



# WATCHMAN'S TRUMPET



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## FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

*Hello,*

*I welcome you to this new month and present to you September 2023 edition of Watchman's Trumpet. The theme of this month's edition is "The Lord's Prayer (Part II)".*

*This edition is the second of a two-part series on this Model Prayer as documented by Mathew's Gospel in Mathew 6:9-13 comprising of eight sermons or messages which include Praying to the Heavenly Father, Sanctity of God's name, Establishment and extension of God's kingdom, Submission to God's will on earth, Man's physical nourishment and daily sustenance, Prayer for spiritual life, health and vitality, Prayer for guidance, protection and deliverance and proclamation of God's eternal dominion, supremacy and magnificence.*

*This teaching of the Lord fall within a wider context of instruction by Christ on Christian duties. The particular aspect of Christian duties highlighted in Mathew six include acceptable giving, fasting and prayers. The Lord in His teaching on prayer corrected the wrong attitude of Jews in His days. According to the Lord, prayer is not designed to educate or inform God about what He did not know or to show off, babble and use meaningless words. Rather, it is a way of*

*making us understand the misery of living without God and salvation, living with hate and resentment and living self-serving life. Genuine prayer will humble our heart, excite our desire, inflame our faith, animate our hope and raise our soul from earth to heaven where believers' Father dwell; tour country and the land of our nativity and enduring inheritance.*

*It is clear from this prayer taught by Christ that our motive, our attitude, the state of our heart and nature of our relationship with others within and outside the church are all important to God whenever we come before Him to pray. Effective prayer will draw us closer to God and fill our hearts with love for others. Actually genuine prayer is asking God for what we are willing and have obligation to share with others. I pray that as you read this second part, great transformation will take place in your life, most especially your prayer life in Jesus name. Welcome!*

## MAN'S NEED FOR PHYSICAL NOURISHMENT AND DAILY SUSTENANCE

*"Give us this day our daily bread"* **Mathew 6:11**

Our text is the aspect of the Lord's Prayer that addressed man and his physical needs.



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The entire prayer can be divided into two broad outlines. First we have God and His glory and secondly, man and his needs. This order is very important. A spirit-inspired prayer or prayer meeting must start with worship. We must prioritize the glory of God, the kingdom of God and the will of God. We must give God a supreme place in our prayers as well as in all that we do. When we do all these, all other things in our life will find their level. Today's prayer point is a reminder that life and living has physical dimension and our body is a wonderful gift from God that needed care.

To understand this prayer point and its lessons, we shall consider these subtopics:

1. Confession and gratitude of God's children
2. Contentment and confidence of kingdom citizens
3. Equity and generosity of faithful believers



## 1. Confession and gratitude of God's children

*"The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."* **Psalm 145:15-16**

*"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* **James 1:17**

*"Give us this day our daily bread"* rendered as prayer point to God is a confession, an affirmation and acknowledgement of God as our source and keeper. The word *"Bread"* as used in this text denotes everything necessary to sustain us including food, clothing, shelter, job, a healthy body, possessions, money, good weather, friends, devout wife and husband or parents, godly children, educational attainment, professional skills, promotion, business profit, etc. They all come from God. Our acknowledgement of this fact is evidence of our gratitude for them and appreciation of the One who gave them to us.

*"Give us this day our daily bread"* expresses our total dependence upon God and His providence. We cannot live for a day, take a breath or seat at our next meal without God's influence, help and support. God is the source, the creator and upholder of all things Psalm 33:11. He controls weather patterns, balancing of seasons, growing of crops, and animal life. He oversees climatic, agricultural and economic conditions that ensure availability of food in market places and on our table. He is the one who restrains and prevents threats to and breaks in universe's food chain. We must daily confess these and express gratitude to God for them. This singular act makes man different from animals.

