chapter, we want to widen that circle further, sharing a handful of testimonies from people connected to the Glory Testimonies community, ordinary believers who have engaged with praying in the Spirit in different seasons of their lives.

These stories are shared with permission, with identifying details changed to protect privacy where requested. They are not included to impress or to set a bar for what your experience "should" look like. They are included simply as windows into the many different ways the Holy Spirit meets people who pray in the Spirit, reminding us that this is not a formula with a single outcome, but a relationship with countless expressions.

A Season of Anxiety

Tendai had struggled with anxiety for most of his adult life, the kind that shows up as a persistent tightness in the chest, racing thoughts at night, and a low hum of dread that never fully goes away, even on good days. He had tried various things to manage it, some helpful, some not, and had largely made peace with the idea that this was simply "how he was."

A friend introduced him to the practice of praying in tongues during a difficult season at work. Tendai was skeptical, not of whether it was real, but of whether it would do anything for him specifically. "I wasn't expecting some dramatic deliverance," he said. "I just started doing it because someone I trusted suggested it, and I figured it couldn't hurt."

What he noticed, over weeks rather than days, wasn't the disappearance of anxiety altogether, but a change in how he related to it. "It's still there sometimes," he said, "but it doesn't have the same grip. It's like there's a little more space between me and the anxious thought now. I can notice it without immediately being swept up in it." He attributes this, in part, to the practice of regularly stepping into prayer in the Spirit, particularly during moments when anxiety would normally take over.

A Marriage Restored, Slowly

Patricia and her husband had gone through a season of significant conflict, the kind that leaves both people wondering whether the relationship can be repaired. Patricia describes feeling, at the time, like she had run out of things to say to God about the situation. "I had prayed about it so many times, in so many ways, and I felt like I was just repeating myself, and honestly, I felt like God had heard enough from me on this topic."

A mentor encouraged her to try something different, instead of continuing to pray about the situation in detail, to simply pray in the Spirit and trust that the Holy Spirit knew what to pray, even when she didn't have new words.

"It felt strange at first, almost like giving up, like I was no longer 'fighting' for my marriage by praying about it specifically," Patricia said. "But over time, I noticed something. I started feeling less consumed by the situation. Not less invested, but less anxious. And slowly, really slowly, things started to shift, not all at once, but in small ways. I don't think praying in the Spirit fixed my marriage by itself. But I think it changed me, how I was carrying the situation, and that changed how I showed up in it."

Patricia and her husband are still working through things, she's careful to say this isn't a "happily ever after" story in the dramatic sense. But she describes the shift in herself as significant, and ongoing.

A Father's Prayer for His Children

Joseph, a father of three teenagers, found himself increasingly worried about his children as they grew older, not because of any specific crisis, but because of the general uncertainty that comes with watching young people navigate a complicated world.

"I found myself praying the same things over and over, protect them, guide them, keep them safe, and while I believe those prayers matter, I also felt like I was running on a loop, and I wasn't sure it was actually helping me, even if it was helping them."

Joseph began incorporating time praying in the Spirit specifically for his children, not as a replacement for praying their names and situations, but alongside it. "What I noticed was less about them and more about me. I felt less anxious carrying them. I felt like I was handing them to God in a

more complete way, not just asking Him to do things for them, but trusting Him with them, period."

He describes this as an ongoing practice rather than a one-time shift. "Some days I still worry. But I have this rhythm now, where when the worry comes up, I don't just spiral, I have somewhere to take it."

A Breakthrough After Years of Waiting

Florence had been praying for a specific situation, a long-standing family conflict, for many years, long enough that she had largely stopped expecting anything to change. "I hadn't given up on God," she said, "but I think I had given up on this particular thing changing. I had sort of filed it under 'this is just how it is.'"

During a season of more consistent prayer in the Spirit, not specifically focused on this situation, Florence describes an unexpected development. "Out of nowhere, after years of no contact, a family member reached out. Not because of anything I did directly, I hadn't reached out first, hadn't said anything new. It just happened."

Florence is careful not to claim a direct causal line, "I can't prove that my praying in the Spirit caused this specific thing

to happen on this specific timeline." But she also describes a deep sense, looking back, that something had been happening in the unseen realm during that season, work she wasn't aware of at the time, that eventually surfaced in this visible change.

"I think sometimes we pray and we expect to see the results immediately, or we expect to be able to trace a clear line from our prayer to the outcome. But I think a lot of what happens through praying in the Spirit is happening in places we can't see, on a timeline we don't control. This situation reminded me of that."

A Quiet, Ongoing Shift

Not every testimony involves a dramatic before-and-after. Grace, who has been part of the Glory Testimonies community for several years, describes her experience with praying in the Spirit in more understated terms.

