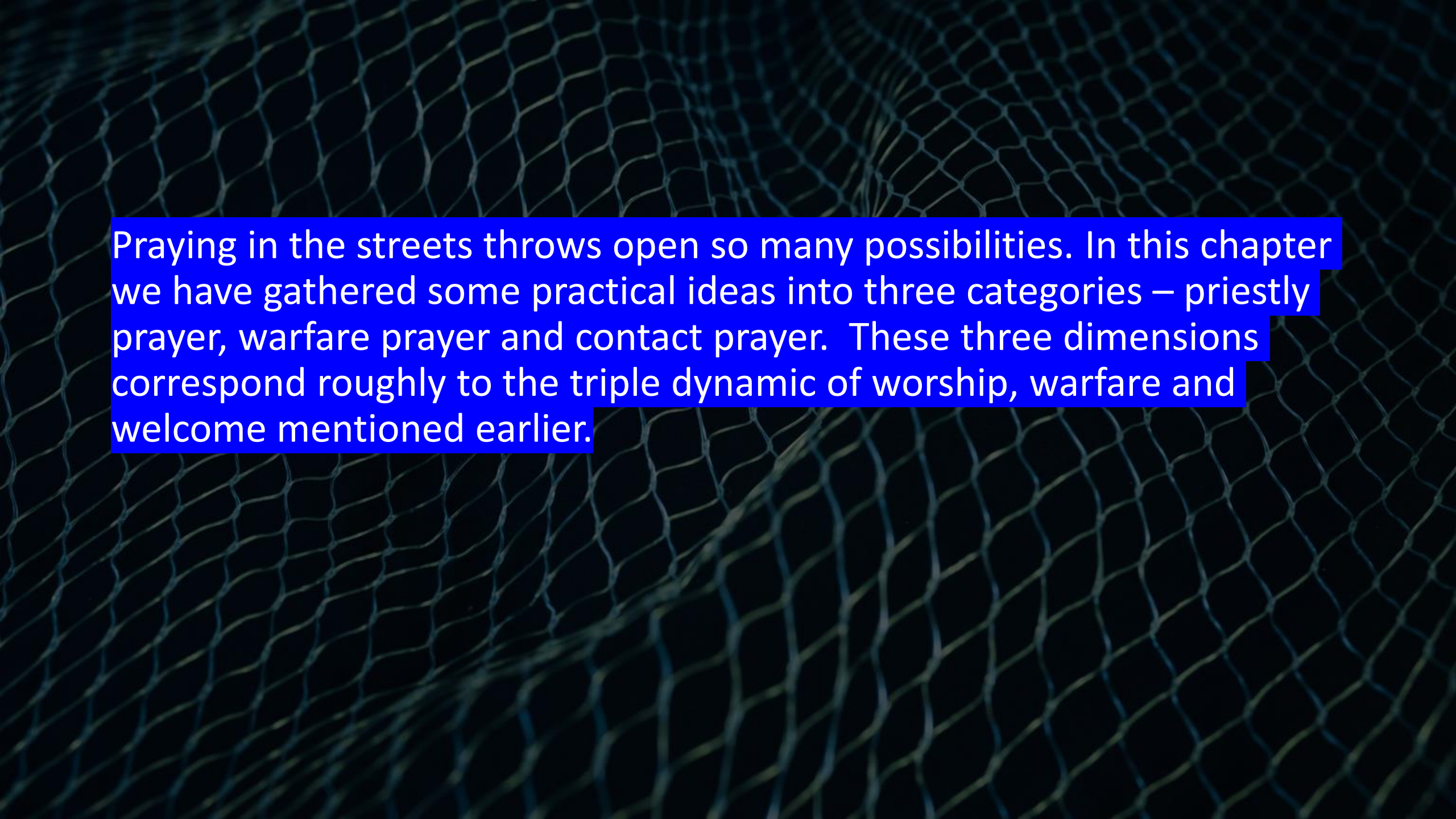




Three-Dimensional Prayer

Prayer Walking Chapter 10

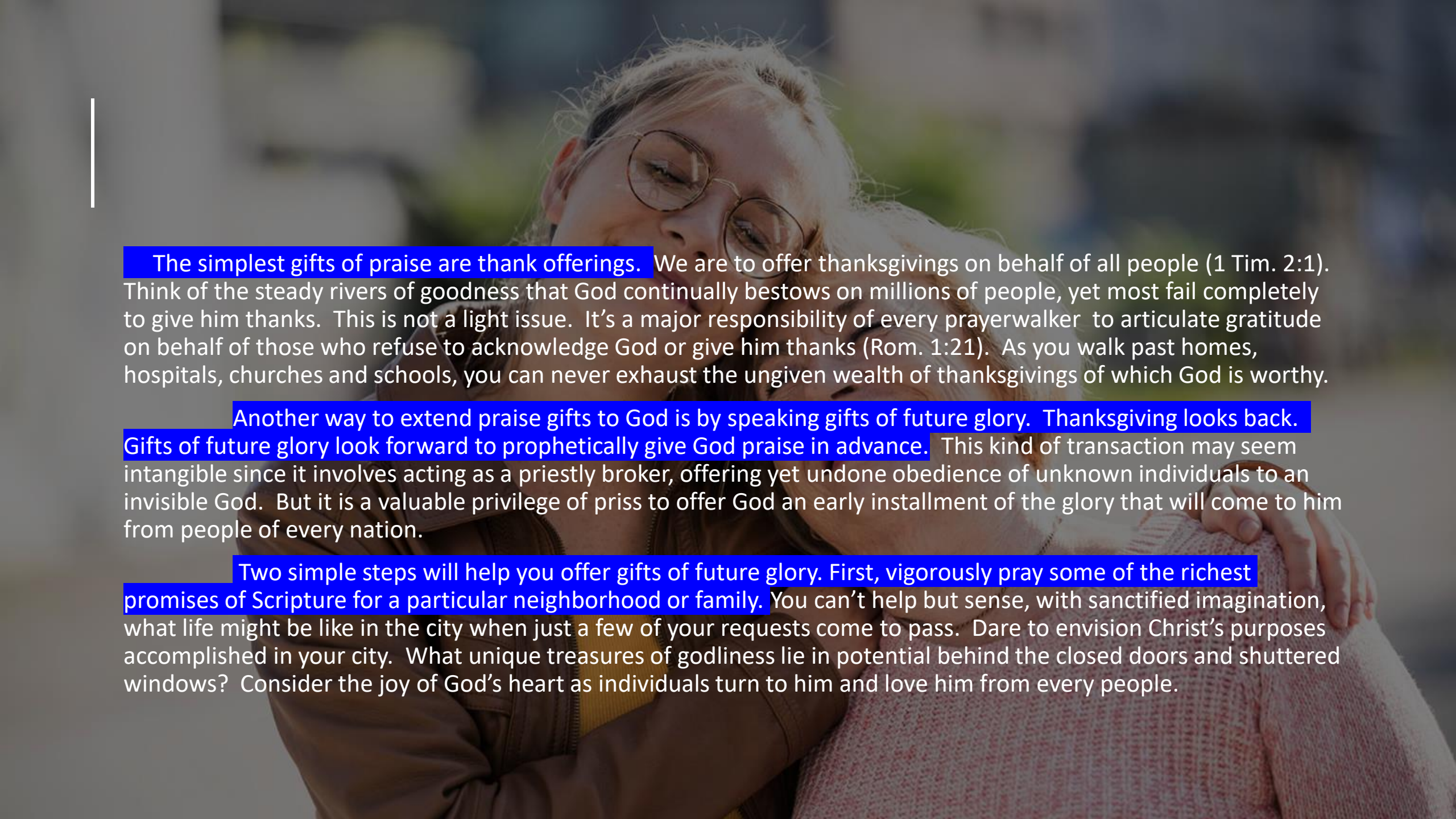


Praying in the streets throws open so many possibilities. In this chapter we have gathered some practical ideas into three categories – priestly prayer, warfare prayer and contact prayer. These three dimensions correspond roughly to the triple dynamic of worship, warfare and welcome mentioned earlier.

1. The Worship Dimension: Priestly Prayer

Martin Luther was right. The priesthood of God includes all believers. Each Christian has a place to stand before God, offering him the service truly pleasing to him. Often that place before God is right in the neighborhood. Here are three ways to pray as a priest.