## 2. Contentment and confidence of kingdom citizens

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."* **Mathew 6:33-34**

*"Give us this day our daily bread"* is a specific prayer for the meeting of our basic needs as guaranteed by God to all kingdom citizens. God wanted us to trust Him for them every day and as we do so keep in mind His faithfulness. Prayer for meeting of believers' needs as taught by Christ has boundaries. It is not a prayer for great wealth and luxury. Granting of ability to accumulate wealth is God's prerogative, and given according to His wisdom and for His purpose. Nothing in the scriptures suggests that all Christians will be wealthy materially in this present life. Sufficient is God's gift to us of all that we require to be and do all that He has ordained for our present life and existence.



We are to pray for daily bread not weekly, monthly or annual provisions. Jesus wanted us to come to Him daily with the list of our needs and as we come set boundaries to our desires. He wanted the night to be the horizon that bounds our daily vision. We are not to carry tomorrow's burden today Mathew 6:31-34. We are to live for a day at a time and live a life in which faith in God immunizes us against frets, fears, worries and anxieties. Worry is sin; by it we express doubts about God's ability, wisdom and goodness.



## 3. Faith building consideration facilitating effective prayer

*"2 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."* **Mark 11:22-24**

Since God is always faithful to His promises to meet our needs, God's people are expected to be faithful too. Faithfulness to God implies a willingness and commitment to follow God's plan, principles and programme for the meeting of our daily needs. Clear difference existed between Israelites in the wilderness and in the Promised Land. If we find ourselves in the wilderness of this world without resource, job, hope or expectation physically from anywhere and anyone, God will supernaturally feed us. But on a normal day, we are to work and through work earn a living to meet our needs and care for others around us.

*"Give us this day our daily bread"* is a prayer offered as if all humanity eats from the same table and we want everyone to be satisfied. This is the Spirit of Christ and Christ-like attitude in faithful believers' life and prayer. Sincerity in praying this prayer will mold compassion in our hearts for others especially those whose life is one long fight against hunger and starvation. Meaningful prayers help us think, love and work like God. If every person, business, institutions and government live by this principle, none will sleep hungry in the world. May God hear and answer our prayers!



## ABOUT WATCHMAN OUTREACH MISSION

Watchman Outreach Mission as envisioned fundamentally comprises of men and women of faith who watch over one another and together watch for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next to this primary assignment is an equally important responsibility of bringing others into the same state of watchfulness and readiness as the coming of the Lord draws near. Ours is a trans-ministerial, trans-denominational mission. Our core values include expository teaching, prayer and counselling. We train in principles and practice of Christian discipleship and equip for effective Kingdom Service.

The Lord Jesus Christ in one of His parable said “*While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept*” **Mathew 25:5**. Watchman Outreach Mission is a response of faith to this and similar warnings about events in the last days. Our response is based on the premise that prophecies, visions and revelations about the future such as the one documented in the Lord’s parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins are sign-posts by which men are warned to keep vigil to avoid disastrous end. We serve to wake up the church and men everywhere to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return.

The Mission, based in Ibadan, Nigeria, was launched in 2009 and its maiden outing took place on the 20th November of the same year. On that day, we partnered with All Nations Evangelical Ministry (ANEM), Akobo, Ibadan for Evangelistic and Medical Mission Outreach to Idi - Ose Village on Arulogun - Olorunda Road in Lagelu Local Government, Ibadan.

In the years that followed we networked with churches and other Christian groups too to implement our mandate which include conducting gospel outreaches, discipleship training for new converts, organizing and facilitating workers and ministerial training, conducting administrative reviews in churches and ministries, writing of proposals for reforms and church growth strategies that can enhance social cohesion, improve church finances and foster overall development, unity and growth of such ministries; monitoring and/or supervision of the implementation of such reforms and strategies.

