

The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting exists to encourage and resource initiatives in prayer, research, mentoring, evangelism and church planting. Resource materials are available.

Regionally, contact the Alliance Regional Resource Office in Budapest:



***Regional Resource Team***

H-1111 Budapest, Budafoki út 34/B III/3, Hungary

Tel: +(36-1) 466-5978 • Fax: +(36-1) 365-6406

E-mail: [Contact\\_Europe@AllianceSCP.org](mailto:Contact_Europe@AllianceSCP.org) • Internet: [www.AllianceSCP.org](http://www.AllianceSCP.org)

In country please contact:

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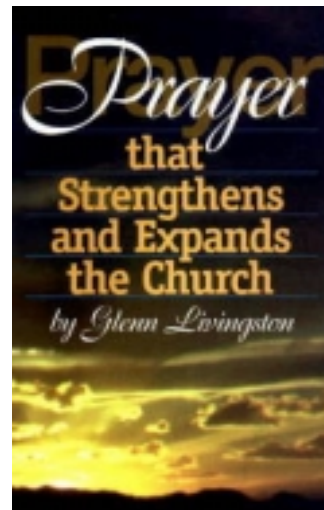
This material is an excerpt from the book of the same title. The book is available from The Alliance Budapest office or in the United States from The Bible League, 16801 Van Dam Road, South Holland, IL 60473 USA, tel.: 1-800-334-7017, e-mail: [BibleLeague@xc.org](mailto:BibleLeague@xc.org)

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***Glenn Livingston, Prayer Movement Facilitator***

The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting

E-mail: [Prayer@AllianceSCP.org](mailto:Prayer@AllianceSCP.org)



# PRAYER

that Strengthens and Expands the Church



Resources for Leaders and Mobilizers of Prayer



**God's Word shows that  
whenever God begins  
to do a new thing  
and He desires  
to mobilize His people,  
HE BEGINS BY  
CALLING THEM TO PRAYER.**

**God has given  
PRAYER  
to unite,  
to guide and  
to empower  
His people for life**

**God has plans and purposes  
in each nation.**

**He desires to use both us and our prayers  
to see His will accomplished.**

**Will we pray and work  
In such a way that  
our world is changed?**

living. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (II Tim 3:16-17)

The Scripture is complete and all the revelation that is needed. Sola Scriptura.

- there is one God, in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are one in essence, eternally co-existent and co-equal.
- that the Lord Jesus Christ is the sole source of salvation. Jesus said, “*I am the way...*” (Jn 14:6). There is an exclusivity here, for all other paths to God are eliminated. The apostle Peter said, “*neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven and earth given among men whereby we must be saved.*” (Acts 4:12). The apostle Paul said, “*There is one foundation...the Lord Jesus Christ.*” (1Cor 3:11) “*For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all...*” (I Tim 2:5-6) Jesus Christ is the sole source of salvation.
- salvation is by grace, a free gift apart from works. “*By grace you are saved through faith. It is not the result of your efforts, but God’s gift that no one can boast about it.*” (Eph 2:8) “*God commended His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. For when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son...*” (Rom 5:8 &10) Salvation is the free gift of God.
- salvation is appropriated by personal faith in who Jesus Christ is and what He accomplished in His death and resurrection. “*If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*” (Rom 10:9) Jesus said, “*But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the children of God, to them that believe that believe on His name.*” (John 1:12) “*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Rom 5:1). Salvation is only possible through a relationship with Jesus Christ. It is personally activated in an individual through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, which causes one to realize his lost and sinful condition, and enables him to repent and trust the Lord Jesus Christ.
- there is the expectation that the body of Christ would spread and grow numerically (Mt 28:19 & Eph 4:15-16). It is God’s plan that the knowledge of salvation available in Jesus Christ should be shared with all people, that they may believe and be saved. He has entrusted the spreading of the Gospel to us who have experienced redemption ourselves. We believers are ministers of reconciliation, ambassadors, co-laborers with Christ. These words are all pictures God has given that present the active participation of believers in the advance of the Gospel. The church, God’s redeemed, is His instrument of proclaiming the Gospel, both verbally and through

## Strategies for the Encouragement of Prayer that Contribute to the Expansion and Multiplication of the Church

It is God’s plan that the knowledge of the Gospel spreads so that Christ centered, growing, multiplying churches are accessible throughout each nation. This will ensure that every person has the opportunity to hear and see the Good News of the Gospel in a way which is relevant to them and their situation. Such a deep and widespread advance of the church will require a mobilized laity, i.e. the mobilization to vision and ministry of the whole body of Christ with all the gifting and resources God has placed there. Encouraging prayer is a means God will use to mobilize His people to vision and proactive ministry, to cleanse, unite, guide and empower His people with spiritual vitality for His work.