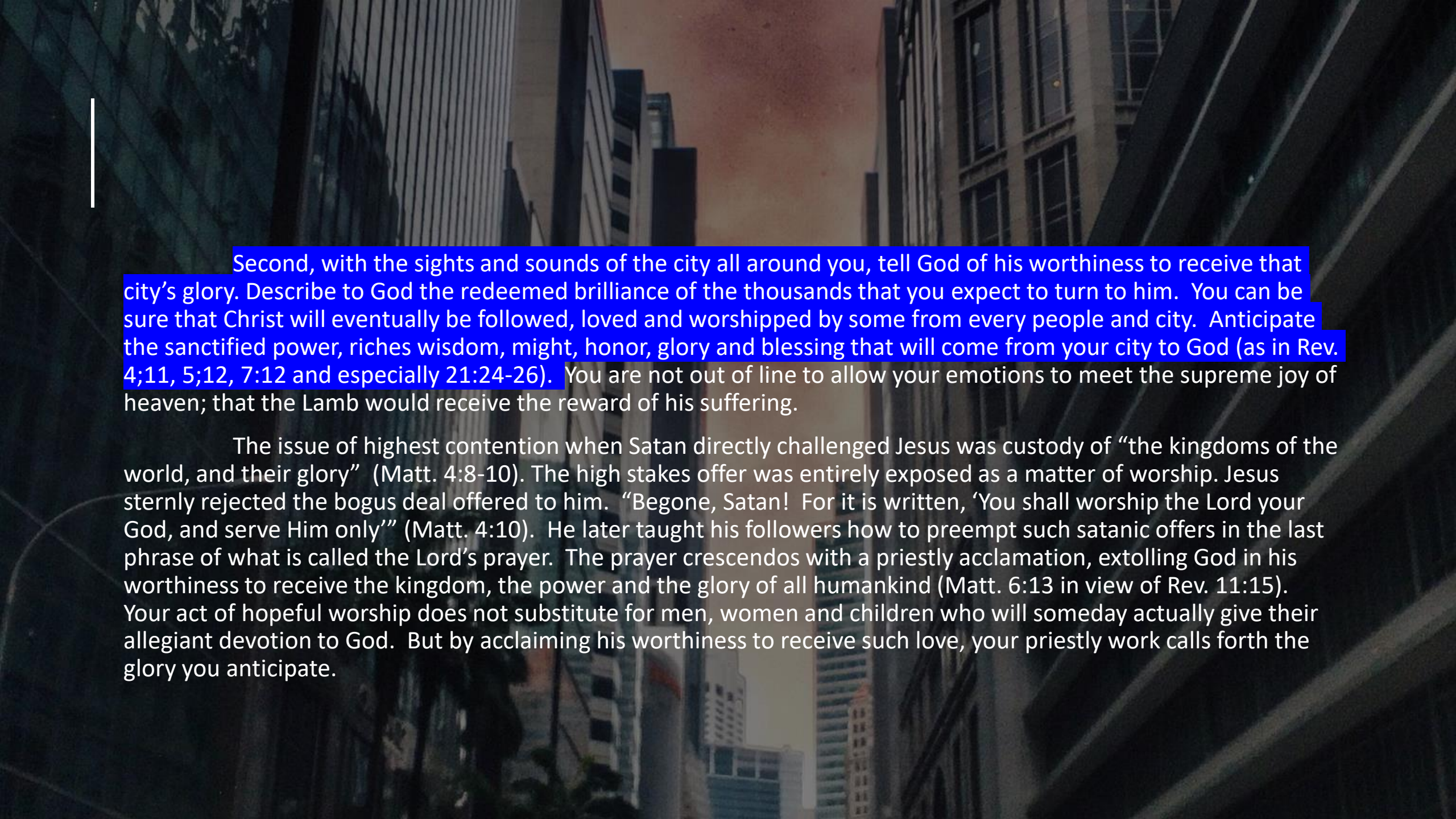
1. Stand before God offering gifts of praise. The primary service a biblical priest performs is unto God himself (Ex. 19:6, 28:3-4, 29-44; 2 chron. 29:11; Ezek. 44:15-16). As God's priests we are to "offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5). God has ordained that the richest gifts of worship would come from ordinary people who are priests: "that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you." (1 Pet. 2:9). Consider your articulated praise to be a special present, made in the hearing of God, which brings pleasure to his heart. God not only deserves your expressions of worship, but he genuinely desires such heartfelt gifts.



The simplest gifts of praise are thank offerings. We are to offer thanksgivings on behalf of all people (1 Tim. 2:1). Think of the steady rivers of goodness that God continually bestows on millions of people, yet most fail completely to give him thanks. This is not a light issue. It's a major responsibility of every prayerwalker to articulate gratitude on behalf of those who refuse to acknowledge God or give him thanks (Rom. 1:21). As you walk past homes, hospitals, churches and schools, you can never exhaust the ungiven wealth of thanksgivings of which God is worthy.

Another way to extend praise gifts to God is by speaking gifts of future glory. Thanksgiving looks back. Gifts of future glory look forward to prophetically give God praise in advance. This kind of transaction may seem intangible since it involves acting as a priestly broker, offering yet undone obedience of unknown individuals to an invisible God. But it is a valuable privilege of prayer to offer God an early installment of the glory that will come to him from people of every nation.

Two simple steps will help you offer gifts of future glory. First, vigorously pray some of the richest promises of Scripture for a particular neighborhood or family. You can't help but sense, with sanctified imagination, what life might be like in the city when just a few of your requests come to pass. Dare to envision Christ's purposes accomplished in your city. What unique treasures of godliness lie in potential behind the closed doors and shuttered windows? Consider the joy of God's heart as individuals turn to him and love him from every people.



Second, with the sights and sounds of the city all around you, tell God of his worthiness to receive that city's glory. Describe to God the redeemed brilliance of the thousands that you expect to turn to him. You can be sure that Christ will eventually be followed, loved and worshipped by some from every people and city. Anticipate the sanctified power, riches wisdom, might, honor, glory and blessing that will come from your city to God (as in Rev. 4:11, 5:12, 7:12 and especially 21:24-26). You are not out of line to allow your emotions to meet the supreme joy of heaven; that the Lamb would receive the reward of his suffering.

The issue of highest contention when Satan directly challenged Jesus was custody of "the kingdoms of the world, and their glory" (Matt. 4:8-10). The high stakes offer was entirely exposed as a matter of worship. Jesus sternly rejected the bogus deal offered to him. "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only'" (Matt. 4:10). He later taught his followers how to preempt such satanic offers in the last phrase of what is called the Lord's prayer. The prayer crescendos with a priestly acclamation, extolling God in his worthiness to receive the kingdom, the power and the glory of all humankind (Matt. 6:13 in view of Rev. 11:15). Your act of hopeful worship does not substitute for men, women and children who will someday actually give their allegiant devotion to God. But by acclaiming his worthiness to receive such love, your priestly work calls forth the glory you anticipate.