Some of these Christian groups and ministries include with Christ Apostolic Church, Oke - Ife in Ajangboju, Ibadan, Nigerian Military Christian Fellowship, Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment Chapter in Oyo - State Nigeria, Christ Gospel Mission International, Light of Jesus Evangelistic Ministry with branches in different cities in South Western Nigeria, and Ark of Salvation Church of Christ (ASCC) with headquarters at Molade, Monatan Ibadan.

Till date, although partnered ministries change from time to time depending on the leading we receive from the Lord, we remain committed to our main purpose and vision; that of service to the church and in the world to wake up men everywhere and encourage them to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return. Through our activities, souls had been saved, believers edified and church workers’ spiritual growth and development enhanced, all to the glory of God.

## WATCHMAN PRAYER HOUR



### *Prayer Points - For September 2023*

1. Thank God for His supremacy and sovereignty over all creation
  2. Thank God for His Fatherly role in our lives as well as in the life of all kingdom citizens
  3. Thank God for the greatness of His Holy name and the power of His kingdom.
  4. Pray for daily provisions: food clothing and shelter
  5. Pray for prosperous seasons in agriculture, economics, commerce and industries in your nation.
  6. Pray for continuous guidance of the Holy Spirit and divine protection
  7. Pray for protection against attacks by the devil and evil spirits
  8. Pray that grace to wholeheartedly forgive all insults and injuries from others
  9. Pray for inner healing and cleansing from pains and injuries from others
  10. Pray for enhanced and sustained relationship with God
- “ ..... men ought always to pray, and not to faint;’ **Luke 18:1**

**May the Lord hear and answer all our prayers - AMEN!**

**Watchman Prayer Hour** holds every Saturday from 10.30am - 12.00MD. We invite you to join us at our office in 78/80 Nepa (IBEDC) Building, Opposite U.I. Second Gate, Ibadan . Oyo - State Follow us on any of our Social media platforms and send your inquiries or prayer requests to any of our digital addresses.



**PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL  
LIFE, SPIRITUAL HEALTH  
AND VITALITY**

...*"Forgive us our debt as we forgive our debtors"* **Mathew 6:12;**

*"Forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us"* **Luke 11:4**

After meeting our physical needs, the next thing on the list of prayer points that Jesus taught us is the meeting of our spiritual needs. It is thus clear that man is both a physical and spiritual being. A state of health and soundness is required in both dimensions for balanced, fruitful and profitable life. The most significant factor that can foster, enhance and sustain our spiritual health is our relationship with God. Sin creates barrier between God and man. To remove this barrier, we must pray for and receive God's forgiveness.

Forgiveness from God not only results in remission of our sins, it grants us access to new life. Forgiveness, remission of sin and impartation of new life comes through faith in Christ. Without it, we are lost and we are debtors to God. Jesus in our text linked the possibility of receiving forgiveness and salvation with a commitment to forgive all who sinned against us. This prayer in our text is a heart-searching and introspective prayer point. To understand its necessity, we shall consider two subtopics:

1. Our need for forgiveness and salvation
2. Condition for enjoying and keeping God's forgiveness and Salvation

**1. Our need for forgiveness and salvation**

*"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity..."* **Micah 7:18**



*"...Forgive us our debts..."* The scriptures stated that God's forgiveness and salvation is just a prayer of confession away from us no matter how wicked and terrible we are or have been 1 John 1:9. *"The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sins"* 1 John 1:7. All men need forgiveness because we have all sinned. Forgiveness from God like physical food is one of man's greatest and deepest needs. It is at the heart of the Gospel and foundation of relationship with God and with others in God's kingdom. This prayer as taught by Christ in our text is coming to God to ask for what He through Christ has sufficiently provided. The manner of God's forgiveness is also highly instructive because it sets the agenda and provides the template for how we should forgive those who offended us.

God's forgiveness blots out our sins Micah 7:18-19, Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 43:25, grants us access to God's presence Ephesians 2:12-13, frees us from burden of guilt Romans 8:1, God's forgiveness is continuous and unending, Lamentation 3:22-23, God forgives immediately we repent 1 Samuel 12:13 and He forgives completely Luke 23:43. Divine forgiveness is certain and sure 1 John 2:12, it is healing and strengthening, unconditional and free. It is plenteous Psalm 130:7.

