

A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracted World

Week 3: April 3 – April 9

Chapters 16-17



Grab a copy of *THE DREAM KING: How the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr. is being fulfilled to heal racism in America*. In the book you will find the detailed story of the “Kettle Prayers.” I wept reading this story of how one family of Christian slaves were cruelly beaten by their slave owners if they were found praying. The slaves were not allowed to pray because it was assumed they were praying for freedom – and the slave owner didn’t want them even to consider the possibility or hope of freedom. Despite the danger, family members would sneak into a barn late at night while everyone else was sleeping, making sure their prayer meetings were never seen or heard. They carried a black cast-iron kettle. Once inside, they turned the kettle upside down, so the opening was on the dirt floor of the barn; then they placed rocks under the rim of the kettle to prop it up, creating a narrow opening. They would lie on the ground, prostrate around the kettle, with their mouths close to the opening. The kettle would then muffle their voices as they prayed softly through the night.

One of the family’s ancestors who was present in these prayer meetings passed down the story of secret prayer around the kettle. These slaves didn’t believe they would ever see freedom in their own lifetime, so they prayed for the freedom of their children and their children’s children. They risked their lives to pray for the freedom of future generations. One day freedom did come. A young girl who attended those prayer meetings was set free from slavery. This girl passed down the kettle because she knew that she and all those born after her were standing on the sacrifice of others’ devotion to Christ. She carefully preserved and passed on both the kettle and its history. The kettle now belongs to one of the authors of the book, Will Ford.

What took place spiritually as these slaves prayed is a representation of prayer bowls that collect our prayers in heaven. Revelation 5:8 speaks of “bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints” before the throne of God. Scripture says that at some future point, no doubt when God determines the time is right, He adds His fire to these prayers. These prayers are combined, hurled to Earth, and answered in the form of God’s judgments and power.

Through the ages, many people had added their individual thread as a storyline in God's history, but the history they were making would not be complete without the work of future generations being woven into their own. Many promises of God weren't fulfilled within the lifetime of those that prayed for that fulfillment. God may promise a person something and bring it to pass through that person's grandchildren. In His mind, doing it through a person's descendants is the same as doing it through the original individual.

The authors of the book: *THE DREAM KING* go on to say that our collective history is made from a diverse yet unified remnant – great heroes of faith in America who were passionate for the One who paid the ultimate price for everyone's freedom. Jesus Christ risked everything and gave it all so that we could have freedom from sin and a relationship with God. He lives today making intercession so that you and I, as His family members, can together shape the future with Him. His prayers for unity and promise of greater works beckon us to agree today with what He started in our forefathers yesterday (John 17:11, 14:12). Through Him, a new remnant is both healing history and making history.

The story of Kettle Prayers is quite compelling, giving yet another rise in my heart to pray more, pray harder. My prayers are being collected in the golden bowls in heaven. Your prayers are too! We may not have a kettle to remind us of the importance of prayer but we have a calling.

The Christian slaves spoken of in *THE DREAM KING* obviously abided. Their lives were identified by secret prayer. They believed that Jesus would bring real change and their hope was in Him despite the risk of death. What is stopping you?

-----Daily Reflections-----

- Sunday, April 3: As you begin this week's chapters from *A Praying Life*, Paul Miller writes and reminds us again in chapter 16, "*Abiding* is a perfect way to describe a praying life. We shy away from prayers that invite God to rule our lives. They make us vulnerable." How is the "abiding" going for you?
- Monday – Friday, April 4 – April 8: [Chapter 16](#) - Often our need for daily bread opens doors to deeper heart needs for real food (p. 126). How have you seen this happen in your own life? How does someone who is abiding pray differently from someone who is not abiding? How does the "asking" look different. How does the author distinguish between wisdom and guidance? Why does it seldom occur to us to ask God for advice and wisdom (p. 129)? What would it look like for you to ask God for wisdom with an abiding heart, a surrendered will? How would you involve the body of Christ? [Chapter 17](#) –Look over pp. 131-134 again. What stages does God take the husband through as he begins to pray for his wife? How does he become the gospel for her? Think of someone you know who you want to see change in – but to ask for it feels either too controlling or hopeless. How can you begin to take the same approach the husband took? How about your spirit? Is it critical? Do you need to reverse your possible critical spirit and begin to thank God for that person? Why is it so hard for us to pray for change in ourselves?

- Saturday, April 9: What has God taught you about prayer this week? Have you felt stuck, trapped by your feelings this week? What does it mean that King Jesus brings the possibility of real change and hope to you? Talk to God about the cultural changes that need to take place around you.

Daily reflections are adapted from Paul E Miller's *A Praying Life Discussion Guide*.



WEEKLY PRAYER REQUESTS FOR April 3 – April 9

ADORATION: praising God for who He is and what He has done.

Gracious and merciful God, You are good and You do good things for us. You amaze us with your steadfast love that endures forever. You, our fortress and great strength, a very present help in times of need, most worthy of our praise. You are feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols. But You made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before You; strength and beauty are in Your sanctuary. We will ascribe to You glory and strength. We will ascribe to You the glory due Your name. And worship You in the beauty of holiness. (Psalm 96: 4-9). Help us trust in your faithfulness and believe that even now you are working out your good and perfect plan for our life. Blessed are we who fear You, who find great delight in Your commands.

