

## PRAYER: REBELLING AGAINST THE STATUS QUO

*I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;  
they will never be silent day or night.  
You who call on the LORD,  
give yourselves no rest....  
—Isaiah 62:6*

**R**emember David Wells' arresting essay in the *Perspectives Reader* about prayer as rebellion?

What is the nature of petitionary prayer? It is, in essence, rebellion—rebellion against the world in its fallenness, the absolute and undying refusal to accept as normal what is pervasively abnormal. It is, in this its negative aspect, the refusal of every agenda, every scheme, every interpretation that is at odds with the norm as originally established by God.

*This is not the way life is supposed to be. It makes me angry, but I personally can do something about it: pray!*

If your passion has focused on intercession—serving the Body of Christ as a watchman on the walls, you know there are a ton of very good prayer resources out there. We don't need to run through yet another Bible review of all the reasons and keys to powerful prayer. (See the rudimentary resource list below.)

Whether it's straight from the Book or in the thousands of great pamphlets, articles, messages or books on prayer, we know prayer isn't so much about exhortation, information or technique.

It's about the supernatural.

So settle back for a good global story about the power of intercession. A good, true story. Then we'll suggest a few iron-sharpening exercises, mention some key resources and let you get on with your intercessory role in the Kingdom...for now.

### ● A Story

*Somewhere in Western Sahara.* Okay, so you feel a little vertigo: You have no idea where you are. You casually ask Robert, the Brit who organized this trip and is driving your big Toyota Land Cruiser. He sticks out his lip, looks at the flat dirt—sand to the horizon—and says, "Haven't a clue." ([Click here](#) for the rest of the story....)

### Prayer Quotes

"The battle we face is a spiritual conflict. It must be fought and won by men and women of God who are willing to intercede for missionary families as they invade enemy territory held uncontested for centuries. Satan does not meekly give up his prey. He counterattacks fiercely in many unexpected ways. The missionary must have intercessors who stand alongside, praying on a regular and systematic basis."

- David Wang

"History belongs to the intercessors who believe the future into being.... These shapers of the future are the intercessors who call out of the future the longed-for present."

- Walter Wink

"We will only advance in our evangelistic work as fast and as far as we advance on our knees. Prayer opens the channel between a soul and God; prayerlessness closes it. Prayer releases the grip of Satan's power; prayerlessness increases it. That is why prayer is so exhausting and so vital. If we believed it, the prayer meeting would be as full as the church."

- Alan Redpath

"The whole idea of the prayers of the saints is that God's holiness, God's purpose, God's ways may be brought about irrespective of who comes or goes."

- Oswald Chambers

"It is true that Bible prayers in word and print are short, but the praying men of the Bible were with God through many a sweet and holy wrestling hour. They won by few words but long waiting."

- E. M. Bounds

"I believe it will only be known on the Last Day how much has been accomplished in missionary work by the prayers of earnest believers at home...I do earnestly covet a volume of prayer for my...work -- but oh! for a volume of faith too. Will you give this?"

- James Fraser

### ● Lord, Teach Us to Pray

Even prayerless Christians know we should pray for our missionaries. Paul set an early example of missionaries pleading for prayer:

*I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.* —Romans 15:30

You can Google over three million references on the Web with the query “How to pray for a missionary/missionaries.” Many of the citations have surprisingly good and even creative ideas.

So the quandary in global intercession isn’t about how to pray for missionaries. It’s more complicated than that—as in: how to pray for the whole world. It’s praying *for* the nations and *against* the enemy Satan—whose hordes steal and kill and destroy these captives who are without God and without hope.

For your priestly, global intercession, you’ll need prayer *friends* and prayer *fuel*.

*Every prayer warrior longs to:  
1) see the results of prayer and  
2) feel the power of prayer  
—both of which occur when  
praying for the nations!*

### ● Find Friends to Pray for the Nations

(Note: If you haven’t run through it already, work through our [Make A Difference—How to Mobilize Mission Vision in Your Fellowship](#) unit.)

Comrades in global prayer are sometimes tough to find in the typical fellowship. Yet nurturing the prayer skills of the non-mission-minded—the non-*Perspectives* prayer warriors in your church—is wonderfully simple since *we get to see history-changing results!*

That is, much prayer rises like incense before our God, and we’ll never know till heaven how He has answered. But in praying for the unreached peoples of the world, we can virtually *measure* the effectiveness of our prayers. For example, if you began interceding for the exotic, legendary Halkh Mongolian people just two decades ago, you’d be praying for an unreached people group in which there were no known believers. Then there was one. Then eight. Today you’d be praising as well as pleading in your prayers since there are now more than 30,000 young Mongolian believers, with strong Mongolian-led churches sending more missionaries per Christian than any other country in the world!