God's forgiveness paves way for our adoption into God's family, makes us co-heirs with Christ, imparts on us Christ's righteousness, sustains our relationship with God, gives us eternal inheritance, makes us citizens of heaven, makes abundance grace available to us for great possibilities, faithful and effective service in the kingdom. These are the blessings we stand to lose if we harbor unforgiving spirit against others, they also model how we should forgive others.

**2. Condition for enjoying and keeping God's forgiveness and Salvation**

*"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"* **Ephesians 4:31-32**

*"Forgive our debt as we forgive our debtors"* is an admission that we and the best of Christians are fallen men helped back to our feet by grace. It will be morally, socially, and spiritually wrong to withhold the same privilege from others. Jesus is the Savior of the redeemed but He is also the Savior of the whole world. He is committed to creating a better world through believers. If every time we insist on an eye for an eye, in no time, the whole world will go blind. We will be creating a world of endless retaliation and be serving Satan's interest than working for God. We cannot do this if we are true Christians and followers of Christ. Jesus experienced shame; mockery, spitting, reviling, and contempt was heaped on Him. It ended there on the cross. He did not pass it on to those who did these to Him or others. This is what it means to be a Christian.

*"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"* is not a pledge. It is assumed that before we come to God to pray we have forgiven all insults and injuries to us. If we have not, we should stop at this point in the Lord's Prayer and go and do it because continuing beyond this point in prayer will be lying to God, requesting for His chastisement and praying in hypocrisy. We cannot come to God and pray sincerely and effectively with unresolved conflicts Mathew 5:23-24. We are to forgive those who seek our forgiveness to release them from burden of guilty conscience. We are also to forgive those who do not seek our forgiveness for our own souls and destiny's sake. We are to love all men the way Jesus did and hate none.

**PRAYER FOR DIVINE  
GUIDANCE, PROTECTION  
AND DELIVERANCE**

*“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” Mathew 6:13(KJV)*

*“And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one” Mathew 6:13(NLT)*

**1. The presence of temptations and evil in our world**

*“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” Revelation 12:10*

*“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Timothy 3:12*

Our text portrays the dark side of life in our world and what believers should do about it. We are to daily, constantly and consistently pray for divine guidance and protection. Jesus never stated that serving God or fellowship with Him will be easy. Actually, there are problems we could avoid by renege on our Christian allegiance. However, doing so will be disastrous. Paul stated that all who chose to live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution 2 Timothy 3:12 and we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God Acts 14:22. We live daily in spiritual minefield and the danger of falling away from God is real and great. Therefore, we must daily watch and pray not to enter into temptation, and so that God can keep us safe and free from attacks, contamination, corruption, pollution, lusts and defilement as we travel on life’s dirty road.



**2. The place of divine guidance in believers’ trials and temptations**

*“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Psalm 23:4*

The necessity and importance and reality of divine guidance and its benefits are clearly elucidated in our text. We by this prayer acknowledge that prayer moves the hand of Him that upholds and rules the world. *“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil”* is a prayer of conviction that nothing happens to a child of God without God’s permission or consent. None of the trials and temptations that come to us escapes His scrutiny. He will not allow us to be tempted above and beyond the resources for victory that He deposited and keeps depositing in our lives provided we continuously abide in the centre of His will. Where there is need for escape, God will make a way so that no adversity and temptation will separate us from His love or damage our relationship with Him. God actively, practically and positively leads and guides His people in their journey to heaven. Christ is Immanuel, always walking by our side.

When in trouble, if we pray and call upon His name, our God will show up. By praying *“lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil”* we put our total person under God’s surveillance and protective care 24/7 and by it access divine and spiritual resources that gives us victory in all our wars.