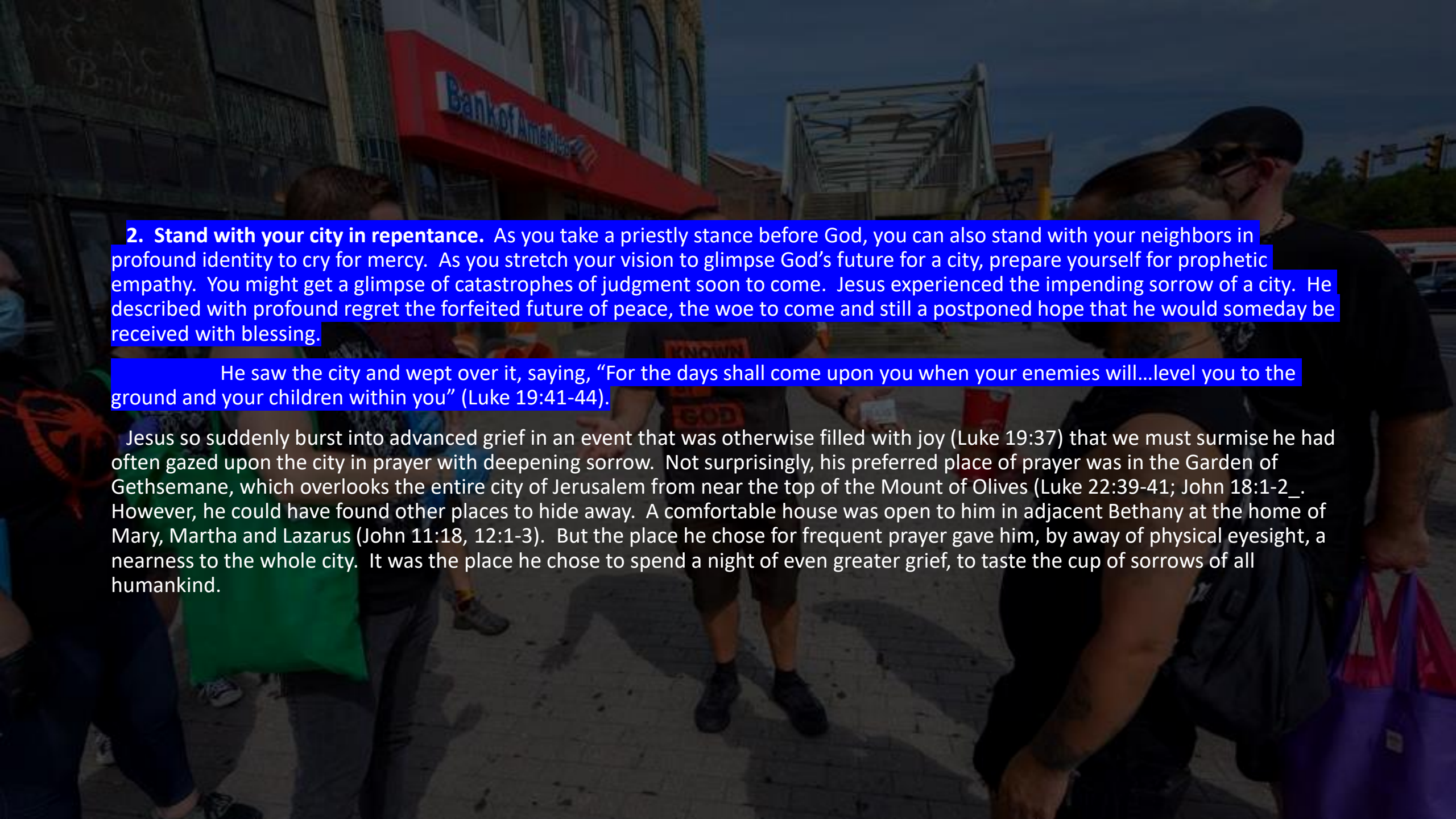


We were praying through the streets of Alexandria, Egypt. It's pretty squalid in some areas, but we came to the realization that he wasn't going to save these people by pulling them out of these majority Muslim neighborhoods. It's going to happen here. Salvation wouldn't be escape from Egypt as it had been in Moses' day. We prayed for God to do another exodus but to keep the people in their families and streets, to establish them in these communities. We prayed, "let my people go, that they may worship me!" We knew that it might be some time until Jesus got a huge following there, But the more we told God what kind of love he deserved from this place, the more we felt sure it was going to happen. We knew how hard it would be for those future believers, so we couldn't help feeling proud of them for loving God at such cost, even though most of them hadn't done it yet.

--Steve Chism, speaking at a recent prayer journey in a poor Muslim area of urban Egypt.

You are worthy of the true worship of everyone who squanders their devotion in this place. Come near, Come no and gain their worship for yourself, Lord Jesus!

--A prayer of Lynn Woodring while walking near the hundreds of Hindus going in and out of the huge Minakshipuram temple in Maduai, India



2. Stand with your city in repentance. As you take a priestly stance before God, you can also stand with your neighbors in profound identity to cry for mercy. As you stretch your vision to glimpse God's future for a city, prepare yourself for prophetic empathy. You might get a glimpse of catastrophes of judgment soon to come. Jesus experienced the impending sorrow of a city. He described with profound regret the forfeited future of peace, the woe to come and still a postponed hope that he would someday be received with blessing.

He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will...level you to the ground and your children within you" (Luke 19:41-44).

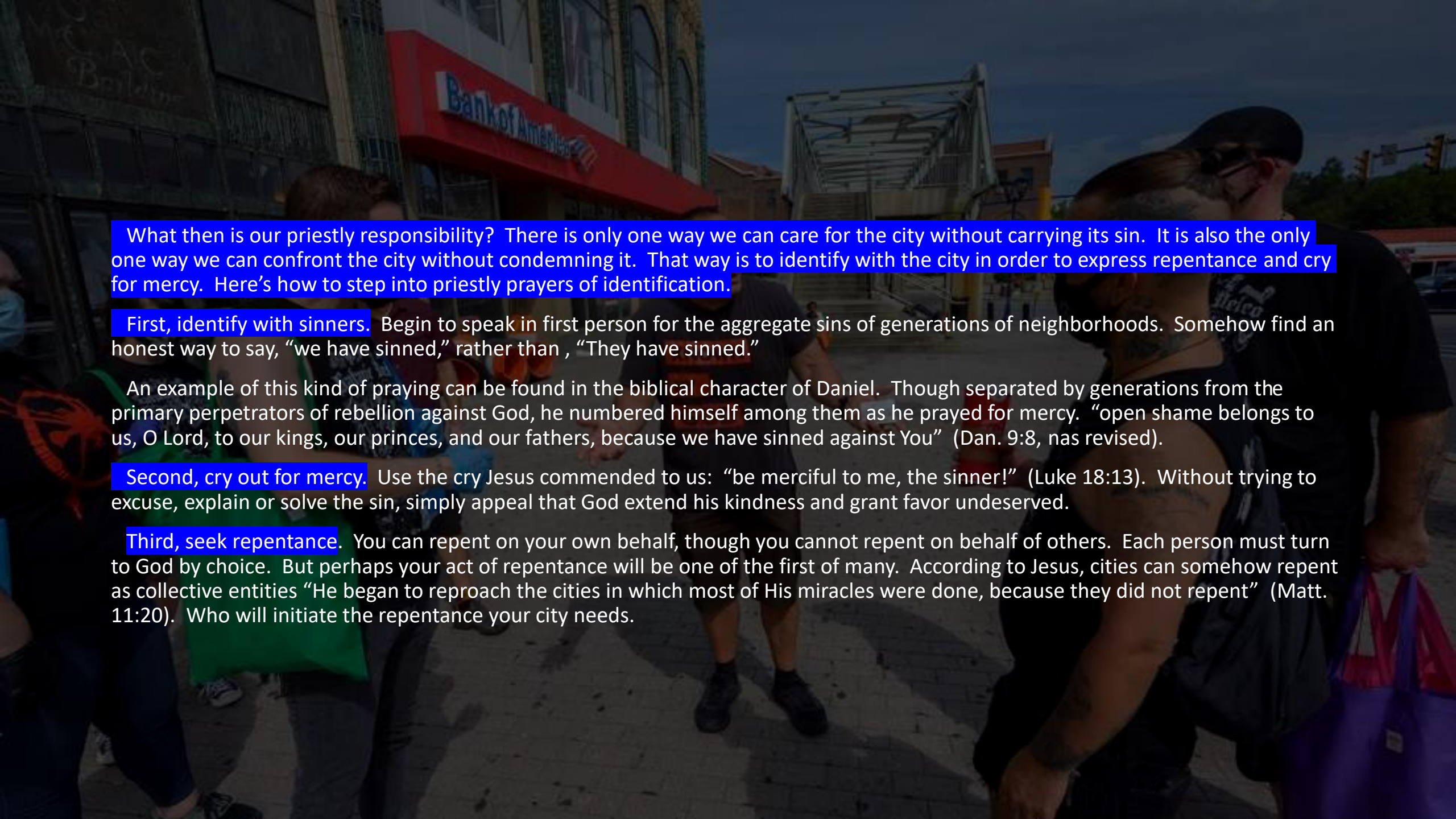
Jesus so suddenly burst into advanced grief in an event that was otherwise filled with joy (Luke 19:37) that we must surmise he had often gazed upon the city in prayer with deepening sorrow. Not surprisingly, his preferred place of prayer was in the Garden of Gethsemane, which overlooks the entire city of Jerusalem from near the top of the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39-41; John 18:1-2). However, he could have found other places to hide away. A comfortable house was open to him in adjacent Bethany at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (John 11:18, 12:1-3). But the place he chose for frequent prayer gave him, by away of physical eyesight, a nearness to the whole city. It was the place he chose to spend a night of even greater grief, to taste the cup of sorrows of all humankind.



As we look upon our own cities, we are tempted to respond inappropriately in one of two ways: either to condemn the city or to carry its sorrows. Neither way is God's way.

Do not try to carry the sins of others so as to atone for their wrongdoing. You are a priest, not the sacrifice. Only one person is able to carry our sorrows. The Father has given this cup to Jesus alone.

The opposite error is to seek the doom of the city and to condemn it. Jonah displayed this kind of abusive Prayerwalking. Did his compassion run short? Nineveh was a "great city, a three days' walk." Jonah only "began to go through the city one day's walk" (Jon. 3:3-4). Perhaps Jonah's suicidal despair was a backlash of his condemnatory attitude.