“Make time for the quiet moments as God whispers and the world is loud.”  
- Anonymous

“We never know how God will answer our prayers, but we can expect that He will get us involved in His plan for the answer. If we are true intercessors, we must be ready to take part in God’s work on behalf of the people for whom we pray.”  
- Corrie Ten Boom

“I have felt the impact of your prayer in these past weeks. I am certain now that nothing has had a more powerful influence on this life of mine than your prayers.”  
- Jim Elliot

“Be much alone with God, and take time to get thoroughly acquainted. Converse over everything with Him. Unburden yourself wholly -every thought, feeling, wish, plan, doubt- to Him...He wants not merely to be on good terms with you, but to be intimate.”  
- Horatius Bonar

“...to pray in the Spirit, to speak words that reach and touch God, that affect and influence the powers of the unseen world - such praying, such speaking, depends entirely upon our hearing of God’s voice.”  
- Andrew Murray

“Pray for great things, expect great things, work for great things, but above all pray.”  
- R.A. Torrey

“The motive is this, ‘Oh! that God could be glorified, that Jesus might see the reward of his sufferings! Oh! that sinners might be saved, so that God might have new tongues to praise him, new hearts to love him! Oh! that sin were put an end to, that the holiness, righteousness, mercy, and power of God might be magnified!’ This is the way to pray; when thy prayers seek God’s glory, it is God’s glory to answer thy prayers.”  
C. H. Spurgeon

Another compelling reason your praying friends will be intrigued to join you in interceding for the nations—even though they're not *Perspectives*-savvy—is that praying for unreached peoples is totally unselfish and is therefore divinely powerful. We know that very often when we pray, we ask “amiss” or “with wrong motives” (James 4:3). When you pull down the strongholds over an unreached people, you have absolutely no personal stake in the outcome; any results are purely for the glory of God. So the global prayer weapons of our warfare have an efficacy, a power that our “domestic” and personal prayers may not have.

Actually seeing in your lifetime the historic results of your prayers plus experiencing a new power in prayer is incredibly motivating to intercessors. You can use these remarkable factors to recruit friends who'll be comrades-in-arms for the spiritual battles you'll wage for the sake of His Name among the nations.

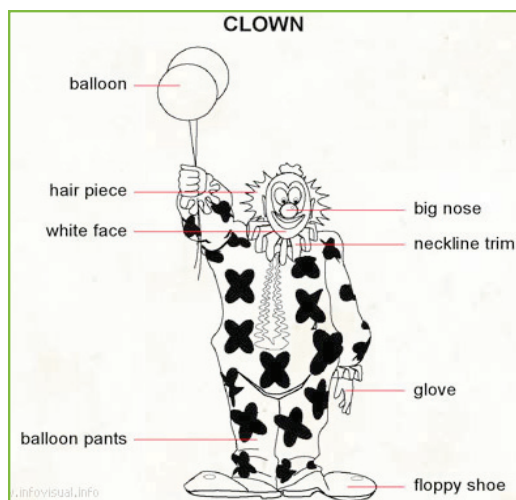
### **Exercise 1. Get praying friends addicted to intercession for the nations.**

If your prayer list doesn't already read like God's *Registry of the Peoples* (Psalm 87:6), consider taking on this memorable unreached people in Mali among whom—at last report—there is one lone follower of Jesus Christ:

The Bozos.

Yes, with big red noses, wild orange hair, floppy shoes.

No, seriously, they are called the Bozos! Recruit a few comrades to intercede with you (Who can resist praying for the Bozos?) by emphasizing that *there will be Bozos in heaven* (Revelation 5:9). And we're not talking about your brother-in-law or neighbor. You and your friends can pray and measure God's response as, through the coming years, more Bozos come to faith in Christ!



Go beyond your local connections of intercessors and explore the various global prayer networks to find new friends to pray with. A good starting point for networking is the Web site of [Operation World](#). (See below.)

“I wonder what would happen to most churches and Christian work if we awakened tomorrow, and everything concerning the reality and work of the Holy Spirit, and everything concerning prayer were removed from the Bible. I don't mean just ignored, but actually cut out— disappeared. I wonder how much difference it would make?”