**3. Petition for victory over all temptation and triumph in all troubles**

*“We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.” 1 John 5:8, 21*

The Lord’s Prayer presents to us a way and the possibility of regularly preaching to ourselves every day, and by it reminds ourselves of our obligations to God, to other believers and all men so we can live free from worries and anxieties as well as lack, loss and limitations as much as possible in a depraved, corrupt and damaged world. We will be hypocrites if while we pray to be protected from temptations and delivered from evils we with open eyes walk into sin’s snare and devil’s trap. We cannot go to sleep on Delilah’s lap and expect to wake up in Abraham’s bosom. Actually this prayer point is a prayer for sanctification, for uprooting from us the evil heart Hebrews 3:11 and every sinful inclinations.

The prayer is a request for the gift of a heart filled with exclusive affection for God Mathew 22:37, for the things of God and for all that is godly; a prayer for deliverance from the activities of the wicked one Mathew 13:19 and all his agents, a prayer for crucified affection and freedom from all enticements and entanglement of lusts and corruption in this evil world Galatians 1:4.





## PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S ETERNAL DOMINION, SUPREMACY, AND MAGNIFICENCE

*"...For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."*  
**Mathew 6:13**

Our text is the concluding part of the Lord's Prayer as documented in Mathew's gospel. It ended the prayer with expression of praises to God. The prayer started with praises and ended in the same way, revealing Christ's expectation that we must start and end our prayers with thanksgiving and praises to God. Essentially, it is a confession about God as the eternal originator, custodian and sustainer of all things. It is a declaration that creation is governed by only one Person who is the only source of power and custodian of all glory in it; that person is God. Whatever kingdom, power and glory exists anywhere else, it comes as grant from Him and flows from Him. Jesus in this teaching revealed that the kingdom in this world is one, the power one and the glory one; they all belong to God.

Thus and clearly we serve a sovereign God that can never be dethroned, that can never be defeated and that cannot fade or diminish in honour and glory. This remains eternally true about God whether we vocalize it or not. But Jesus wanted us to vocalize and loudly proclaim it every time we pray, why?

Let's consider three reasons among many others as we discuss these three points:



1. The power of praise
2. Possession by confession
3. The Anchor of faith

### 1. The power of praise

*"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed."* **Acts 16:25-26**

*"And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten."* **2 Chronicles 20:22**



This closing statement of praise in the Lord's eulogises the greatness of a God who is our Father; believers' Father. Scriptures clearly documented the fact that when we praise God, God is pleased with us and His power is released into the life of those praising Him to address their needs. Praising God at the end of our prayer and petition is like obtaining from God an insurance certificate guaranteeing answers to our prayers. We begin to feel the effect of that in our inner man or spirit as we copiously praise God.

Praise connects and transports us into God's presence. In that moment as heaven and earth unites, earthly glory and even troubles diminish in significance. We are momentarily liberated and we feel the liberty in our spirit. We are brought closer to God more than we are when we started our prayer. We literally feel and experience God's smile and pleasure. When God becomes pleased with us especially with the

fact that we can cast aside all our burdens, focus on Him and worship, praise and honour Him, every other thing in our lives finds their level. That is what happened to Jehoshaphat and Israel in 2 Chronicle 20. It will happen today in your life as you praise God and learn to praise Him more and more.

### 2. Possession by confession

*"Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was intreated of us."* **Ezra 8:21-23**

*"...of His fullness have we all received..."*  
"John 1:16. The things we confess is what we possess. The specific confession here is that our Father created all things, He is in charge and in

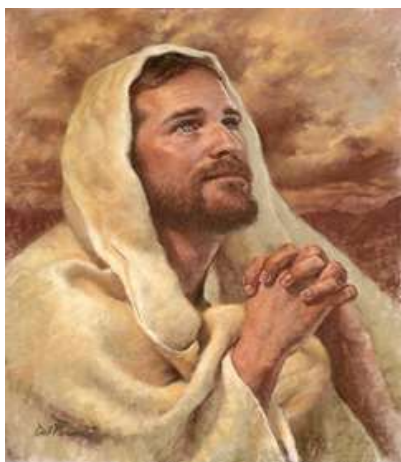


**"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven...."**  
**Mathew 6:9, 10**

control of all things, His power and authority over all shall last forever. It is a confession that will make all kinds of fear in our heart to evaporate. Most of our fears originate from short-coming or limitations in our perspectives about God and His ability.