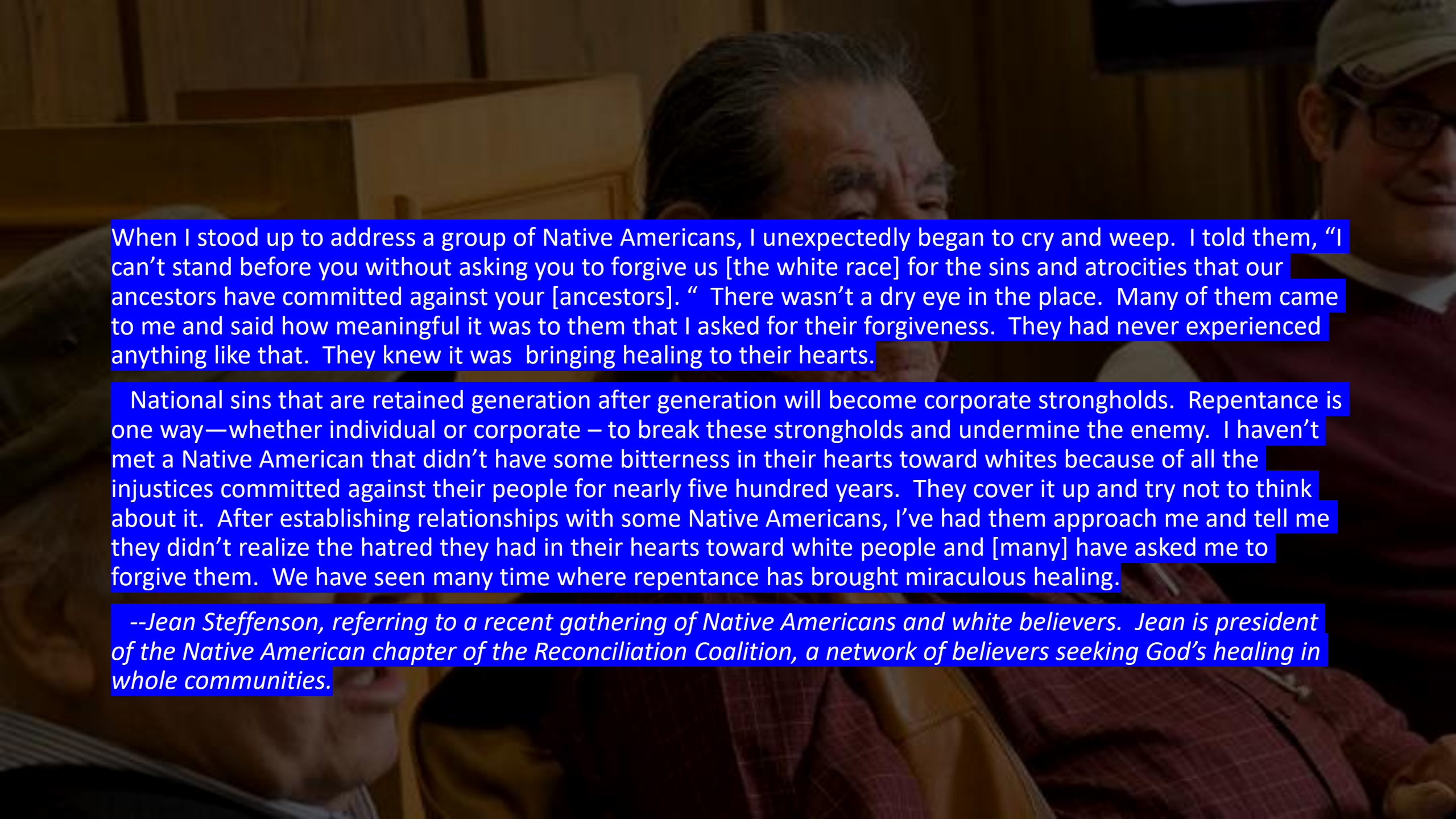
What then is our priestly responsibility? There is only one way we can care for the city without carrying its sin. It is also the only one way we can confront the city without condemning it. That way is to identify with the city in order to express repentance and cry for mercy. Here's how to step into priestly prayers of identification.

First, identify with sinners. Begin to speak in first person for the aggregate sins of generations of neighborhoods. Somehow find an honest way to say, “we have sinned,” rather than , “They have sinned.”

An example of this kind of praying can be found in the biblical character of Daniel. Though separated by generations from the primary perpetrators of rebellion against God, he numbered himself among them as he prayed for mercy. “open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You” (Dan. 9:8, nas revised).

Second, cry out for mercy. Use the cry Jesus commended to us: “be merciful to me, the sinner!” (Luke 18:13). Without trying to excuse, explain or solve the sin, simply appeal that God extend his kindness and grant favor undeserved.

Third, seek repentance. You can repent on your own behalf, though you cannot repent on behalf of others. Each person must turn to God by choice. But perhaps your act of repentance will be one of the first of many. According to Jesus, cities can somehow repent as collective entities “He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent” (Matt. 11:20). Who will initiate the repentance your city needs.



When I stood up to address a group of Native Americans, I unexpectedly began to cry and weep. I told them, “I can’t stand before you without asking you to forgive us [the white race] for the sins and atrocities that our ancestors have committed against your [ancestors].” There wasn’t a dry eye in the place. Many of them came to me and said how meaningful it was to them that I asked for their forgiveness. They had never experienced anything like that. They knew it was bringing healing to their hearts.

National sins that are retained generation after generation will become corporate strongholds. Repentance is one way—whether individual or corporate – to break these strongholds and undermine the enemy. I haven’t met a Native American that didn’t have some bitterness in their hearts toward whites because of all the injustices committed against their people for nearly five hundred years. They cover it up and try not to think about it. After establishing relationships with some Native Americans, I’ve had them approach me and tell me they didn’t realize the hatred they had in their hearts toward white people and [many] have asked me to forgive them. We have seen many times where repentance has brought miraculous healing.

--Jean Steffenson, referring to a recent gathering of Native Americans and white believers. Jean is president of the Native American chapter of the Reconciliation Coalition, a network of believers seeking God’s healing in whole communities.

HIS MARVELOUS KINDNESS IN A STRONG CITY.

3. Stand amidst your city, extending blessings. Blessings are word gifts from God's heart. This form of priestly prayer enunciates a portion of his intended goodness. God creates by speaking words. When people bless, they align themselves with the creative force of God's Word and release measures of God's promise.

God speaks blessings himself, but he authorizes parents and priests, among others, to vocalize blessings. The Bible records instances of Isaac and Jacob each exerting fatherly faith by stating blessings (Gen. 27:1-33, 48:8-20, 49:1-28). God accords to us significant responsibility to give definition to his promises for families, generations, cities and nations. Blessing is a prophetic way of praying. It's like interceding in revers: Without stating the requests, answers to prayer are declared in faith. By such blessings, futures are bestowed. Destinies are altered and opened.

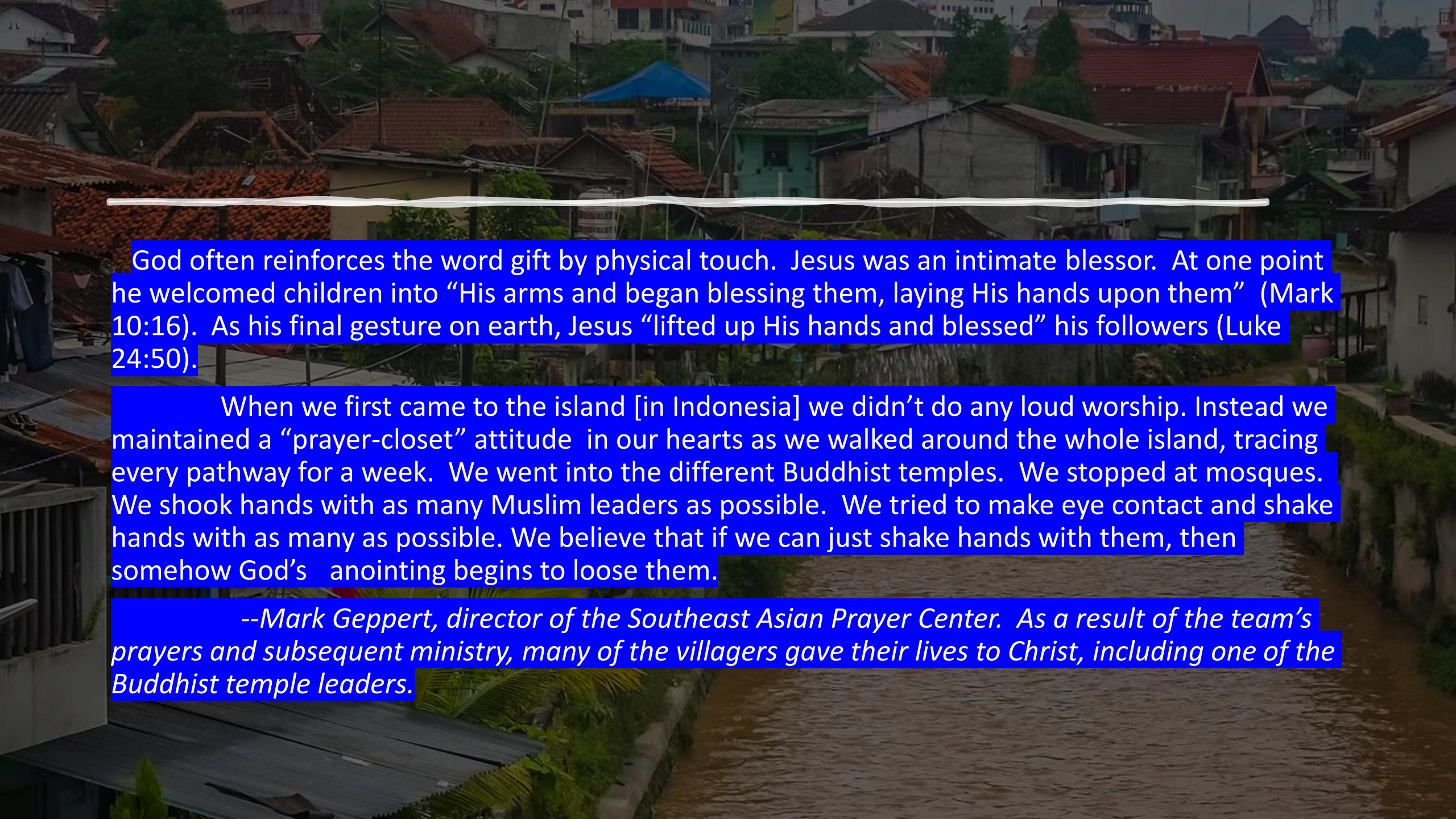
God consecrated priests to "stand before the Lord to serve Him and to bless in His name until this day" (Deut. 10:8). Another classic passage about priests giving blessings shows that while priests pronounce God's goodness upon people, it is God himself who bestows the substance of blessing: "thus you [the priests] shall bless the sons of Israel...and I then will bless them" (Num. 6:23-27)> Let's practice this high privilege, learning how to do it boldly and carefully. Here's how to speak blessings.