The following are aspects in the mobilization of prayer that contribute to the expansion and multiplication of the Church.

### 1. Leadership is an aspect of mobilizing prayer that contributes to movement

It is not enough for leaders to simply believe in prayer. It must be a vital part of their lives. The need in the mobilization of prayer is for functional spiritual leadership, i.e. pacesetters for prayer. The word pacesetter derives from the runner in a race who moves ahead to set the pace. The pacesetter sets the example. The leaders God will use to mobilize prayer are prayer pacesetters, those who, by their words and life, encourage intimacy with God and an aligning with God’s plans and purposes.

Pacesetters of prayer need to be multiplied on all different levels, i.e. cell leaders of prayer (men, women and youth) on church, city, regional and national levels.

### 2. Sharing of vision is an aspect of mobilizing prayer

The word vision is being used in the sense of the picture we hold in our minds of the future based on what God has revealed in His word. The sharing of vision regarding God’s desires and plans concerns three areas.

First, leaders should share a clear scripturally based vision of what God has given us in prayer. Most believers recognize that prayer is foundational to spiritual life and ministry. However, for them to make changes in their lives, in their schedules, and priorities, in order to really devote themselves to growing in their prayer lives, would require compelling reasons. These compelling reasons given in God’s word need to be shared with all believers. God’s word must be shared in such a way that believers come to realize in a new and fresh way that God wants to make use of both us and our prayers to move His purposes forward. Believers must grow in their understanding of truth regarding the strategic nature of prayer.

Their prayers are a means God has chosen to use to see His purposes accomplished.

This truth then becomes the motivation for devoting themselves in a new and fresh way to prayer. It moves them from praying out of a sense of obligation or duty -“I know I ought to pray” - to praying because their prayers are important. “My prayers are a means God has ordained to use to see His purposes accomplished. Since my prayers are important, I choose to make prayer an increasing priority in my life.”

A second aspect which encourages prayer is the sharing of the vision the Scripture presents of God’s purposes and intentions. We need to see our lives, our involvement in church and our mission in the world from God’s perspective. God’s plans involve the knowledge of His redemptive love being shared with all people. His plan involves using His church, vital groups of believers, to be salt and light throughout the whole world.( II Cor 5:18-20 ) By this plan all people would have a credible witness of the Good News of the Gospel. As believers come to see and align their lives with God’s plans and purposes, and expect God to use them, it motivates them in their prayer life.

A third area that can vitalize a vision for prayer is research. The sharing of research on the spiritual situation of the “harvest field” and “harvest force” can highlight needs and opportunities. This research shows believers compelling reasons to devote themselves in a new and deeper way to prayer, to seek understanding, leading and empowerment. (Example of Nehemiah 1.)

Sharing vision encourages and motivates believers in their prayer lives. When believers come to see that God will make use of both them and their prayers to see His purposes accomplished and these individuals begin to multiply it will result in a growing movement of prayer among believers.

### **3. Sharing prayer focus is an aspect of mobilizing prayer**

It is natural for us to focus our prayers on our immediate personal needs. The Scriptures speak of praying for our daily provisions, seeking forgiveness and protection. What we may not do so often is pray along the lines of what God wants, for His plans and purposes. Most of the prayers, instructions on prayer and prayer requests found in Scripture concern encouragement for us to pray for issues that are strategic in seeing vital advances of the Gospel. In other words, when God answers these strategic prayers, the Gospel moves forward in significant ways, i.e. His will is done, His kingdom is advanced, etc. Praying in a strategic way has to do with our sensitivity to pray for issues God has shown will empower the Gospel to go forward. Praying in this manner strengthens the church and contributes to seeing the reality of a "church planting movement" (a widespread and systematic approach to the presentation of the Gospel to a whole region or people), which is the purpose of The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting (SCP).

The topics for prayers should include a focus on two areas.

First, prayer should be focused on issues involved in seeing God’s purposes accomplished within the body of Christ. The greatest barriers to the advance of the Gospel are often found inside the church! These can be barriers in our relationship with God and

can be mobilized focused on issues that will bring an advance of God’s purposes.