This closing sentence of the Lord's Prayer reminds us of whom we are in Christ and in God's kingdom. This thought calms our fears. It opens our eyes to the fact that there can be no lack in the life of daughters and sons of the One who owns and upholds all things by His power.

As we confess the fact that creation is one both in heaven and on earth and that our Father is the Governor and King over all, positive practical changes begins to take place in us. As we solemnly, sincerely, convincingly and repeatedly confess that there can be no power or glory anywhere except that which God our Father distributes and gives, the Holy Spirit restores and/or enhances our confidence and faith in the Almighty. It is as we repeatedly confess who God is that our position in Him becomes clearer. As we ascribe dominion, power and glory to our Father, we begin to see with the eyes of faith the greatness of our inheritance and we are able to claim and possess them.



### 3. The Anchor of Faith

*"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1-2*

*"Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness" Exodus 24:9-10*

The majority of trouble in this world arise from disconnect from God, His glory and riches. Many frustrations that men experience are the effect of everyone trying to build their own kingdom and neglecting others. Proclaiming that "the kingdom, the power and the glory" of all things in heaven and on earth belong to God, are in His hands and subject to His control opens our eyes to the greatest source of help that ever existed or can ever be found anywhere. It is a proclamation that gravitate us from self-centredness to absolute dependence upon God. When we have nothing that we can hold on to except God, we will discover in that instant moment that God alone is sufficient. He has never failed and He will not fail you.

We have through this closing section of this prayer an invitation to partake in God's kingdom, to partake in His power and receive upon our lives an imprint of His glory. The more we pray, the more we use Jesus' model of prayer, the closer we are drawn to God and the more prepared we are to reign with Him in His everlasting kingdom and in eternity.

As we confess that there is no kingdom, power and glory outside that which God holds, we are drawn to Him to seek Him and make His plans, purpose, desires and interests part of our life day by day, week after week, month after month - forever!

The Lord's Prayer is brief, documented in few words, yet its depth if explored contains all ingredients that we all need for grace, peace, love, contentment and freedom in the entire course of our Christian journey and in our quest for eternal happiness. The Lord's Prayer gives hope, builds faith, provides direction and in it we have the expression of what God desires for man and the best that man (any man) can ever have and can ever be.

As we round off this Lord's Prayer series, let's not forget that as taught by Christ, this prayer is a family and community prayer rooted in love for God and humanity; and undergirded by the Golden Rule. Hence the things we desire and pray that God should do for us, we should pray that God should do for others also. This is the true Christian spirit. All true believers in all fellowships and denominations are members of the same family. Our God and Father is one, the same with our Saviour and Lord. Our daily prayer is incomplete without praying for others. May God answer all our prayers!



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**John Bunyan** was born in Elstow, near Bedford, in 1628, the son of Thomas Bunyan and Margaret Bentley. He followed his father into the tinker's trade but rebelled against God and *'had but few equals, both for cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the holy name of God'*. As a teenager, he joined Cromwell's New Model Army, but continued his rebellious ways. His life was saved on one occasion when a fellow-soldier took his place at the siege of Leicester, and *'as he stood sentinel he was shot in the head with a musket bullet and died'*.