IN A STRONG CITY.

Discern the heart of God. Look to him as the magnificent Father of every one of the households for which you are praying. If the yearning of God's heart could speak, what would be said? You are not left to your own supposition. Scripture is loaded with the generosity of the Father. Let the promises of Scripture ruminate in your heart as you walk near households. Let your words give voice to God's highest intentions.

Blessings naturally arise from petitions. If you first spend time concentrating on a matter by making explicit request, you may then find it easier to package your prayer as a blessing for people. One of the best examples of priests giving blessings occurred in King Hezekiah's day. "Then the Levitical priests arose and blessed the people; and their voice was heard and their prayer came to His holy dwelling place, to heaven" (2 Chron. 30:27). God heard their blessings as prayers.

Get physically near to those you are blessing. Blessings are prayers, but they are almost always stated by the "blessor" in the presence of the "blesse." In many instances, blessings are stated directly to the ones who are to receive them. The biblical record of blessings suggest that blessings cannot really be offered well in absence from those being blessed. God brought creatures close to Adam for their naming, which is a form of blessing (Gen. 2:19). Isaac blessed his sons with physical touch, as did Jacob (Gen. 27:1-28:4, 49:1-28). Balaam took care to come within sight of the people he was blessing (Num. 22:41, 24:2).



God often reinforces the word gift by physical touch. Jesus was an intimate blessing. At one point he welcomed children into "His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands upon them" (Mark 10:16). As his final gesture on earth, Jesus "lifted up His hands and blessed" his followers (Luke 24:50).

When we first came to the island [in Indonesia] we didn't do any loud worship. Instead we maintained a "prayer-closet" attitude in our hearts as we walked around the whole island, tracing every pathway for a week. We went into the different Buddhist temples. We stopped at mosques. We shook hands with as many Muslim leaders as possible. We tried to make eye contact and shake hands with as many as possible. We believe that if we can just shake hands with them, then somehow God's anointing begins to loose them.

--Mark Geppert, director of the Southeast Asian Prayer Center. As a result of the team's prayers and subsequent ministry, many of the villagers gave their lives to Christ, including one of the Buddhist temple leaders.



Speak out loud. Lest your blessings turn to soggy sentiment in your mind, say your blessings out loud. The priests of Hezekiah's day blessed the people in their hearing, but God was the most important listener. Give your blessings the declarative volume they deserve.

Giving blessings is a matter of great power and urgency. Proverbs, 11:11 portrays the struggle for cities as a war of powerful words: "By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is torn down." God desires a continual stream of blessing by righteous people giving voice to what he longs to do.



2. The Warfare Dimension: Warfare Prayer

Praying Within Your Authority

Heaven's assignments do not work by the volunteer system. No one can appoint themselves to a place of great prayer authority. It may not even be accurate to say that we “take authority.” God alone gives authority.

Authority is a relational reality. Let's not make an elitist mistake of thinking that authority is merited by hours logged on bended knee. Authority is not earned. It is entered. Intercessory authority is a growing relational reality in two directions: intimate cleanness before God and a love for the people for whom God has assigned us to pray.

Spiritual warriors in Scripture were granted authority to pray. Their authority did not stem from what they knew but from who had come to know them because of their growing life of prayer. They were known before God and the angelic entities of heaven. It's not who you know but who knows you.



Daniel was told by heavenly visitation that his prolonged prayer had shaped the war raging in the heavenlies. Take note of how he was addressed by the heavenly visitor: “O Daniel, man of high esteem...” (Dan. 10:11, also v. 19). Daniel was a respected name and voice in the councils of heaven. He prayed with powerful impact, but from what we know, he never addressed or even knew that principalities were being thwarted by God while he was praying (Dan. 10:1-21).

Recall the story of the seven sons of Sceva who tried to use Jesus’ name as a talisman of authority. They had challenged a man possessed by an evil spirit with the words, “I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.” the spirit’s response keyed on the well-known name of Paul among heavenly demonic beings. “I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?” there were violent repercussions for these men for dealing with demons without any position before God’s throne (Acts 19:13-17). (In light of the demon’s recognition of Paul, it is significant that Paul had lived more than two years in this city, coming to know it well, accomplishing much by prayer [Acts 19:10-17].)

Jesus told them there were arenas of authority in war that they would probably never see or enter. “I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning” (Luke 10:18). He then told them that the authority they wielded was even greater than what he had yet told them or what they had even guessed.



the crux of the matter was that the authority had been added to them by divine grant. They were not intrinsically powerful. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power over the enemy, and nothing shall injure you (Luke 10:19; note the footwork involved in triumphing over evil)

Jesus calmly urged them to direct their joy away from triumph over evil to the matter of surpassing significance: that they were known before the courts of heaven by name. “do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven” (Luke 10:20).

Having their names recorded in heaven probably does not refer to their being duly registered from eternal salvation (though no doubt this also was true of them). In the society of Jesus’ day, honor and reputation were matters of highest value. Jesus directs their joy to what they would have been nurtured in their society to prize most: a permanent honor granted by God. This renown was theirs quite apart from their exploits of trampling demons. They were esteemed before God as beloved children.

The core of their authority in prayer never stems from being knowledgeable. They were the “babes” through whom the Father was pleased to accomplish his purposes (Luke 10:21-24).



Push Past Your comfort Zone

Our point is to encourage you to pursue your maximal authority in prayer. Be on the stretch, praying beyond a comfort zone. You probably are using authority beyond what you know, as Daniel and the seventy discovered. At the same time, let's be wise not to overstep our authority in spiritual war but instead resolve to continue praying as Christ gives us specific assignment.

We all face different kinds of struggles in spiritual war. God grants appropriate power for each distinctive battle. For example, every believer endures a constant defensive struggle with sin, the flesh and the devil in order to follow God. The Lord is continually with us as well, giving us sufficient spiritual fortitude to resist and stand. But there are different battles to take place in the domain of one's personal life.

Some battles take place on what some are calling a "strategic level." Strategic-level warfare involves contending for the redemption of large numbers of people in specific geographical areas by integrating evangelism, prayer and service. Under some understandings of spiritual war, hierarchies of angelic beings hold sway over territories. As mighty as these principalities may be, it is a grave error to suppose that God deploys against them a corresponding hierarchy of human prayer warriors, with higher and lesser echelons of intercessory power. The simplest of God's children can pray effectively according to God's assignment.

We will only be able to renounce elitism on the one hand and cowardice on the other if we keep focused on Christ. He himself is our power and the fullness of our authority. He is with us in his might every day. He alone is worthy forever to retain and use what the Father has granted to him: all authority in heaven and in every locale of the earth (Matt. 28:18).