#### **Prayer Cells:**

"Prayer cell" is an especially descriptive word because it brings to mind the growing and reproducing element that is the desired characteristic of these groups. An example of how these prayer cells can function is as follows. When a prayer cell meets, it begins with a time of first quieting members and inviting the Holy Spirit to guide the time. Then they share with each other how things are going in their own lives spiritually. There must be a realness, a genuineness, with God and one another. Next they ask God to instruct and grow them in their prayer life. Then they make use of the means God will use to answer this prayer, the Scriptures. Next is a short, inductive Bible study to uncover truths about prayer. For prayer, as other areas of the Christian life, needs to be worked at to be developed. The prayers and prayer requests of the apostle Paul are especially instructive. They show us prayers inspired by the Holy Spirit and highlight key issues we are to be lifting up in prayer to advance the Gospel. Then comes a time of intercession. Pray in accordance with how the Scriptures teach first and then for other specific prayer requests. Intercession is made for individuals, groups and issues involved in advancing God’s kingdom. Conclude by praying for the growth of the prayer cell and encourage cell members to share what they are learning about prayer with others. Encourage cell members to share with others on issues of prayer and invite others, especially new believers, to join a prayer cell convenient to where they live or work. The ideal number for a cell seems to be four to six participants before it divides. This allows all to most fully participate.

#### **Leadership:**

Each prayer cell needs a leader, and should have at least one person in training for leadership. The leader is a conduit for bringing current prayer requests and answers to prayer into the cell. The leader also shepherds the functioning of the cell, being sensitive to encourage the participation of all. They also train new leaders and encourage the multiplication of the cells.

#### **Scheduling:**

There is usually an established time frame for the prayer cell meeting. Some cell groups meet for an hour, some for an evening or a whole night. These groups usually meet once a week, and at a time that does not conflict with any church meetings.

## **Why Do We Labor and Pray for the Advance of the Gospel ?**

We hold with a holy boldness the following **core convictions that God has given us to believe**, which are also the basis for our being able to labor together.

We believe that the Scriptures teach:

- they are the inspired revelation of God and the only basis for faith and Christian

because they were weary and were scattered as sheep without a shepherd. So He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. Therefore I want you to pray to the Lord of the harvest that He will send out laborers to gather in the harvest.'" Mt 9:36-38

Christ, the head of the Church, is saying, "You who are my disciples, pray to the Father, that He would send out all the harvesters, all the workers needed to bring in the harvest of souls." Then the Lord of the harvest calls those workers, He equips them with spiritual gifts and assigns them to their work, and guides and empowers them.

The Apostle Paul prayed and encouraged prayer for these strategic issues:

2. "...that utterance may be given unto me..." Eph 6:19-20

Pray that God would give the *logos* - the words to speak, the appropriate expressions for sharing the Gospel. Paul did not always present the Gospel in exactly the same way, and he knew the importance of seeking God's guidance. Lord, give us the strategies and the very words to share that will advance the Gospel.

3. "...that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel....that I may speak boldly as I ought to speak." Eph 6:19-20

Paul knew the importance of seeking God's enablement to make him bold. Lord, anoint us with boldness to proclaim Your Word in spite of all obstacles and threats.

4. "...that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ." Col 4:3-4

Paul knew the importance of seeking God to go before him and open doors, that the Gospel might go forward. Lord, open doors and remove the obstacles in the way of sharing the Gospel.

5. Paul prayed, and requested others to pray that he would "...make the Gospel manifest as he ought." Col 4:4

Paul knew the importance of seeking God's empowering, so he could clearly proclaim the Gospel. Lord, empower the sharing of the Gospel, through both our words and deeds.

## Sharing Models for Mobilizing Prayer

There are many models for mobilizing prayer beyond personal intercession and weekly church prayer meetings. Some examples of ways of forming small groups of believers, who commit to meet together on a regular basis to pray are: prayer partners (2 people), prayer triplets (3 people), or prayer cells. Through these models much intense prayer

with each other, and Satan uses them to make the church weak and a poor witness for the Lord. The focus of prayer should be for cleansing, healing, unity, vision and growing genuine spirituality. ( Eph 1:15-19, 3:16-21, Col 1:9-11, Col 4:12. These give us examples of how to pray for the church.)

The second focus involves encouraging prayer about issues the Scriptures show are vital for the advance of the Gospel. Examples are: prayer for laborers, open doors, boldness, the very words to say, protection, wisdom, etc. ( Mt 9:38, Col 4:3, Eph 6:19-20, etc.) as well as specific aspects regarding God's leading and empowering of evangelism and the planting of new churches.

Note: In encouraging prayer, there is need to be sensitive to keep the plain things on which God has given us clear instruction the main things and to avoid extra-biblical issues that tend to divide the body of Christ.

### 4. Sharing biblical principles of prayer is an aspect of mobilizing prayer

Just as we receive encouragement in other areas of the Christian life, so we are to stimulate one another in prayer. God will use this to grow believers in their understanding of prayer. Such encouragement involves a Biblical dealing with questions such as: What does prayer have to do with anything? Why do we pray? What are the foundations of intercession? What does it mean to co-labor with Christ in prayer? To be praying always? How can we pray in accord with God's will? What has fasting to do with prayer? How does God answer prayer? What are our expectations to be about the timing of answers to prayer? Why does God not answer some prayer? It is important to share the principles of prayer.

