

*To my wife who is my greatest support in my journey of
faith with God and the Northside City Church family.*

You're the best!

Special thanks to the greatest leadership team a church could have. Thanks to Dave and Leisa Sarley who faithfully and sacrificially helped to launch Northside City Church. Without them NCC would not be here. Thanks to Ivan my faithful fellow partner in ministry, who does everything with utmost excellence, he raises the bar high for us all. Matt who inspires everyone around him with his worship and willingness to do whatever it takes to get the task of reaching lost people for God accomplished. Cady, who is a giant-killer taking on the biggest outreach projects of our church with great vision and vigor. Jeremiah, who has the fire-burning passion for God and a never give up attitude that is admired by everyone who knows him. Tony our enthusiastic connections pastor who loves God, loves people and loves serving like no other I know. Also special thanks goes to our amazing volunteer leaders who make Northside City Church happen, you rock! Without my staff and volunteer leaders I would not be able to take the time to write; thank you all so much. And to my wife who has been my best friend since we met in High School. And a very special thanks to my mom who inspired this book because of her faithful prayers for me. I would not be a follower of Christ if it hadn't been for your prayers. I love you.

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Introduction

It was a Saturday night and I had been a Christian for exactly one week. The plans were to spend an evening with my new Christian friend's fellowshiping but inside I felt the desperate urge to stay home and pray. I didn't fully understand what was going on inside of me. So I went to my new friend's house and told him what was going on that I thought I needed to go home and pray. This was very odd for me; I didn't know how to pray. I went home with this deep stirring inside me.

As quickly as I could I went in my bedroom and my plans were to read the Bible some and write out my prayers on a piece of paper. The only thing I knew about prayer was from what someone told me earlier that week, “*when you pray be specific.*” I decided to pray specifically for my ex-girlfriend, Joy and my soon to be sister in-law, Barbara. I prayed for others as well but there was just something in me, a heavy burden, to pray specifically for Joy and Barbara. I remember saying to God, “*I don't know how to pray but someone told me to pray specifically so I pray for Joy and my soon to be sister in law, Barbra that they would*

become Christians tomorrow.” I read the Bible some, prayed some more and fell asleep. Woke up the next morning went to church. As soon as I returned home my phone rang and it was Joy. She said, *“You will never guess what happened today. I went to a church today with Barbra and we both gave our lives to Christ!”* Wow! I was totally blown away that God answered my prayers, and so fast. So while it was hot I asked God for a brand new Corvette, \$100,000 and...just kidding on asking God for the Corvette!

That day I learned something very powerful about God and prayer; it’s real, it works and God loves to answer prayers. He hears us when we pray. He’s listening and loves to listen to His kids! Since then I have received many answers to prayers and many prayers that seemingly went unanswered or I just plain got a, “no,” and that’s okay, He’s God. He knows what is best for me and He wants what is best for me and for you. I’ve learned that delay in answers is not necessarily denial. God’s timing is perfect. Sometimes God does answer immediately. My mom told me a story when I was a teen and I left home to live with someone else, actually I had to live in my car. The next morning about 9:00 she called her church and they

immediately put me on their prayer chain. I was home by 11:00. God answered their prayer very quick!

Prayer is that subject that many Christians talk a lot about but unfortunately do little of. I am just as guilty as everyone else. I have recently read that the average Christian prays just 5 minutes per day. I also read that the average Pastor prays less than 20 minutes per day. For Christians, prayer is and should be foundational. Prayer is vital if we are going to have a vibrant, dynamic relationship with Christ and if we are going to make a difference in our world. It’s amazing that we have such a power available to us and many rarely tap into the power of prayer. I believe that it is time for the church to get back to the basics. The early church in the book of Acts was so powerful not because of their knowledge but because of whom they knew. The early church met constantly for prayer. Prayer is the most powerful force on earth because as someone said:

“Prayer can do what God can do!”

- Prayer can melt a hard heart.
- Prayer can warm up a cold heart.
- Prayer can activate and arouse an apathetic heart.

- Prayer can heal a broken heart.
- Prayer can change a stubborn heart.
- Prayer can change circumstances.
- Prayer can alter events.
- Prayer can affect elections.
- Prayer can transform communities.
- Prayer can change the destiny of a nation.

“Prayer can do what God can do!”

That’s why the great men and women of the Bible and in church history devoted themselves to prayer.

“Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.” - Psalms 55:17

“Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.”

- Daniel 6:10

In his book, *“Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire,”* Pastor Jim Cymbala tells the story of a man who came to his mid-week service, he recognized him as a minister. So he invited him to share a few words during their service. The

man got up to the pulpit and said, *“You can tell how popular a church is by who comes Sunday morning. You can tell how popular the pastor is by who comes Sunday night, but you can tell how popular Jesus is by who comes to the prayer meeting.”*

It’s very sad to say but the most un-popular meeting in the American church today is the prayer meeting. I believe we need a revival in prayer, in our personal lives and in our churches. Our country has some serious problems and as born again believers in Jesus Christ we must get back to the basics of serious prayer for our sake, our families sake, the churches sake, our nations sake, and for the sake of our world. God declared that a nation can only be healed if His people will be committed to prayer.

“... if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” - 2 Chronicles 7:1

Prayer is how we as the people of God begin to build our lives, our families, our church, our schools our government and our nation on a solid foundation.

Unfortunately, what we see in the church today is many people who build their Christian lives on shaky ground. When tough times come, and they surely will, Jesus even promised that they would come, people fall away. Many times the purpose of that troublesome time was to purify and strengthen our faith. There is nothing like difficult times to get us on our knees. As Titus Livy once said, “*adversity makes men remember God.*” But don’t have fear because God never lets us go through things that we can’t handle if we go to Him. And He always greatly rewards those who are found faithful. Remember He is a good God, a good God who enjoys rewarding His people.

In the following pages we will see from God’s Word:

- The power and purpose of prayer.
- The commitment of the first church to prayer.
- Why God doesn’t answer some prayers?
- The kinds of people God does not listen to?
- Whom God listens to?
- Who should we pray for?
- When should we pray?
- How to pray?

- And much more.

My hope and prayer is that this book will stir you and equip you on your journey with God to having an effective consistent prayer life, also to gain a better understanding of the mystery and power of prayer. This book is meant to be a guide to the basics of prayer and to serve as a guide to which you can take into deeper study.

**From the forthcoming book by Pastor
Jerry Chadwick entitled, “*Secrets to
Answered Prayer.*”**

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