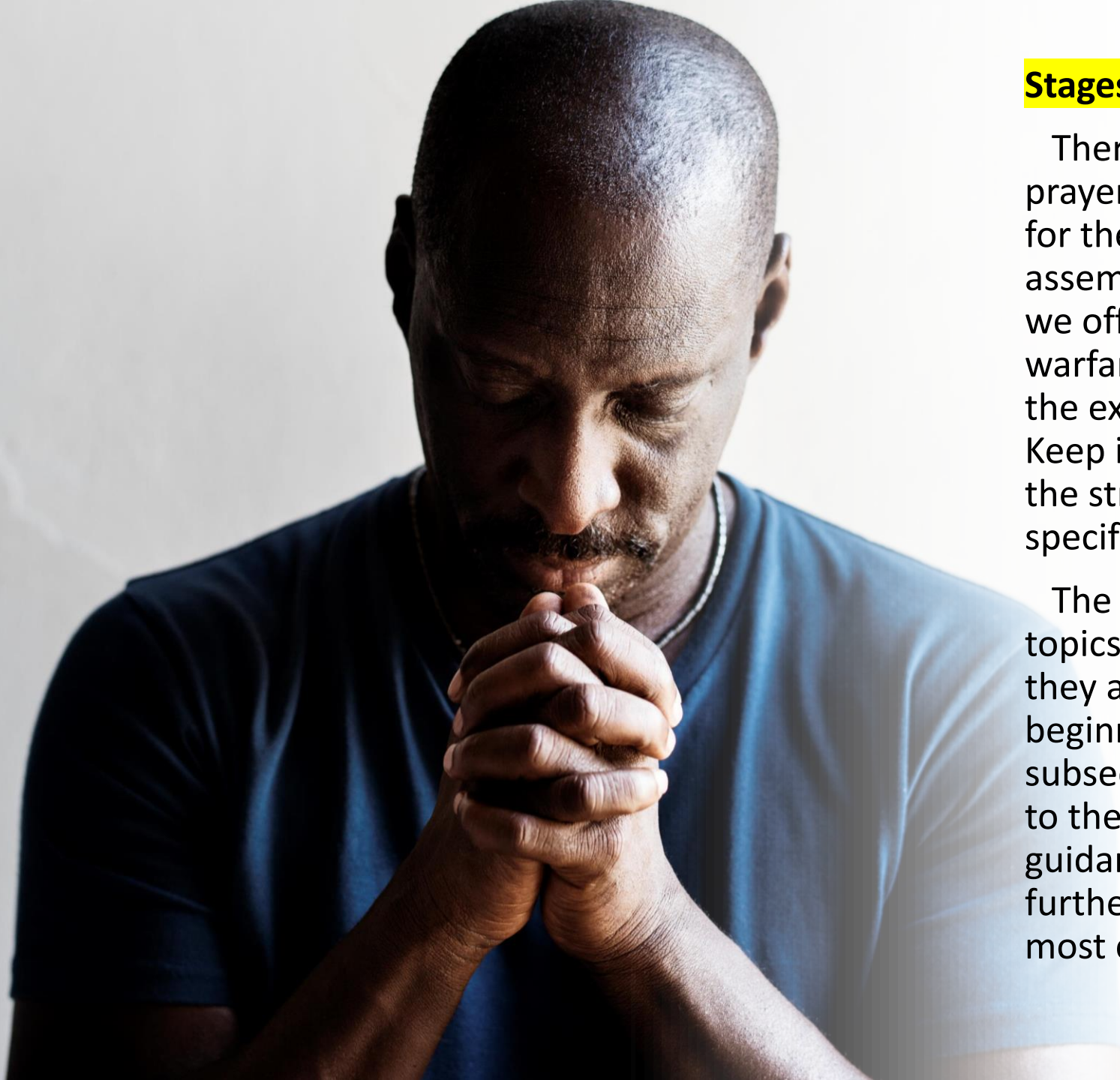
Spiritual warfare is hard work. It requires us to roll up our sleeves and slog it out. No magic wands. I'm distressed when I hear people talking as if there were some sort of magic wand, as if you could go into one of these areas where for century after century, thousands upon millions of people have used their own free-will choice to welcome demonic powers and principalities to live amongst them and rule over them. Don't tell me we're going to send a little prayerwalk team to set aside the logical consequences of their free will choices, pulling up centuries of demonic entrenchment just because we quote a verse or sing a good worship chorus. I'm sorry, it just doesn't work that way. There are no magic wands. But the effectual fervent prayer of righteous men and women avails much. If that verse (James 5:16) were not in Scripture, you and I would be in a bad way today. Fear might have a place in our midst. The next verse makes a point to say that wonder-working Elijah had not magic want at all. He had "a nature like ours." He simply prayed "earnestly" (James 5:17).

--George Otis Jr. has led many intercessory prayer teams to investigate and pray at the spiritual hot spots of earth from whence it is thought that evil powers hold sway over large territories. As president of The Sentinel Group, George serves as a leading authority in the newly developing field of missions research called "spiritual mapping."

We went through a phase where some of our people were trying to speak to this or that principality or power over a neighborhood and they found out that their lives were really getting trashed. I don't believe the Lord had given them authority to do that.

--Bob Branch, pastor of the Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Framingham Massachusetts. He continues to prayerwalk regularly with teams, including people from his church.

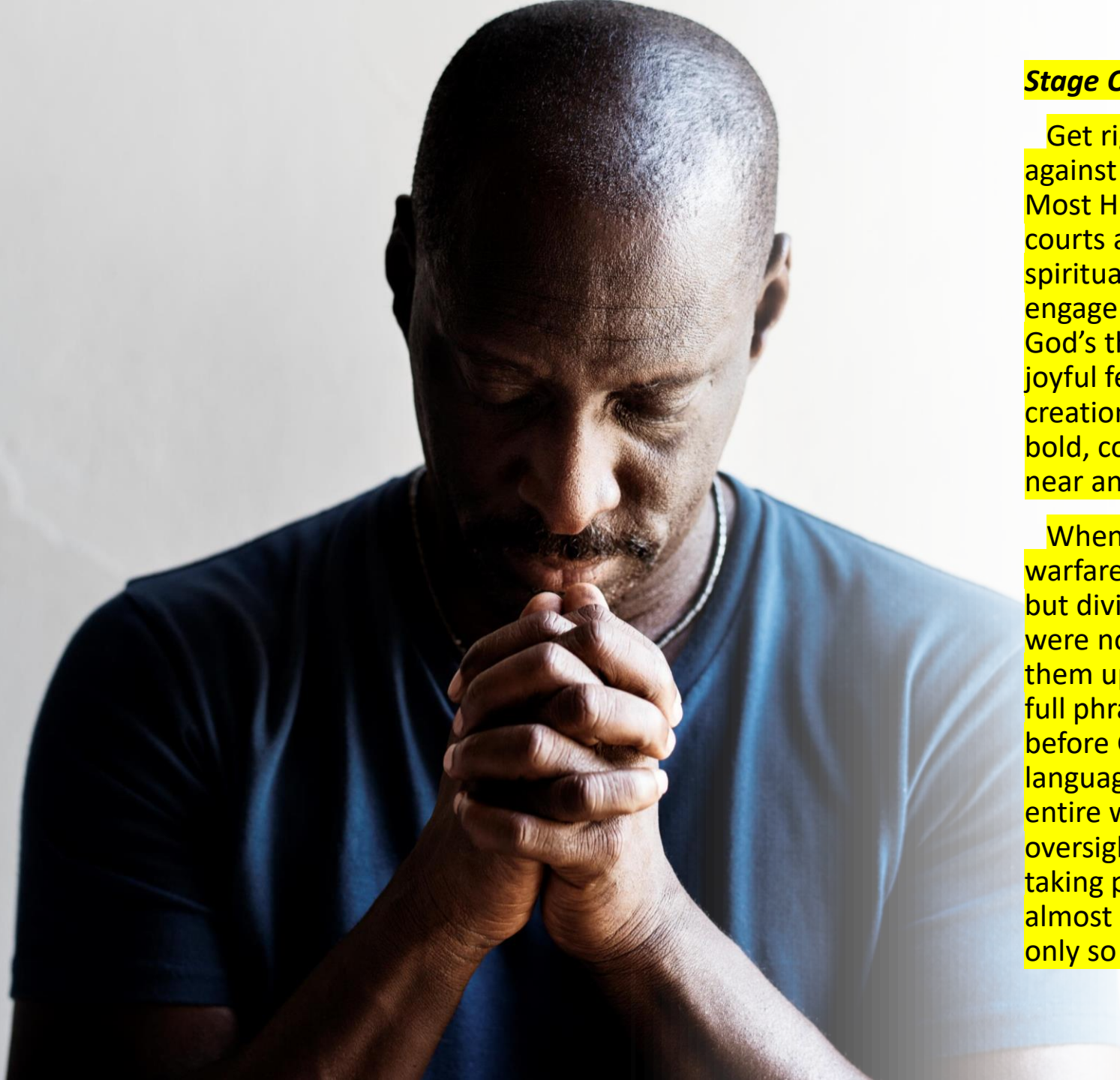




Stages of Warfare Prayer

There is no doubt that in some way prayerwalkers step into the spiritual battle for their cities. Without attempting to assemble a complete map of spiritual war, we offer this primer of basic stages of warfare prayer. It has been distilled from the experience of many prayerwalkers. Keep in mind that these points pertain to the struggle for spiritual influence over specific territories and cities.

The main value of this short list of prayer topics is the strategic sequence in which they are given. Pursue stage one as a beginning point and a platform for all subsequent warfare prayer. Then push on to the later stages as God gives clear guidance to do so. You will not need to go further than the first or second stage in most cases.



Stage One War: Appeal Directly to God

Get right to the core of the war. Before you come against anything or anyone, come reverently to the Most High. Come before God in his throne room. His courts are in session. His throne presides over all spiritual war. If angelic forces are to be sent to engage in battle, they will take their assignments from God's throne. Stand at attention before him with joyful fear. The dreadful and beautiful King of creation has named you to be his child. You have bold, confident access through faith in Jesus. Come near and make your appeal.

When Paul mentioned the weapons of spiritual warfare, he described them as being "not of the flesh, but divinely powerful" (2 Cor. 10:4). But the weapons were not innately powerful, as if anyone could pick them up and utilize them. A literal translation of the full phrase would be: "The weapons...are...mighty before God" (2 Cor. 10:4). The royal courtroom language "before God" shows that Paul regarded the entire war as happening under God's immediate oversight and direct authorization, as if it were all taking place within a few feet of God's throne. It is almost as if these weapons have a power cord that is only so long.



Psalm 18: is one of many places where David, the great warrior, says the primary act of spiritual warfare is in taking refuge. David chose to “take refuge” by appealing to God in “His temple” (Ps. 18:2, 6). The result: God himself “sent from on high...He delivered me from my strong enemy” (Ps. 18:16-17). David understood that spiritual war was essentially God’s rescue operation. As a result, he knew the experience of God training his “hands for battle” to pursue enemies (Ps. 18:24). But the entire affair began by taking refuge and remained a matter of “great salvations” (Ps. 18:50, literal translation).