Discharged from the army after three years, Bunyan married a God-fearing woman (whose name is unknown) in 1648, who brought two books to the marriage: *"The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven"* (Arthur Dent) and *"The Practice of Piety"* (Lewis Bayly). These convicted him of his sin and he made attempts to reform his life. But he realized that he was lost and without Christ when he came into contact with a group of women who's *'joyous conversation about the new birth and Christ deeply impressed him'*. In 1651 the women introduced him to their pastor in Bedford, John Gifford, who was instrumental in leading Bunyan to repentance and faith.

That same year he moved to Bedford with his wife and four children, including Mary, his firstborn, who had been blind from birth. He was baptized by immersion in the River Ouse in 1653. Appointed a deacon of Gifford's church, Bunyan's testimony was used to lead several people to conversion. By 1655 Bunyan was himself preaching to various congregations in Bedford, and hundreds came to hear him. John Owen said of him that he would gladly exchange all his learning for Bunyan's power of touching men's hearts. In the following years, Bunyan began publishing books and became established as a reputable Puritan writer, but around this time, his first wife died. He remarried in 1659, a godly young woman named Elizabeth, who was to be a staunch advocate for her husband during his imprisonments - for in 1660 Bunyan was arrested for preaching without official permission from King Charles II; he was to spend the next 12½ years in Bedford County Gaol. Although a time of much suffering, Bunyan's years in prison were productive, for he wrote extensively,

## MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

**JOHN BUNYAN**  
1628 - 1688



with only the Bible and Foxe's Book of Martyrs beside him, publishing such titles as *"Christian Behaviour"*, *"The Holy City"* and *"A Defence of the Doctrine of Justification"*. Of particular significance for his life-story was *"Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners"*, which chronicled his life up to the time of his imprisonment.

He was eventually released in 1672, and took up his pastorate in Bedford, having been appointed by the congregation the preceding January. After some fruitful years of ministry, in March of 1675 Bunyan was again imprisoned for preaching publicly without a license. It was during this imprisonment that he began the first part of his most famous book, *"The Pilgrim's Progress"*, which was to sell more than 100,000 copies in its first ten years in print. Released in 1677, he spent the last ten years of his life ministering to his congregation and writing, including - *"Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ"* (1678), *"The Life and Death of Mr Badman"* (1680), *"The Holy War"* (1682), and the second part of *"The Pilgrim's Progress"* (1685). He published ten more books in the last three years of his life, amongst them *"The Jerusalem Sinner Saved"* and *"The Acceptable Sacrifice"*.

In August 1688, after successfully mediating in a disagreement between a father and son, as he was riding from Reading in Berkshire to London, Bunyan caught a cold and developed a fever. He died at the house of his friend John Strudwick on Snow Hill in Holborn.

### SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

*"Thine, O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty..." 1 Chronicles 29:11*

## SONG OF THE MONTH

### O GOD, OUR HELP IN AGES PAST

1. O God, our Help in ages past,  
our Hope for years to come,  
our Shelter from the stormy blast,  
and our eternal Home.
2. Under the shadow of Thy throne  
Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is Thine arm alone,  
and our defense is sure.
3. Before the hills in order stood,  
or earth received its frame,  
from everlasting Thou art God,  
to endless years the same.
4. A thousand ages in Thy sight  
are like an evening gone,  
short as the watch that ends the night  
before the rising sun.
5. Time, like an ever-rolling stream  
bears all its sons away;  
they fly forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the op'ning day.
6. O God, our Help in ages past,  
our Hope for years to come,  
be Thou our Guard while life shall last,  
and our eternal Home!

**Author:** Isaac Watts

## CONTACT DETAILS

**Amazing Grace House  
Joy Estate,  
Olorunda – Abaa, Ibadan,  
Oyo – State, Nigeria**

### BANK DETAILS FOR DONATION

<b>Bank:</b>	<b>FBN PLC</b>
<b>Acct Name:</b>	<b>Watchman Outreach Mission</b>
<b>Account No.</b>	<b>C/A 2016363366</b>
<b>GSM No.</b>	<b>+234-9026840215, 8033846714 8056671595</b>