



Johnese ministers alongside her husband, Ken, Potomac Ministry Network Superintendent. Over 45 years, they have served four congregations in the Potomac Ministry Network and as network officers since 1996. Married for 46 years, she is the mother of five and Grammy of thirteen. She has a Bachelor of Individualized Studies in Pastoral and Psychological Studies from George Mason University, Fairfax, VA. She received Assemblies of God ordination in May, 2015. She is a writer and a speaker and works part-time in at the Potomac Ministry Center. She coordinates ELEMENT, ministry to PMN credentialed women and wives of credential holders, as well as directs Northern Virginia Christian Writers Fellowship. Her goal is to understand her role in God's story and faithfully play out His purposes for her. In all things God is at work. Shine the light; defeat the dark

Why Pray?

Johnese Burtram

Prayer – as ancient as the Garden, timeless, revered, *holy* activity of religion. From the highly structured and regimented to the spontaneous expression of the soul, the devout embrace prayer.

For Christians prayer is communication in what we view as a relationship, not a religion. Because communication is the soil in which relationships develop, we rightly understand prayer as essential to Christian faith. Christian prayer is rooted deep in our connection to and our obedience of God.

Why pray?

We pray because we need it.

Honest souls recognize we need the help of the Lord. Only the foolish rely on self-sufficiency. In a life filled with difficulty and complications, we need the help of the Lord to navigate the rough waters that imperil our lives and batter our souls.

... Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my **prayer**. (Psalm 4:1)

I call to the LORD ... and I am saved from my enemies. (Psalm 18:3)

Hear my cry for mercy... (Psalm 28:2)

From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. (Psalm 61:2)

In the day of my trouble I will call to you, for you will answer me. (Psalm 86:7)

Is any one of you in trouble? He should **pray**. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to **pray**. (James 5:13, 14)

We pray in response to God's instruction and expressed will.

God invites us to be a part of His endeavor in the earth. The notion boggles the mind. Why would the sovereign of the universe have any desire, let alone need, for my participation in His activity? But He does. He invites, encourages, and instructs to us call on Him.

... you will call upon me and come and **pray** to me, and I will listen to you. (Jeremiah 29:12)

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. (Jeremiah 33:3)

... Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always **pray** and not give up. (Luke 18:1)

... **pray** in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on **praying** for all the saints. (Eph 6:18)

... **pray** continually; (1 Thess 5:17)

Is any one of you in trouble? He should **pray**. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to **pray** over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ...**pray** for each other so that you may be healed. (James 5:13, 14, 16)

We pray because it matters.

Equally astounding as God's invitation to partner with Him in His purposes, is the knowledge that my prayers matter. Our prayers move the heart and hand of God. God comes near; He hears; He forgives; He heals; He steps into our circumstances in demonstrable ways.

...the LORD our God is near us whenever we **pray** to him. (Deut. 4:7)

Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they **pray** ... Hear from heaven, ... and when you hear, forgive. (1 Kings 8:30)

The priests and the Levites stood to bless the people, and God heard them, for their **prayer** reached heaven, his holy dwelling place. (2 Chronicles 30:27)

But when you **pray**, ... **pray** to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Matthew 6:6)

The **prayer** of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)

In recent years, I have come recognize that prayer ranks near, if not at the top, of my life priorities. This connection to God through prayer puts me in a proper posture toward God. I acknowledge my abject poverty without Him. I communicate trust in His wise bestowment. From this place of humility *God can show up and show off* (Mark Batterson.)