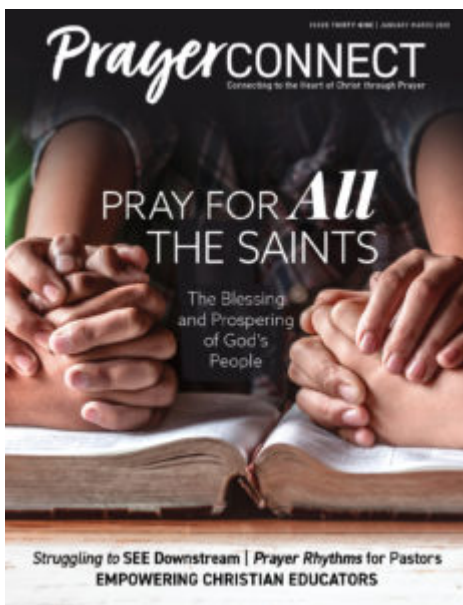


Pray for All the Saints

Theme Introduction

The Blessing and Prospering of God's People

By Carol Madison



Once a month I fight rush hour traffic into downtown Minneapolis to spend the day at an evangelistic ministry devoted to reaching the next generation. I begin the morning with a short prayer-related teaching time for the whole staff and then offer half-hour personal prayer appointments the rest of the day. The slots on the sign-up sheet are filled with those who want to spend 30 minutes expressing their personal and ministry-related concerns. They call it their "prayer counseling time," but truthfully there is no actual counseling. I just bring their requests before Jesus. He is Healer, Deliverer, Redeemer, and Restorer of all things.

Over the years, I have prayed for a variety of needs that

represent the hearts of this mostly millennial staff. Often tears flow as people express concerns and struggles. We ask God for breakthrough, healing, clarity, and restoration. Everything is confidential, so they feel safe in expressing a wide range of requests.

I've prayed with people regarding relationship issues in the office—and I've watched as God has resolved things or sovereignly moved people on to different work situations. I've prayed for comfort for people in times of tragedy or disappointing life circumstances. It's also been fun to journey with people in new dating relationships that move toward engagement, marriage—and then children! One staff member received spousal blessing to tell me about their pregnancy before the rest of their family, simply because we had been praying about it for so long. I'm sure it's the only time I will be the third person to know such glorious news!

I learned early on not to try to “fix things” or intervene in situations. I simply entrust the person to God with the full confidence that He will sort things out. And He always does.

Prayer for God's People

I believe this is one of my more strategic prayer ministries because God uses it to encourage and enable this staff to move forward in God's calling for them—to see a generation transformed by the power of Jesus.

Our tendency may be to focus on praying for world situations or for those who need salvation. These are all good, right, and God-ordained prayers. But we must not neglect the prayer for God's people in all life circumstances. When His followers experience the presence and power of Christ in their lives, the gospel always advances. There is a direct correlation between the prosperity of one's soul and the desire to share the hope of Jesus.

In this issue, Dave Butts highlights the prayers of Jesus and Paul to demonstrate the urgency of praying for fellow believers—the “saints.” This is how God’s Kingdom advances with power! James Banks writes about strategic and forward-looking prayer that speaks into the destinies of future generations. Jesus prayed in advance for Peter’s faith not to fail (Luke 22:24), and that perspective can also shape our prayers for all Christ-followers. Kathy Branzell urges us to have a “got your back” kind of warfare mindset in praying for family and friends, knowing that Satan targets God’s people for discouragement and destruction.

I love praying a blessing for others that comes from 3 John 1:2: “Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers” (nasb). Imagine the impact a thriving Church will have on a dying world!

CAROL MADISON is editor of *Prayer Connect* and author of *Prayer That’s Caught and Taught*.