"I wouldn't say anything dramatic has happened because of this practice. No sudden healing, no obvious breakthrough I can point to. But I would say I'm a different person than I was a few years ago, calmer, more rooted, less reactive. And when I trace that back, a lot of it connects to this rhythm of

prayer, including praying in the Spirit, that I've built over time."

Grace's story is, in some ways, the most common kind of testimony, not a single dramatic moment, but a slow, cumulative shift in a person's inner life, the kind of change that's hard to point to on any single day but unmistakable over years.

A Closing Thought on These Stories

If you read through these testimonies looking for a pattern, a formula, "do this, and this specific thing will happen," you may find that the stories resist that kind of reading. Some describe emotional change. Some describe relational change. Some describe a shift in perspective more than circumstance. One describes an external breakthrough after years of waiting.

What they share is not a common outcome, but a common practice, ordinary people, in the middle of ordinary lives, making space for the Holy Spirit through prayer in the Spirit, and trusting Him with what happens next.

Your story, whatever shape it takes, however dramatic or quiet, fast or slow, is not less valid than these. It's simply

yours, written between you and the Holy Spirit, one day at a time.

Going Deeper

Key Scripture: *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." Revelation 12:11*

Reflection Question: *As you read through these testimonies, which one, if any, resonated most with your own experience or hopes? What does that tell you about what you might be longing for in your own prayer life?*

Prayer Prompt: *Spend a few minutes thanking God for the testimonies of others, even ones very different from your own story, and ask Him to begin writing your own testimony, in whatever way and timeline He chooses.*

CHAPTER 27

A Closing Word: The Lifetime Invitation

We've covered a lot of ground in this book. We began with the foundations, what it means to be born again, filled with the Spirit, and walking in step with Him day by day. We explored what praying in the Spirit actually means, and spent significant time in the four dimensions, tongues, authority, praying according to the Word, and surrender. We looked honestly at why prayer sometimes stalls, and at what to do when prayer gets hard, dryness, distraction, discernment, unanswered prayer. We went deeper into worship, corporate prayer, spiritual warfare, praying for family, grief, and the Father heart of God. And we closed with practical rhythms, common blockages, a 21-day journey, and the testimonies of others who have walked this path.

If you've read this far, whether quickly or slowly, whether you've engaged with every practice or simply read along, we want to leave you with one final thought, the most important one, in some ways, of the entire book.

This is not a finish line. It's an invitation, and it's one that doesn't expire.

Praying in the Spirit is not a technique you master once and then move beyond. It's not a phase of spiritual growth that more "advanced" believers eventually graduate from. It is, instead, an ongoing relationship, one that can deepen for the rest of your life, through every season, every circumstance, every age and stage you'll move through.

There will be seasons where this practice feels vibrant and alive, where prayer flows easily and you sense the Holy Spirit's presence clearly. There will be other seasons, and if you've been walking with God for any length of time, you already know this, where it feels dry, difficult, even distant. Both seasons are part of the same lifelong relationship. Neither one is the "real" version and the other a deviation.

What we hope you carry forward from this book isn't a set of rules or a checklist of practices to maintain perfectly. It's something simpler and, we believe, more durable: an awareness that the Holy Spirit is present, available, and willing to help you pray, even when you don't know how, even when words fail, even when life is overwhelming, especially then.

If You're Just Beginning

If this book has introduced you to praying in the Spirit for the first time, perhaps to the gift of tongues, perhaps simply to the idea that the Holy Spirit actively helps you in prayer, our encouragement is simple: take it slow, and take it seriously. Don't rush to have a particular experience. Don't compare your beginning to someone else's years of practice. Simply begin, today if you haven't already, with whatever small step feels available to you, and let the relationship grow from there.

If You're Returning After a Long Time Away

If this book has found you in a season of returning, perhaps you once had a vibrant practice of praying in the Spirit and drifted away from it, through busyness, through disappointment, through simply life happening, our encouragement is this: there is no penalty for the time away. The Holy Spirit has not been keeping score. You can begin again, today, not as someone who failed and is starting over in shame, but as someone who is simply continuing a

relationship that never actually ended, even during the years it felt distant.

If You're Walking Through Something Hard Right Now

If you're reading this book in the middle of genuine difficulty, grief, illness, financial hardship, relational pain, we want to acknowledge that directly. Nothing in this book is meant to suggest that praying in the Spirit is a way to bypass hard seasons, or that if you just pray "correctly" enough, the difficulty will resolve on your timeline.

What we believe, and what we've seen, is that praying in the Spirit can be a place of genuine help during hard seasons, not necessarily by changing your circumstances immediately, though sometimes it does, but by changing how you carry them, by connecting you, in your weakness, to a Helper who knows exactly what you need, even when you don't.

A Prayer to Close

We want to close this book the way we've closed each chapter, with a prayer, but this one is for the whole journey, the one you've taken through these pages, and the one that continues beyond them.

