



You cannot take the nourishment of your mind lightly. You cannot assume that the voices you are exposed to everyday are feeding you the proper nourishment that you need to live a successful life. You must question the conduct of others and separate yourself from any man who does not live by the word of God. The course of your life comes from your mind and the thoughts of your mind come from your spirit. It is your spirit that leads you to action. So, if your actions have led you away from God, you need to consider who is feeding your mind and who words and deeds are affecting your spirit. Avoid darkness.

The Prayer Jar



A Book of Prayers

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Women of Courage

Light A Candle In My Name

Edited: Jonathan Lee-Ames Hop, M.A.

Your best friend or a family member will appreciate a copy of this book. It is important that we continue to encourage ourselves in our walk with God. It is important that we continue to read, study and meditate so that in times of trouble we will not falter but gird our loins and stand for right, not evil. This is what every Christian is called to do.

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“You were born with potential.
You were born with goodness and trust.
You were born with ideals and dreams.
You were born with greatness.
You were born with wings.
You are not meant for crawling, so don't.
You have wings.
Learn to use them and fly.”

Jalaluddin Rumi (1207 – 1273)

Prayer is not an old woman's idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)



Author's Statement

When God gave me the assignment of writing a book of prayers I was bewildered and stunned. I had no idea what He wanted from me or how to start writing a book of prayers. I have never spoken a public prayer in my life nor had I ever prayed in the traditional manner. Whenever I wanted something or needed

something to happen I merely had a conversation with God. I never said Oh Exalted One in all of your magnificent mercy and glory I beseech thee etc. etc. Those words of exaltation had never passed my lips. Neither did I refer to God as Father God. I have heard the phrase Father God used by women on prayer lines. But I felt no kinsmanship with the name Father God. Father God sounds contrite and off putting. Salutations like Father God and Oh Lord the Magnificent One does not draw me closer to God it pushes me further away. In the Bible Jesus talks about manufactured holiness and having people watch while you pray. Self-edification in prayer is a no no so I have stayed away from public prayer. I do not pray to be admired nor do I pray for public consumption. I either called God, God or I called Him Lord. Now that I am writing this to you I have come to realize that I have two uses when I use the words god and lord. When God and I are friends and buddies and we are on speaking terms I refer to Him as God. When I am upset with Him I call Him Lord. At this very moment I just realize that I differentiate the name I call Him based on how I feel about Him at the time I am talking to Him. I have come to realize that many times I use the phrase, you know Lord that doesn't make any sense. I use this phrase when I am trying to reason with Him. Of all the people to tell to write a book of prayer I am the least. In all of my writings I have never tried to convert anyone into believing in a god. My purpose has always been to show His uses.

The thought of writing a book of prayers actually gave me a head ache but I knew I could do nothing else until I finished this assignment.

I had no idea why He wanted me to write a book of prayer. Of all the people in the world I was the least worthy to write a book or prayer and the least educated on praying. My mother taught me the Lord's Prayer when I was young and as a child I said this pray every night before I went to bed. As I got older sometimes I would say the Lord's Prayer but I was not a faithful prayer. If I was worried or frightened I would recite the 23rd Psalms. My mother also gave me that passage to recite. She said that many times during her life reciting the 23 Psalms helped her. She also recited the 91st Psalms. As I grew older I found those two passages helped me.

Reading and reciting these verses has a calming effect. Recite Psalms 23 and Psalm 91 to yourself and note how you feel after reading these passages.

Psalms 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 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.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalms 91

1He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

3Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.

4He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

7A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. 8Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

9Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

10There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

12They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

13Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. 14Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

15He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. 16With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

The passages give you a sense of resolve that once prayed things would get better. The verses make you feel anything is possible. The passages make you feel that your do not have to rely upon your own powers that there is additional help available to you.

When my friend, Rev. Selma Moore, of Arkansas called me and said God gave me this assignment I was quite upset. I could not understand why He was telling me to write a book of prayers when He knew I had told Him over a year ago I was not praying to Him anymore. Also I was resentful that God would give me something to do that I was not vaguely interested in plus I knew I had to drop everything else that I was doing to write this book. My friend from Arkansas was 93 years old. She had served the Lord since she was six years old.

