



Needed: Men of Prayer

By CLAUDIO CONSUEGRA

After 70 years of captivity in Babylon, the Israelite exiles were returning to Jerusalem. Faced with the enormous task of rebuilding the city, its walls, and its Temple, and encountering persecution along the way, Nehemiah turned to God. He wrote: “So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven” (Neh. 1:4).

There seems to be a concerted effort in the media to undermine the role of men. Commercials, movies, and sitcoms in general portray men as dumb, clumsy, and weak. Changing roles in society are creating a crisis of identity among many young men who are turning to gangs, drugs, alcohol, and serial premarital sex. Some, in hopelessness, have ended their lives, with suicide being the third-leading cause of death in the United States, behind accidents and homicide, of people aged 15 to 24.¹

While in the church calendar the first Sabbath of September is set aside as Men’s Ministries Day of Prayer, men of God have to dedicate daily time to pray for themselves and their families. Ellen White wrote, “There is need of Nehemiahs in the church today—not men who can pray and preach only, but men whose prayers and sermons are braced with firm and eager purpose. . . . The success attend-

ing Nehemiah’s efforts shows what prayer, faith, and wise, energetic action will accomplish.”²

Many men know how important their prayer life is, yet they don’t know how or where to begin. Here are a few ideas to help you take the first steps in this journey of communion with God:

1. Find your ideal time. Identify your optimal prayer time—morning, evening, midday—and make it a regular time of your schedule, “continuing steadfastly in prayer” (Rom. 12:12). In order to develop this new, healthy habit, set aside a few minutes each day for 30 days of regular time with God. Give it a try and see what happens. It will make a difference!

2. Find your ideal place. Find a quiet, private place without distractions. Although Jesus said, “But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father” (Matt. 6:6, NIV), you can pray anytime, anywhere—such as in the car, during work, while exercising. However, be intentional about setting aside a specific amount of undivided time for your conversation with God while you pray for yourself, as a man and priest of your home, as you intercede for your family.

3. Pray for each member of your family individually. Quick, “blanket” prayers are not sufficient; your family needs personal intercession for each member. First, pray for your wife; for her physical, emotional, and spiritual

health. Pray for protection, courage, and strength. Pray for any specific needs she has expressed to you. Second, pray for each of your children by name, according to their age and age-related needs. Pray that they will be open to God’s leading in their lives; that they will respond to His promptings. Third, pray for your family circle. Pray that God will keep you together through whatever challenges you may encounter. Fourth, pray that together you may reach out to others. Ministering together as a family is one of the most effective ways to instill spiritual principles in your children and keep them engaged in their spiritual lives.

E. M. Bounds wrote: “What the church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men—men of prayer.”³

May you be such a man for your family, for your church, and for your community. As the old hymn challenged us: “Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone! Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known.”⁴

¹ <http://www.teensuicidestatistics.com/>

² Ellen G. White, *Christian Service* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1925), p. 177.

³ E. M. Bounds, *Power Through Prayer* (New York: Marshall Brothers), chap. 1.

⁴ Phillip P. Bliss, “Dare to Be a Daniel” (1873).



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