Holy Spirit, thank You for being present in every page of this book, and for being present, even now, with the person reading these words. Thank You for being a Helper who doesn't grow tired of our weakness, who intercedes for us even when we don't know what to pray, who fills us, leads us, and teaches us, day after day.

For everyone who has journeyed through this book, we ask that You would continue what You've begun. Where there has been a spark of new understanding, fan it into a flame. Where there has been a return after a long absence, welcome that person home, fully, without condition. Where there is dryness, meet it with Your presence, even if that presence doesn't feel like anything at first. Where there is grief, sit with it. Where there is fear, replace it, gently, with Your peace.

And for the days, weeks, months, and years ahead, for every prayer that will be prayed in the Spirit long after this book is closed, we ask that You would be present in each one,

helping, interceding, filling, leading, just as You have promised.

This is not the end of the story. It's an invitation to keep going, one day, one prayer, at a time.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Brian The Seer and Pastor Naya Wanjiru Glory Testimonies Team

APPENDIX A

Key Scriptures on Praying in the Spirit

Throughout this book, we've referenced many Scriptures related to prayer, the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual life. Below is a compiled list of key passages, organized loosely by theme, for your continued study and meditation. Each entry includes a brief note on its relevance.

On Being Born of the Spirit

John 3:6 — "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The foundation of the spiritual life: a new birth, by the Spirit, that precedes and makes possible everything else in this book.

Romans 8:9 — "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you." A reminder that the Spirit's presence is the defining mark of belonging to Christ.

On Being Filled With the Spirit

Ephesians 5:18 — "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." The call to ongoing, repeated filling, not a one-time event.

Acts 2:4 — "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues." The pattern of filling accompanied by speaking in tongues, established at Pentecost.

On Walking in the Spirit

Galatians 5:16 — "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." A daily, moment-by-moment posture, not a single decision.

Galatians 5:25 — "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Living and walking, internal reality and outward practice, held together.

On Praying in the Spirit

Ephesians 6:18 — "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all

perseverance and supplication for all the saints." The central verse of this book, prayer that is Spirit-led, persistent, and outward-facing.

Jude 20 — "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit." Praying in the Spirit as a means of personal spiritual building.

Romans 8:26-27 — "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses... the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us... according to the will of God." The Holy Spirit's role as Helper and Intercessor, central to understanding praying in the Spirit.

On Tongues

1 Corinthians 14:2 — "For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God." Tongues as Spirit-to-spirit communication, not primarily for human understanding.

1 Corinthians 14:4 — "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself." The personal, building-up function of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:10 — "To another, different kinds of tongues, to another, the interpretation of tongues." Tongues as one gift among many, given by the Spirit as He wills.

On Authority

Luke 10:19 — "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy." The authority given to believers, to be exercised in standing firm, not in self-promotion.

Colossians 2:15 — "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it." Christ's victory as the basis for the believer's authority.

Matthew 16:19 — "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Authority exercised in alignment with heaven's will, not as independent power.

On Praying According to the Word

1 John 5:14 — "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." Confidence in prayer rooted in alignment with God's will, as revealed in Scripture.

Isaiah 55:11 — "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void." The enduring effectiveness of God's word, a foundation for praying Scripture back to God.

Hebrews 4:12 — "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Scripture as active and alive, not merely historical text.

On Surrender

Romans 8:26 — (see above) The Spirit's intercession as a model of surrendered prayer.

Galatians 2:20 — "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." The pattern of surrender that underlies all Spirit-led living, not the erasure of self, but a new center of life.

1 Peter 5:7 — "Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." A practical picture of surrender, releasing burdens into God's care.

On Spiritual Dryness and Difficulty

Psalm 42:1 — "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God." An honest expression of longing in the midst of dryness.

2 Corinthians 12:9 — "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." God's response to Paul's unanswered request, sufficiency rather than removal.

Daniel 10:12-13 — The account of Daniel's prayer, delayed in its visible answer due to unseen spiritual opposition, a picture of prayer's effects unfolding beyond what we can observe.

On Discernment

John 16:13 — "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth." The Holy Spirit's role as guide, a foundation for discernment.

1 John 4:1 — "Test the spirits, whether they are of God." The call to discernment, not blind acceptance, even of spiritual experiences.

On Worship

Psalm 103:1 — "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!" A model of pure worship, focused on God's character.

John 4:24 — "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Worship as a Spirit-engaged activity, not merely external form.

On the Father Heart of God

Matthew 18:3 — "Unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." Childlike posture as central to relationship with God.

Romans 8:15 — "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" The Spirit's role in establishing our identity as God's children.