### 5. Literature is an aspect of mobilizing prayer that contributes to movement

Literature is a vital way of communicating and keeping the focus of prayer on those issues that will move the church forward. The early church copied letters from the Apostles and passed them around. This literature gave reports, continuing instruction and strategic prayer requests. It is helpful to develop and share Biblically based prayer literature. These resources both help communicate the goal in mobilizing prayer and keep the focus clear.

### 6. Networking of individual and group prayer is an aspect of mobilizing prayer that contributes to movement

Networking is the process by which individuals and organizations become connected with one another in order to achieve common goals. Networking among the whole body of Christ is an important aspect of mobilizing prayer. In the course of networking out among believers, sharing both vision and prayer encouragement, you will find existing groups that gather for prayer on a regular basis. These may be church groups, youth groups, or special interest groups. Praise God for His work among these prayer groups and seek to resource them with encouragement in prayer. As biblical encouragement and instruction on prayer is shared, it will quite naturally bring a focus to prayer onto those strategic issues that God has given us to pray for so that His kingdom may ad-

vance. These individuals and groups need to be networked to other aspects that contribute to an SCP movement: to vision casting, research, training, mentoring, evangelism and church planting initiatives. The expectation is not that these groups would all completely align with our prayer focus, but some would and others would at least begin to include in their prayer the issues involved in strategic advances of the Gospel.

**7. Mentoring of prayer leaders and those God is raising up as leaders is an aspect of mobilizing prayer that contributes to movement.**

Mentoring is the developing of purposeful relationships, where one who knows or has resources shares, either generally or at critical moments, in such a way as to assist personal and/or ministry development. The mentoring relationship involves a genuine personal interest in the individual and his ministry. Most people understand positional authority, but in mentoring there is a different kind of authority. It is a relational authority. The mentoring of emerging leaders of prayer is an important aspect of both seeing new leaders raised up and modeling a more Biblical style of leadership.

**8. Sharing models is an aspect of mobilizing prayer that contributes to movement.**

In seeking to see God’s purposes advanced, we need to look for particular ways of mobilizing prayer beyond personal intercession and weekly church prayer meetings. Prayer partners (2 people), prayer triplets (3 people), or prayer cells are some of the ways of mobilizing much intense prayer focused on the issues that will bring an advance of the Gospel. These are ways of forming small groups of believers who commit to meet together on a regular basis to pray.

**Conclusion: The mobilization of prayer is foundational to the expansion and multiplication of the Church**

Throughout Scripture and in all of the accounts of revivals, we see that prayer - deep intercessory prayer - has preceded all the mighty visitations of God among his people. It seems whenever God begins to do a new thing and He wants to mobilize His people (believers), He begins by calling them to pray. This is because Christianity is a lay movement. Widespread evangelism and church planting movements require a mobilized laity: The mobilization of all the gifting and resources God has placed in His body, the church, to both vision and ministry. To see such a mobilization and advance of the church will necessitate more than goals, strategies, people and natural resources. There must be a genuine and holistic attention to prayer. For prayer is a vital resource that God has given us for accomplishing His purposes. Prayer is foundational to the mobilization and multiplication of the church.

**Initial Issues for Prayer in the Facilitating of a “Movement of Prayer” among God’s People**

**Both personally and in groups asking God to:**

1. **work** within us a thirst and deep hunger for communion and intimacy with Himself, and for His visitation upon our land.
2. **produce** within us a holy discontent with things as they are.
3. **give** us a new sense of the urgency of the need for a deep and widespread advance of the Gospel in our land.
4. **reveal** to us new dimensions of His Holiness and understanding of His eternal purposes. That the Lord would increasingly manifest His Glory and Presence among His people.
5. **search** us and reveal all impediments within us to His using us, that we might be cleansed vessels for His use and stand united in seeking the advance of His plans and purposes.
6. **raise up** a spirit of prayer among His people, which would be evidenced in a growing lifestyle of prayer and living close to God, and growing passion for intercession for those issues that will advance His kingdom's purposes.
7. **give** us a new sensitivity to the guidance of The Holy Spirit. and a vision for the Church as He desires it.
8. **give** us an eagerness to be used by the Lord, and a willingness to obey and trust Him more fully.
9. **open** our eyes to see where He is working, so as Elisha's servant we can recognize His working and exercise greater faith to join Him in it.
10. **fill** us with the desire and ability to increasingly live faithful, fervent, focused lives.

**Praying for Issues Scripture Shows will Allow, Guide and Empower the Gospel to Go Forward in Significant ways**

1. *“When the Lord saw the crowd of people, He was moved with compassion on them*

**What a great work God has called us to,  
to pray and minister in such a way that our world is changed !  
Ordinary people with an extraordinary God.**