Pause to express your thoughts of praise and worship.

CONFESSION: stating our sins and asking forgiveness!

God, forgive me for the times when I look through the lens of my own comfort and happiness and forget that I'm fulfilling a purpose and plan that you have for me. Forgive me for holding on to control over my circumstances. Give me the grace I need to surrender my plans to you.

I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin. O Lord, do not forsake me; O my God, be not far from me! Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation. (Psalm 38: 18, 21-22) Forgive my tendencies to wonder, to think more about this world more than You, more about spring than the days leading up to Easter. Your arm, O Lord, is not too weak to save, nor your ear too deaf to hear when I call. It is my sin that cuts me off from You. Search me, O God and know my heart; point out anything in me that offends you and lead me along the path of everlasting life. Lord if there's anything in my life that is displeasing to You, if I'm engaged in any pursuit that is outside of Your will, would you show that to me?

THANKSGIVING: thanking God for specific things that He has done.

Lord Jesus, I will sing to You and give You praise. For You have rescued the lives of the needy from the hands of the evildoers. (Jeremiah 20:13). You, O Lord, are good, a refuge in times of trouble; You know those who trust in You. (Nahum 1:7). Thank you for Your blood that has been applied to my heart. I do not lose heart, even though my outward self is perishing, yet my inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light affliction, which is momentary, is working for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. So, I do not look at the things that are seen but at the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are temporary, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4: 16 -18)

Our EE ministries praise God for the following answers to prayer:

- On March 12, Shibu Oommen completed a SYFW In Havertown, PA with 15 people training, 2 pastors, 4 churches in attendance.
- On March 12, Keith Hood completed a SYFW in Bloomindale, GA with 18 people training, 1 pastor and 1 church attending. During OJT, 9 people heard the gospel. They encountered multi-ethnic individuals during evangelism on the streets of GA. There was great enthusiasm about implementing EV2.
- On March 13, Don Snipes completed a SYFW in Bella Vista Arkansas with 19 people training, 3 pastors, 1 church. They plan to start implementation within 2 weeks of the workshop.
- On March 17, James Steward completed an Everyday Evangelism Launch in Peachland, NC with 10 people trained, 3 pastors, 6 churches in attendance. 15 people heard the gospel during OJT with 7 of them making professions of faith.

Pause to offer your own expressions of thanksgiving.

SUPPLICATION: asking God for our needs and our wants.

God, help me see my circumstances through your eyes. I may not always know what to do with every next step, but I will choose to rest in you and trust you to provide all I need. Restore my heart when I feel discouraged and lead me to find refuge under the shelter of your wings. Help me keep my focus on you, Lord, and trust that you will show me my next steps when the time is right. God, You designed that our lives would be aimed at forming our character to resemble Jesus more fully. You are preparing for us an eternal glory that far outweighs our present difficulties.

- Pray for the continued ministry of EE in Arkansas with Don Snipes serving as IFW. Pray for the pastor and 3 trainers in Bella Vista, AR as they began their semester of EV2 training on March 27. Pray that they will

- see much fruit and that they will remain faithful to the Lord in witnessing both as a way of life personally and as a church seeking to penetrate the darkness and affluence of their community with the gospel.
- Pray for the continued ministry of EE in the SE under the direction of James Stewart. Pray that the 5 churches that attended the Everyday Evangelism Launch in Peachland, NC on 3/17 will implement EV2 in their churches. Pray that host church, Harmony Church, will be able to follow up with the new believers that came to Christ during OJT.
 - Pray for our next Equip America on April 23 in the following locations:
 1. Pueblo, CO
 2. Tallahassee, FL
 3. Las Vegas, NV
 4. North Providence, RI (Spanish Version)
 - **The 71st National Day of Prayer** will be celebrated on Thursday, May, 5, 2022. The theme this year is a call to praise in prayer. *'EXALT THE LORD, WHO HAS ESTABLISHED US'* based on Colossians 2:6-7.
 - For plans and preparations for Congress Of Nations in 2023
 - Pray for "TOGETHER 22" happening in the Cotton Bowl Stadium in Dallas, TX, June 24-25! EE is partnering with Pulse to help the spread of the gospel and equip others to share. Pray for an outpouring of God's Spirit as entire generations gather to meet with Jesus and be equipped to share Him with the world. We're praying that a new Jesus movement will be unleashed.
 - Pray for churches throughout America as Easter Sunday approaches. Pray that Easter 2022 will be the year when churches are bursting with people (like never before) coming to church to see Jesus and hear the Good News that JESUS SAVES and HE'S COMING AGAIN. Pray that households will be saved. Pray that pastors will preach with an anointing of God's Spirit like never before.
 - Jesus wept out of compassion. Jesus wept over the wages of sin. Jesus wept because His love is perfect and He doesn't want anyone to perish but all to have eternal life. PRAY that believers will weep over the sins of this country. Pray that we would weep over the lost. Pray that we would weep in gratitude for Christ's willingness to pay our sin debt and embrace the price that Jesus paid for our eternal resurrection. Pray that the Body of Christ would weep for His people to rise up and be Kingdom-minded, Great Commission-focused, unified together as ONE to win this world for Jesus.