APPENDIX B

Prayer Declarations and Decrees

The following declarations are offered as tools, not formulas. They are meant to be prayed thoughtfully, in the context of a relationship with God, not recited mechanically as though the words themselves carry independent power. Use them as starting points, adapting them in your own words as the Holy Spirit leads.

Declarations for Identity

I am a child of God, adopted into His family, not by my own effort, but by His grace.

The Holy Spirit lives in me, and I am never praying alone.

I do not need to perform or pretend in order to come into God's presence. I come as I am, and I am welcomed.

Declarations for Prayer

I have a Helper in prayer, the Holy Spirit, who knows what I need even when I don't.

When I don't know how to pray, the Spirit intercedes for me, according to the Father's will.

Praying in the Spirit builds up my inner life, even when I don't understand what is being prayed.

Declarations for Authority

I have been given authority in Christ, not to control, but to stand firm against fear, discouragement, and opposition.

The same power that raised Christ from the dead is at work in me.

I do not fight from a position of defeat, but from a position of victory already won.

Declarations for Dry Seasons

Dryness does not mean God has left. He is present, even when I don't feel it.

My prayer life is not measured by a single day, but by a lifelong relationship.

I choose to keep showing up, even when prayer feels difficult, trusting that faithfulness matters more than feeling.

Declarations for Surrender

I release what I cannot control into the hands of the One who controls all things.

Surrender is not giving up. It is placing my trust in Someone stronger than myself.

Not my will, but Yours, Lord, in this situation and in every situation.

Declarations for Family and Loved Ones

I release my family members into God's hands, trusting His work in their lives, even what I cannot see.

The Holy Spirit is interceding for my loved ones, even now, even in ways I'm unaware of.

I will not carry anxiety for my family as though I were the only one watching over them. God sees, and God is at work.

Declarations for the Days Ahead

I commit to a rhythm of praying in the Spirit, not as a perfect record, but as a faithful practice.

Whatever season I am in, vibrant or dry, easy or hard, I will continue this relationship with the Holy Spirit.

What God has begun in me, through this book and through this journey, He will continue to complete.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Brian The Seer

Brian The Seer is a prophetic teacher, content creator, and founder of Guga Inspire, Rhema Amplifié and the Remnant Magazine, all together known as Glory Testimonies. Through video teaching, written resources, and community engagement, Brian has dedicated his work to helping believers grow in their understanding of spiritual warfare, prayer, and the practical outworking of faith in everyday life. His teaching style is direct, theologically grounded, and rooted in a conviction that spiritual truths are meant to be lived, not merely understood.

Pastor Naya Wanjiru

Pastor Naya Wanjiru brings a unique perspective to this book as a former practitioner of occult and ritual practices before her dramatic conversion to faith in Jesus Christ. Her testimony, woven throughout this book, offers a perspective shaped by firsthand experience on both sides of the spiritual divide, what it means to operate under one spiritual authority, and what it means to be set free into another. Pastor Naya now serves within the Glory Testimonies

community, walking alongside others in their own journeys of prayer, deliverance, and spiritual growth.

Together, Brian and Pastor Naya have collaborated on this book as part of an ongoing effort to provide accessible, biblically grounded, and practically applicable teaching on prayer and the Holy Spirit's work in the life of every believer.

Connect With Glory Testimonies Ministries

Thank you for taking this journey through Praying in the Spirit: Unlocking the Language of Heaven. We hope this book has been a meaningful step in your relationship with the Holy Spirit, and we'd love to continue walking alongside you.

To stay connected with Brian The Seer Ministries and Glory Testimonies, including new teachings, testimonies, and resources for your continued growth, follow our channels and platforms, where we regularly share video teachings, prayer resources, and community updates.

We also invite you to share your own story. If something in this book, a chapter, a prayer, a piece of the 21-day journey, has been meaningful in your own walk with the Holy Spirit, we'd love to hear about it. Testimonies like the ones shared in Chapter 26 come from real people willing to share their journeys, and yours could be an encouragement to someone else walking a similar path.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide, fill, and lead you, in prayer and in every area of life, today and always.

Brian The Seer and Pastor Naya Wanjiru Glory Testimonies Team

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PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Unlocking the Language of Heaven

There is a realm beyond what our natural eyes can see and a language beyond what our natural lips can speak. That realm is real. That language is powerful. And it is available to every believer.

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT will take you on a life-changing journey into the supernatural dimension of prayer. Discover how the Holy Spirit helps you pray according to God's will, edifies your spirit, intercedes for you, and releases heaven's power on earth.

IN THIS BOOK, YOU WILL DISCOVER:

- What it means to pray in the Spirit
- The biblical foundation and purpose of praying in tongues
- How praying in the Spirit strengthens your inner man
- How it aligns you with God's will and timing
- Practical steps to grow in this supernatural gift

For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. For no one understands him; however, in the Spirit he speaks mysteries.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:2



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