I met Rev. Selma Moore in 2005 when her sister, Hattie McKinney, gave Rev. Moore a birthday party for her 82nd birthday. After the party I exchanged phone numbers with Rev. Moore and we began an eleven year conversation. During our eleven year association I learned to trust and respect Rev. Moore's relationship with God. What was foremost in her mind was serving God. All of her efforts was direct to being obedient and serving the Lord. She contributed to her church by purchasing and arranging the flowers on Sundays. She encouraged the pastor of the church. She was a member of two women's groups that dealt with the poor. Somehow she was always in service even though she had retired. She had a relationship with almost everyone living in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. She even had a relationship with the chief of police trying to keep men from getting into trouble. She received praise and recognition for her service from family and friends. Consequently when she called and told me that God wanted me to write a prayer book I knew I would have to pay attention to what she said. She told me she had walked into her kitchen and got a teaspoon and scooped out some peanut butter from the jar onto her spoon and as she was putting the spoon in her mouth the Lord told her why don't you call Gloria and tell her you're hungry and tell her instead of worrying about her other books she needs to write a book of prayers. Her other books will sell but her prayer book is what she

will be known for. Rev. Moore did as she was told now I am writing this book.

I met Rev. Moore for the second time in July 2016. I met her again in 2016 because she was attending a family reunion. Try as I might I could never get down to Arkansas to see her. I asked her to send me a picture in 2015 because I could not remember her face. Between 2005 and 2016 we talked over the phone. Rev. Moore had retired but over the years she developed a phone ministry where people would call her and discuss their problems or seek her guidance. She told me that she wanted to be of service to people. She used to laugh when she said that. She would say when I meet people I just keep on talking. I get to know them and they get to know me. Imagine ministering to people over the phone at 93 years old. She did not just say God is good try not to sin and God will bless you to people. She spent time talking listening to people's problems trying to help people develop their spiritual health. With what money she had she tried to help people who were in serious trouble in paying their light bill, getting medication and buying food. She gave from her heart and from her belief that she should serve God and man. When she told me that God told her to call me I believed her. It was too late in life for Rev. Moore to be using the word of God for her own advantage. Her age precluded her from trying to impress me. I knew she and God have had a relationship for a

long time and she knew God's voice. I did not doubt what she said for a moment but I was disturbed.

One of the problems I had praying to God is that often times I want to make a bargain. Yet after I made the bargain I found out that I got the short end of the stick. Several times I had made a bargain with the Lord. I would say if you do this then I will do that. Well there was one occasion in 1995 God did not play fair and so now I never want to make a bargain with the Lord. I will never again say if you do this then I will do that. God is a hard task master. I told the Lord that He did not play fair. I told Him that I would never bargain with Him again. I was tired of God taking me place I did not want to go and putting me in front of people I did not want to talk to. Also I have a hard time saying the words let your will be done. I have told the Lord on many occasions I did not think it is fair where the devil disciples get all the help and God keeps some of His servants on bread and water. I told the Lord if you wanted me to be a sheep you should have made me a sheep. You can't give me a warrior's heart and expect me to be peaceful, kind and pleasant. To me Rev. Moore was a great example with just a little help Rev. Moore could touch millions of lives. Yet she exist on a small social security check the does not meet her needs and the state of Arkansas had the nerve to cut the amount of food stamps the state gave her each month. The denomination she worked for all those years did

not provide her with a pension. The male pastors were provided for but not her. Yes there is prejudice in the church. We might have to hire female pastors but we don't have to treat female pastors equally. That is correct male run religious organizations want women to stand out in the hot sun selling chicken dinners to raise money for the church building fund but that is all the want from women. Otherwise women should sit down and shut up. Oh yes some of them can serve as ushers that should make them feel important. Lilly Ledbetter is not the only woman in America who wasn't paid equally. Goodyear is not the only employer that stiffs their female employees the church does it also.