David’s songs continually show the same pattern: David approaches God so that the Lord himself would step into battle. David initiates warfare by taking refuge, which is not at all a matter of retreat, but tremendous victory. “I will cry to God Most High, to God who accomplishes all things for me. He will send from heaven and save me” (Ps. 57:2-3). In Psalm 144 David mentions that his hands were trained for war (v. 1). But his greater hope is for God’s hand. “Bow Your heavens, O Lord, and come down...Stretch forth Your hand from on high; rescue me and deliver me” (Ps. 144:5-7, nas revised).

The heavenly courts of God on high are consistently regarded as the decisive theater of war (Ps. 76, 82). David knew that he had access to the King of all to make appeal. How much more do believers in Christ have sure access to the throne of God to appeal for his triumph? (Heb. 4:16 in light of 2:8-16, and Eph, 3:10 as activated by the standing privilege of 3:12).



How do believers wage this kind of war? It is not a matter of methodology, but relationship. Come as a worshipper. Speak humbly as if you were actually standing before God's glorious throne and he had interrupted all other business in heaven and earth to give you full attention. Be careful about gratuitous mental images, though such scenes given in Scripture are not imaginary. Although Christ remains veiled from your sight, he is indeed exalted to the right hand of the throne of God (Mark 16:19; Eph 1:18-23). We are called to set our minds on "things above where christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1-2). Resolve to speak to no angelic power whatever as you register your complaint in the courts of heaven. Make a straightforward plea to God.

Boldly request that God would arise and send forth from heaven to execute judgment on his enemies. God's judgment is his central act of spiritual war. In acts of judgment God brings punishment on those who have opposed him as enemies, and in the same stroke he brings salvation from those he favors. Request the salvation God has promised. You do not need to directly accuse angelic beings that you may or may not know. (Psalms 7, 17, 20 and 94 show truths underneath the familiar prayers of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20:5-23, of Hezekiah in 2 Kings 19:14-37 and especially of the church in Acts 4:23-31.)

God, how could you leave 850 million people under the thumbprint of this thing? Surely you are going to rise up and deliver them. Come on, God, let's see your stuff here.

--Mark Geppert, praying in front of a Hindu temple in Nepal

During the Jericho marches around the cities of our adopted country, we learned something about dealing with demonic principalities. The book of Jude (especially vv, 8-10) teaches that addressing spiritual principalities directly is not something we should do lightly. It's more appropriated in most situations to say, "The Lord rebuke you," rather than to shout directly at these demonic forces. So, in most circumstances we will focus on the Lord and pray only to him. We praise him for his power, his authority and for what he accomplished in binding Satan by the work of the cross. And then we ask God himself to rebuke and bind these demons.

--Joshua Brinkley, a missionary to a country in North Africa which is hostile to Christianity. No local believers were known in the entire country when Joshua arrived. Now a small church is growing for the first time.



Stage Two War: Truth Encounter About God

Another basic part of spiritual war is what could be called “truth encounter” in which believers proclaim truth about Christ and his kingdom. Relatively few engagements of spiritual war erupt into full-blown “power encounters” in which God’s prevailing might is put on open display. But almost every battle of spiritual war involves some kind of truth encounter.

Speak the truth about Jesus right out into the atmosphere of the street you are walking. You won’t need to address your declaration directly to demonic powers for them to take notice. It’s probably just as well that you don’t. You have not been assigned to be a prosecutor of evil powers. You have merely answered the subpoena of heaven to give testimony to Christ in a specific setting on earth. Resist the urge to accuse demonic powers. Don’t be baited into angry, sarcastic comments about the devil. Such invective merely coarsens your own thinking. Speak straightforward gospel truth as if you were under oath in heavenly courts.

All heaven loves to hear testimony about Jesus. Describe what the Father has done for the Son he loves. Declare the love and obedience that Jesus offers to the Father. Announce the wonders of the Spirit. Read Scripture in a proclamatory way. You may be prompted to recount a particular story of Scripture.



Recount your own story of redemption as you pray. Your spoken testimony is an overcoming weapon of astounding power (Rev. 12:11). The weapons Paul refers to in 2 Corinthians 10;3-6 were designed to bring down fortresses that suppressed the knowing of God. Satan masquerades behind speculations and grips people in their own high-minded blindness. Your statement of truth could be part of a mighty event taking place before God in heavenly dimensions, dismantling schemes of deception.

What particular deception has bewildered the people of your city? Whatever the lies may be, declare corresponding truth. You may spare evangelizers hundreds of hours of quarreling with nonbelievers later on.

Restate the biblical declarations that every false god and angelic being will eventually bow in worship to God (Ps. 29:1-2, 97:7; Phil. 2:10-11; Heb. 1:6). Without ridicule or any supposition that you are evangelizing angelic beings, call for their worship and subjugation to the Lord Jesus Christ.



We had been meditating on 1 Corinthians 15 in light of the Easter season while on a prayer journey in Egypt. On Easter morning it dawned on me that Islam denied just about every gospel truth in 1 Corinthians 15:3-11. Islam denies that Jesus died, that Scripture is faithful to speak of Jesus, that there was sin to die for, that he was buried or that he rose from the dead. We went out that day and for many weeks afterward declaring these elementary gospel facts – not to people, but right out into the atmosphere in different neighborhoods.

--Steve Chism, leader of a prayer journey to Egypt Carnesville



Stage Three War: Character Encounter for God

Prayerwalkers often gravitate to praying for Christ and his kingdom rather than against Satan and the evil he incites. The aim of spiritual war is the glorification of Christ. God's primary way of defeating the bragging might of evil is to manifest Christ's character, even in the weakness of those who follow him.

God's basic strategy for spiritual war is not to eradicate evil in order that good might have a chance. Instead, God reveals and empowers his own goodness in people so that evil is overwhelmed. This is why he mandates the risen Messiah to "rule in the midst of Your enemies" (Ps. 110:2, nas revised). God has planned a unique invasion of every community with the resplendent goodness of his Son. Prayerwalkers can diligently pray that Christ's character will eventually expose, weaken and displace evil.

this way of triumph over entrenched wickedness is succinctly stated by Paul, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). The Christian community is to resist the ever-escalating forces of evil that bait us to fight fire with fire (or perhaps "ire with ire"). By seeking peace with all people, Christians can patiently endure ugly hatred and wage war in the mightiest way of all, by leaving "room for the wrath of God: himself (Rom. 12:19).



Later in the same letter, Paul calls believers to become wise in what is good and to become innocent in what is evil (rom. 16:19). Christians emerge triumphant not because of their encyclopedic knowledge of evil beings and their names. God himself does the crushing of Satan – but under the innocent feet of believers. “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (Rom. 16:20). Prayerwalkers easily recall such imagery as they walk their towns. As you walk, fix your heart on what good things God is bringing forth. God will align your steps to defeat sinister schemes of evil.

Engage in character encounter by praying that God would bring forth the fruit of the Spirit which may correspond with the outworkings of the flesh. It won’t be hard to see the corruption described in Galatians 5:19-21 in your town. “the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.”

In the same places you see these things, pray for the corresponding fruits of Galatians 5:22-23 to grow. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” Pray for the fruit of the Spirit as if you were planting its seed in the ground, parting down the soil and watering it with your prayer. Where there is immorality, pray for the fruits of faithfulness and self-control. Where there is strife, pray for the fruits of kindness and gentleness. Where there is the depression of drunkenness, pray for the fruits of joy and patience.

Cultivate the spiritual soil of your city by praying for healing of relationships of every kind. Reconciliation suspends Satan’s efforts to stir up septic sin which may lie below the surface of everyday life in your city. Restoration amidst families and friendships provides an environment of clean potency for God’s character to mature and multiply.

Stage Four War: Prayer Encounter Against God's Enemies

Spiritual combat according to the first three stages may be sufficient for most Prayerwalking encounters. Sometimes, however, God gives believers a specific duty of voicing direct challenge to heavenly powers. Opinions vary at this point. There are strong feelings by some that demons need a good verbal drubbing to take their eviction notices seriously. Others feel that a Christian who speaks a single unprovoked word to a demon is dangerously reviling high angelic majesties (2 Pet. 2:10-12). There is obviously middle ground, and it is likely that the issue boils down to timing and authority.

Many people's discernment outstrips their authorization from God. You might indeed accurately sense strongholds or demonic assignments or even names of principalities. Your perception does not necessarily constitute a commission for action. Knowing the mind of God is more important than discerning the schemes of evil. Has God authorized the ousting of demons from a territory or household? It may take but a moment or it might take days to be confident of understanding the Lord's will. No matter how long it takes, seek God first for guidance before directly engaging the enemy in spiritual combat, especially when contesting spiritual influence over specific terrain. Be ready to sense that God may have plans other than direct confrontation.





Timing may be a significant issue in connection with restraining the enemy. Jesus never spoke of binding the enemy without mentioning the loosing, or rescue, of people (Matt. 12:29, 16:19, 18:18; Luke 11:20-26). God may indicate that you wait so that your insight regarding evil can serve the work of many. Perhaps by waiting for God's timing several churches might band together to be not only more effective in suppressing evil but to follow through with a solid plan to free people and establish righteousness. Envisage your prayer as having an incapacitating effect on powers of darkness, long enough to fruitfully proclaim the gospel. You may want to precede your prayer with fasting. Anticipating the results of your prayer, you may want to prepare for the harvest. Either way, urgency does not always mean haste.