- Francis Schaeffer

“We all have to wait until the astonishing discoveries will one day be made, and find out whose faithful prayer in hospitals, prisons, jungles, wheelchairs, crowded city apartments, cabins in the woods, farms, factories, or concentration camps has been a part of a specific victory in snatching someone from a circle of death, or in breaking chains so that there seems to be an ease for that one in stepping into new life. I feel sure that we'll be surprised beyond measure to discover who or how many will receive the rewards for their part in taking literally and with simple faith and trust the responsibility to intercede, to pray, to make requests day in and day out.”

-Edith Schaeffer

“Prayer is not a preparation for the battle; it is the battle!”

- Leonard Ravenhill

“Almost everyone believes that prayer is important. But there is a difference between believing that prayer is important and believing it is essential. ‘Essential’ means there are things that will not happen without prayer.”

- Dee Duke

Find praying friends particularly *among the elderly*—in your fellowship, in nearby elder-care facilities, in your extended family. Empower them with purpose; they have the time and wisdom to pray for the nations. Perhaps God is giving them these extended years on earth precisely to change history. You supply the prayer fuel and updates; they will pray!

(Continued)

### ● Find “Fuel” to Pray for the Nations

How do you get specific in your prayers for the nations? How can you tell when your prayers are taking effect? Both questions are answered by gathering the people group information already researched by the Body of Christ.

More than 300 Christian research organizations around the world are now sharing their findings. This rare information fine-tunes your intercession, and it gives you benchmarks to measure the results. For example, among the Bozos there is no church whatsoever according to *The Joshua Project* information. Noting that benchmark of zero churches will make it obvious when your prayers are kicking in as one church fellowship, then two, then a church movement erupts among the Bozos.

Get an idea of how to find prayer fuel on a people group by glimpsing some Web information on that one-of-a-kind ethnic group—the Bozos. Of course, you can follow this process to find out more about nearly any unreached people on the planet!

#### *Exercise 2. Gather prayer fuel for intelligent intercession.*

- Ask God for wisdom in praying what He wants among the Bozos.
- Go to [JoshuaProject.org](http://JoshuaProject.org)
- Insert in the Search box “Bozos.”
- Jot down everything you feel is significant about the Bozos.
- Follow the links to find out more.
- Duplicate your findings for your fellow intercessors.
- Pray.

### ● Free-Falling in Prayer

Is a world Christian supposed to only pray for the unreached *ethne* of the world? We might get so focused on our “favorite” people group that our times of intercession slide back into “our own desires” to see results.

Feel free to regularly pray through your own fellowship’s prayer requests—even if it only seems to be a repetitious rundown of all the ailments of church members. Check with your church’s denominational or network affiliations for prayer items. Visit the *Mission America Coalition* site <[MissionAmerica.org](http://MissionAmerica.org)>—particularly the “Lighthouse” section—for prayer points and national prayer networking. Remember that, in our

“Prayer is primarily a wartime walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief. It is not surprising that prayer malfunctions when we try to make it a domestic intercom to call upstairs for more comforts in the den...Until you know that life is war, you cannot know what prayer is for: Prayer is for the accomplishment of a wartime mission.”

- John Piper

(Read through John Robb’s stunning article [“Prayer as a Strategic Weapon in Frontier Missions”](#) —“Are unreached peoples resistant to the gospel or has so little prayer gone up for them that they are effectively held in check by the enemy?”)

*Perspectives* emphasis on the world’s unreached peoples, your own nation is also one which God is longing to bless.

Further, here’s an exercise to keep you open-minded about who and what to pray for regardless of your own interests: Intercede for the individuals and pray against satanic attacks in a “random” string of Web searches regardless of where you land:

#### *Exercise 3. Pray through the Web.*

- Ask God for insight.
- Use your usual Web search engine (Yahoo.com, Google.com, etc.) to enter the following, and then pray about what catches your eye and heart:

- American church.* Remember that without a vision, the people “lose focus” (Proverbs 29:18).
- World political leaders.* Praying for these figures is a command (1 Timothy 2:1-2)!
- Disaster.* Often when the god of this world ravages a city or people, it’s an indicator that God is moving behind the scenes.
- Poorest of the poor.* “Remember the poor” (Galatians 2:10).
- Street kids.* Look after the orphans and widows in their distress. (James 1:26-27).

Add your own free-form search terms. And be jolted into specific prayer on topics you never thought you’d be praying about!

*For more Prayer resources check out the Next Steps section of the Perspectives website.*  
[www.Perspectives.org](http://www.Perspectives.org)