I stayed away from praying where I had to say let your will be done. When my mother prayed she use to say let your will be done. I had problems with this phrase because I always felt that the person praying secretly hoped that God's will would be what the person was praying for. So you see there is no reason to pray when you have these thoughts in your heart. God knows I have been angry with His performance for years. I am tired of seeing lives destroyed because of wickedness. I am tired of seeing children suffering from sexual abuse. I am tired of seeing children starving. I am tired of reading about homeless men being murdered. I am tired so I told God I was tired I told the Lord this many times especially those moments when the average person would pray. I told Him I would

do my best as a human being but I was not praying anymore because my prayers were not being answered. My reasoning to Him was why put me on the front line and you do not give me the tools to do the job. My telling a woman or a child that God loves you means nothing when the woman and child are hungry and homeless. And how are you going to tell a man in prison that God loves you when all of his young life he was abused by his mother's lovers. Another problem I had with God He says pray for your enemy. I don't think I have to elaborate on that any further.

I discussed my assignment with my friend, Turetha (Yetive) Maddox. I have known her over 35 years. I told her God wanted me to write a prayer book. I told her I could not believe that God was asks me to do such a thing. I told her I was frustrated and had no idea how to complete this assignment. She suggested that I look at prayers in the Bible and look at other prayers people had written. I didn't feel comfortable with that because it made me feel I was copying someone's thoughts and ideas. Then Yetive told me a story about her mother talking to her brothers and sister about praying. This story is the reason why I changed the name of my book. I changed the name from My Book of Prayers to The Prayer Jar. Yetive told me that her mother heard her brothers and sister complaining one day about praying, especially if their prayers were being answered. Yetive said her mother told her children that every time they

prayed for something they were to write the prayer down on a piece of paper and put the prayer in the glass jar in the kitchen. If the prayer was answered they were to write that down too. And at the end of the year they were to take the pieces of paper out of the jar and decided on whether they were fortunate or not and whether or not God answered prayers. Is that not a way to teach children about praying?

For the assignment God gave me I did just what children do who are given a plate of vegetables to eat. I picked at the vegetables with my fork. I separated the peas in groups on my plate. Then I put the peas in a line building myself up to take a mouthful. I started the book by writing the title page calling it My Book of Prayer. Every day I had my plate of vegetables to eat. I kept asking myself, what am I to say. As you can see now I have eaten my vegetables and this book is a result of that meal. Rev. Moore called me December 10, 2016 to write a prayer book. I ordered a printed copy for her January 12, 2017.

And God said, "Son, pay attention to what I say. Listen to my words. Never let them get away from you. Remember them and keep them in your heart. They will give life and health to anyone who understands them. Be careful what you think, your life is shaped by your thoughts."

Proverbs 4:20-23

"And I make a covenant with you: I have given my power and my teachings to be yours forever, and from now on you are to obey me and teach your children and your descendants to obey me for all time to come." Isaiah 59:21

The Prayer Jar



“Luck is for the unprepared, and I have trained you too well to rely on anything that fickle.” Karen Lynch

Whenever the subject of religion comes up six questions are always asked. Why does man have a religion? How did religion come about? And why do I need religion? What is a prayer? Why should I pray and who should I pray to. These questions are important because the answers are the foundation of any religion. In this book we will assume that you have decided why does man have a religion? How did religion come about? And why do I need religion? So we are going to focus on the last three questions, what is a prayer? Why should I pray and who should I pray to. Because when you think about it being happy and solving one's life problems is a paramount desire.

If you ask a thousand people for the definition of a religion you will get a thousand different answers. But one thing is for certain religion comes in handy when man has absolutely no answer for the dilemma confronting him. This book is for the man who needs relief. For the man who is looking for a solution to his problems when none are in sight.