(Ministries of EE: Share Your Faith Workshop, Everyday Evangelism, Hope for Kids)

SYFW	4/10	The Assembly	Evansville, IN
SYFW	4/24	North Macon Presbyterian Church	Macon, GA
SYFW	4/29 – 4/30	Calvary Arlington	Arlington, WA
SYFW	4/30	Broadway Baptist Church	Maryville, TN
SYFW	4/30	Grace Baptist Church	Salem, OR
SYFW	4/30	Calvary Arlington	Arlington, WA
SYFW	4/30	Polk Baptist Association	Columbus, NC
SYFW	4/30	Faith Family Fellowship	Purdy, MO
SYFW	4/30	Philema Road Baptist Church	Leesburg, GA
SYFW	4/30	Taller Manos a la Obra a Rio Life Community Church (Spanish)	Mercedes, TX
SYFW	4/30	Rio Life Community Church (English)	Mercedes, TX
SYFW	5/1	Maumee General Baptist Church	Owensville, IN
SYFW	5/7	Emmanuel Baptist	The Dalles, OR
SYFW	5/7	Faith Presbyterian Church	Wilmington, DE
SYFW	5/14	Taller Manos a la Obra a Iglesia ACyM Casa de Jennings	Bronx, NY
SYFW	5/14	The Redeemed Christian Church	Erie, PA

SYFW	5/15	Mt. Pleasant Church of God	Evansville, IN
SYFW	5/14	Callahan Baptist Church	Callahan, FL
SYFW	5/21	First Baptist Church	Effingham, IL
SYFW	5/22	Oak Hill Christian Center	Evansville, IN
SYFW	6/4	Trinity Bible Fellowship	Blanton, PA
SYFW	6/11	Life Bible Church	Harrisburg, OR
SYFW	6/25	The Church of the Apostles	Atlanta, GA
SYFW	8/27	Martha Road Baptist Church	Altus, OK
EV2 Launch	4/21 – 4/23	Eficaz a Iglesia Un Nuevo Comienzo	El Paso, TX
EV2 Launch	4/21 – 4/23	New Vision Church	El Paso, TX
EV2 Launch	4/21 – 4/23	Lanzamiento Evangelismo Eficaz a New Vision Church	El Paso, TX
EV2 Launch	5/13 – 5/14	Northside Baptist Church	Lawton, OK
EV2 Launch	5/19 – 5/21	Lanzamiento Evangelismo Eficaz a Iglesia ACyM de Virginia	Manassas, VA
EV2 Launch	6/10 – 6/11	New Generation Baptist Church	Norman, OK
EV2 Launch	8/4 – 8/5	First Baptist Rogers	Rogers, AR
EV2 Launch	8/25 – 8/27	Lanzamiento Evangelismo Eficaz a ACyM Casa de Oracion	Brandon, FL
Classic Clinic	10/24-10/28	Chinese Community Church of Indiana	Carmel, IN

Are you having trouble sleeping at night? Worry and anxiety can bring about sleeping problems. Here are 7 scriptures for you to pray to help you sleep.

1. Proverbs 3:5-6

Dear Lord, help me to trust in You with all my heart and not lean on my understanding. You said for me to cast all my cares upon You because You care for me. Tonight, I'm casting all my burdens, all my anxiety, all my worries at Your feet. Help me to stay on the narrow path that leads to a complete reliance upon You. Amen.

2. Psalm 56:3

Dear Lord, I am afraid. My heart is troubled about many things. Please help me to put my trust in You and You alone. Amen.

3. Romans 8:38-39

Dear Lord, thank you that nothing can separate me from Your love. Your love is bigger than my fear, my anxiety, and my circumstances. Thank You for your unending love. Amen.

4. John 14:27

Dear Lord, my heart is troubled. Your Word says you gave me Your peace, but I don't feel it right now. Please ease my troubled heart and let me feel the peace that only You can give. Amen.

5. Psalm 34:4

Dear Lord, thank you for being a God who answers prayers. You alone are holy and worthy of praise. You have the power to free me from my fears. I trust in You alone. You alone can calm my mind and bring me peace from my feeling. Amen.

6. Philippians 4:6-7

Dear Lord, thank You for who You are. You are the Great I AM. Thank you for sending Your Son to die on a cross for my sins and allowing me to have a personal relationship with You. Lord, I need peace tonight. You know my innermost thoughts and feelings. I claim the peace you give. Guard my heart and mind against fear and worry that doesn't come from You. Thank You for Your love. Amen.

7. 1 Peter 5:6-8

Dear Lord, my mind is racing and I can't sleep. You tell me to cast all my anxiety on You, so here I am doing just that. I know the enemy is the author of lies and confusion and chaos. He prowls around doing everything he can to make my mind race and give into worry. You are bigger. You are the God of peace You will carry my burdens. I need you. Amen.