Compared with the huge backlog of experience Christians have gained in delivering individuals from demonic oppression, most Christian leaders admit that we know relatively little about dealing with territorial spirits, whatever they may be. Exorcism routines that are suitable for dealing with demonized individuals are not necessarily appropriate when dealing with neighborhoods or territories.

We can safely assume that each case will be unique, requiring express authorization as well as clear instructions as to what to say and what to do. Those who feel that they have contended successfully with territorial forces rarely resort to what we have called "stage four" war of direct encounter. Other more indirect avenues of confrontation usually suffice. Those who claim to have been effective in speaking against angelic majesties residing in assigned territories rarely boast about it. If they tell of the encounter, they usually report of giving a simple word of restraint. The actual statement is usually quite brief and authoritative, often with some kind of symbolic gesture.



Some have suggested that the wind and the waves that were blocking Jesus' entry into a new region were energized by territorial powers assigned to the area. Jesus' word to the weather – and the forces presumably behind it – displays the brevity and faith required in this kind of spiritual war: "Hush, be still" (mark 4:35-41).

Having waged and won this struggle, he went on to a further encounter with a throng of embodied spirits more determined to stay in the country than they were in the oppressed man (Mark 4;1-20), especially v. 10). Still Jesus did not invade the area with unassailable power. He left rejected by most, received by few and yet praise among all (Mark 5:17-20)

I believe our task in spiritual war is to neutralize the "tractor beam" hold these territorial strong men have had over the minds and spirits of the people who have welcomed them to dominate them. We are asking here for the grace of God to be shed abroad. These people [in the least-evangelized areas of the world] are deceived because they chose to be deceived. Romans 1 [vv. 18-23] tells us this clearly. It's not that they didn't have truth; they elected to suppress truth in unrighteousness; they chose to believe a lie. And the enemy met them at this point of contact, animating religious systems which came to life, supernaturally glued together. And [these religious systems] became a powerful, deceiving shell. We're not asking God to make them Christians. God doesn't force anybody to be a Christian. We're asking God to give these people something they don't deserve – a second chance to process truth. We're asking God through intercessory prayer to break the enchantment over these people – to level the playing field so that when evangelists come in behind the intercessors, there will inevitably be a harvest of some magnitude.

-George Otis Jr., among the first in recent times to enter Mongolia at a time when there were no known Christians. Many others joined in the effort before and after George, but there are now thousands of Mongolian believers in churches which are growing at a brisk pace. George has done on-site prayer in some of the least-evangelized countries in Asia and the Middle East.

When we first went to [a country in North Africa], there was not a single believer in the entire country. We were the only Protestant missionaries. When I first stepped into the country, I felt as if I had walked into a brick wall. During the first year, we didn't see a single Muslim person come to Christ. We thought, Even if we keep this up for twenty years, this will not plant a church.

A year after we entered the country, we began to do what we call "Jericho marches." We would fast all day, sometimes two or three days. Then at night, for security reasons, we would walk the entire circumference of the city, praising the Lord, praying over the city, claiming the city for Christ, trying to bind the demons over that city and over the country as a whole. We did this around every major city in the whole country.

On our third Jericho march in a certain city, I remember around 1:00A.M. I felt clearly led by the Holy Spirit to pray about the evil powers over the city. In fact, I sensed he was giving us a specific authority to address the prince of this country. I said, "Prince of this country, I rebuke you. I bind you. I cast you out." I said all of those things you've probably heard said before. When I did, my wife and I both sensed that something cracked and broke in the heavenly realms. Actually, it was a vision of Satan's power stretched over the country like a geodesic dome. This dome cracked and was shaken, and there was room for light to come pouring in. It was during the week following that we saw the first local person come to Christ. And we have seen people come to Christ fairly steadily ever since at the rate of about one every two months.

Does this mean I have eradicated the principalities over the country? A month later we sensed demonic resistance building up again. The way I put it together is that we should be sure that we are being led by the Holy Spirit to speak against evil. I've come to say, "I bind you and cast you into the abyss," when there won't be dark powers over the territory anymore. Not so. The struggle goes on. I think we have substantial progress, but they [evil] spiritual powers] aren't going to be obliterated until Jesus comes back.

--Joshua Brinkley, a missionary to a country in North Africa

3. The Welcome Dimension: Contact Prayer

By contact prayer we mean occasions of praying directly for people in their presence. This dimension of on-site prayer is not often connected with engendering a welcome for Christ in a community.

Jesus prayed for people directly. He often prayed for people who approached him (Luke 5:12-15, 7:2-10, 17:12-19). At times he initiated conversations which turned to prayer (Luke 7:11-15, 13:12-13).

1. Open relationships. Of course, follow the leading of God in knowing who to pray for and when. Spontaneous hunches move most prayerwalkers, although some churches have attempted to pray with someone from every household in a neighborhood in a systematic way.

We felt that the leading of the Lord was to do the entire area and not to leave anyone out. I just feel that everyone needs an equal opportunity to receive a Bible and to be prayed for. By walking the land literally, the entire area has been covered by praying Christians and we believe that there's a work done in preparation for the further work of God.

--Caroline Erickson, member of Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California. She and her husband, Larry, help organize the church's citywide Prayerwalking program called Operation Saturation.

When you encounter someone, you would like to pray for, start with a simple introduction. Explain something of who you are and what you are doing. You'll get trapped into preaching small sermons if you attempt long explanations of your motives. Be content to be somewhat misunderstood. Don't ever imply that your motives spring from observing the troubled condition of the neighborhood.

Be unapologetic about your willingness to pray. If you obey standard social sensitivities, you will not intrude at inappropriate times. Converse with easy, authentic graciousness.

You don't need to ascertain whether someone is a Christian or not in order to pray for them. Christians usually speak up about their faith. Make only light inquiries about their needs.

2. Get permission to pray. By asking something such as, "Is there any concern about which we can pray for you in Jesus' name?", you can gain permission and discover one or two topics of prayer. It's quite rare that people refuse such gentle offers to pray.

We walk up to people and say, "We're Christians, and we're walking through the neighborhood and asking God to bless you. We wanted to know if there was anything specific, we could pray for you today" Generally nine times out of ten they'll say they want us to pray for a certain situation. One guy's father died, and he knew his mother was suffering. So, he asked us to pray for his mother. We prayed for his mother, but we also prayed for him that he would know how to minister to his mother, how to say the right things to his mother, show her love and support. Then we ask them if we can lay hands on them. We might say, "Do you mind if we touch you while we pray for you, because if Jesus were here, he would be touching you. In fact, He is here. He sent us here today to assure you he's for you and not against you. He's reaching out to you now." Then we pray simple prayers. They love it. We have never had anybody say, "get your hands off me, Don't touch me. Who are you?" Never.

--Maury Millican, associate pastor at Mission Hills Church in Austin, Texas. He sometimes walks through apartment complexes with a partner, asking people if he can pray for them.

3. Pray to the point. In particular, remember that you are providing a prayer model for some who may have no other contact with believers. Use a style that's easily understood and imitated after you are gone. Stifle the habit of preaching rambling messages within prayers. Don't give sermons before or after your prayer. Surprise people by simply praying.

Stay available. Find ways to follow the results of your prayer. For example, offer to pray again or further. Writing down what you prayed and for whom is a way of demonstrating that you really believe God heard your prayer. Your prayer can become a topic of conversation for years to come.

You don't need to be reminded of who this is [referring to a picture of Jesus accompanying this message], but it is in his name that we are praying for you this week. Please feel free to display this picture in a prominent place in your home to remind you of our prayers.

--Message left at houses in Wigan, England, by St. Nathaniel's Anglican Church. The notes come attached to a picture of Jesus dying on the cross and are brought to houses that have been prayed for during prayerwalks and in other prayer gatherings. Members of his congregation later distribute another leaflet inviting the people to submit prayer requests or to request prayer inside their own homes. After doing this for four years, Brian Gregory, the parish minister, reports that Prayerwalking has become as much a characteristic of community life as the beat policeman. Many people have joined the church, in part because of friendships begun by receiving prayer from Prayerwalking parishioners.

Contact prayer is best done as a component of the service a church offers to its own community. This leaves you free from the pressure to turn the simple prayer event into an evangelism episode or a counseling session. Other times of interaction will follow. Contact prayer can either seize God's timing or sow seeds for later harvesting. Learn how to know God's timing. It is not necessary to load contact prayer events with involved testimony or standard evangelism techniques. As God answers prayer you will find abundant opportunity to explain the gospel.

Ed Silvoso of Harvest Evangelism in Argentina trains people to pray for their neighbors by writing their requests in a book, leaving a space to record answers. The person receiving prayer is asked to report any answer to prayer to the intercessor so that the request can be registered as being answered. Any unanswered requests on the list serve as an ongoing reminder for prayer. Reporting back to the intercessor becomes a wonderful occasion to celebrate God's goodness and to tell more about his love.