The dictionary says religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power that is called a god. The superhuman power, or supernatural being or supernatural beings is an

outgrowth of the need of man for someone or something to correct or solve issues and problems in a person's life beyond his or her control. As the culture around man evolved religion became a cultural system of behaviors and practices. From these practices sacred texts and holy places evolved causing the dictation of ethics, and approved norms. The lives of women and men are taken when they violate these norms. Wherever man finds himself on the earth these ethics and approved norms dictates a person's life. If you are born in India your life is governed by their gods. If you are born in Africa your life is governed by the gods they worship in Africa. If you are born in America your life is governed by the gods worshipped on this continent. Conflict arises when the purpose of religion is discussed. Some argue for a blind belief of service and worship of a god. Some argue that religion was created by men for the advantage of men. Women are forced into servitude based on moreways constructed by man all for the purpose of keeping women in line controlled and obedient. Others suggest religion is to bring comfort to man especially in time of a crisis. Others argue that an institutionalized system of religion brings about enslavement where various religions attitudes, beliefs, and practices are used to keep man in a permanent state of torment. Thousands and thousands of people now say in our modern society preachers in America have organized a system of beliefs,

ceremonies used to enrich themselves. If you find yourself without money start a church. Regardless of what camp you belong religion is a choice in most western cultures. This choice is not found in certain Eastern and African cultures. One tool of western religions is the prayer. It is the vehicle by which a person reaches out to his or her god for answers for intervention and resolution.

What is a Prayer?

A prayer, simply put, is conversation with God. A prayer is seen as a means of getting help. Religion is structured so that there is a lone deity that can fix everything in our lives. Or we hope so.

Why Should I Pray?

There are two answers to this question. We pray because we were instructed to pray without ceasing. And we pray because it is an instrument that we believe will resolve problems that we cannot solve.

Who Should I Pray to?

When Jesus was teaching on the mountainside, he was giving man instructions on how to live. He taught against divorce, adultery etc. When Jesus was asked how to pray he said this

Matthew 6:1-18 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

⁵“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹“This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today

our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. ¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

¹⁶ “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Jesus spoke again about praying in Luke 18:1-14 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ² He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. ³ And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’

⁴ “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’”

⁶ And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?” In Matthew and Luke Jesus is not only talking about praying he is talking about one’s conduct and motives when praying or serving his or her fellow man. His words should not be ignored or over looked. There is power and recompense in his words and the consequences are fierce.

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ ¹⁴ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled,

and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” Here Jesus is concerned that people understand that the purpose of prayer is to communicate to God not to impress a friend or stranger. False humility is one thing that turns young people off with the church.

Who Are the People That Pray and What Drives People to Pray

The need or desire to win is one reason why people pray. These people pray because they believe they are facing an insurmountable force and require outside help. These people believe that they do not have the desired power to rectify the situation; which means most people pray when they are in a crisis situation.

An example of this type of person was General George Smith Patton. George C. Scott portrayed General George S. Patton in the movie Patton. During the movie General Patton was faced with an intolerable weather front. It had been raining for three months. The weather would not clear up so planes could fly. General Patton needed aerial support so he could keep assaulting the Germans thereby maintaining his advantage during World War II. He was supposed to cross the Rhine River December 19, 1944. This was a pivotal moment in history. The third army was the tip of the spear to make the main thrust into a totally area occupied by the Germans. Patton's troops were needed to relieve the besieged 101st Airborne defending

Bastogne in the Battle of the Bulge. When the weather would not clear General Patton commissioned a weather prayer from the Third Army Chaplain. At 11 a.m. on the morning of December 8, 1944 General Patton phoned the Head Chaplain of the Third Army, James H. O'Neill, a Catholic priest. He told the chaplain that something must be done about the rain. He was trying to win the war and the weather was not cooperating. He needed the chaplain to write a weather prayer. He wanted to get God working with him. When the chaplain said he did not know how that was going to work praying for good weather so we can kill our fellow man. General Patton responded by asking the chaplain how much praying was going on in the third Army. The chaplain said he did not believe very much praying was going on. General Patton said,

“Chaplain, I am a strong believer in Prayer. “There are three ways that men get what they want; by planning, by working, and by Praying. Any great military operation takes careful planning, or thinking. Then you must have well-trained troops to carry it out: that’s working. But between the plan and the