

The Breakthrough  
**INTERCESSOR**  
Fall/Winter 2024

# *Lying In A Manger*

The Magazine About Prayer

*“And she gave birth to her firstborn son  
and wrapped him in swaddling clothes  
and laid him in a manger, because there  
was no place for them in the inn.”*

*Luke 2:7 ESV*





The Breakthrough  
**INTERCESSOR**

**FALL/WINTER  
2024**

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Our Mission...  
Bringing together anonymously those needing prayer and Christians  
willing to pray for them; calling, equipping and encouraging people  
for this work.

# OUR MISSION

Breakthrough Intercessory Prayer Ministry is here for anyone who wants prayer. Prayer requests may be sent to us by mail, phone, email, fax, or through our website. Your prayer request is sent anonymously to six of our nearly 4,000 intercessors around the world who agree to pray for 21 days for each request they receive. (Prayer requests are identified by first name only, and are never sent to intercessors in the same geographic location as the prayer requester.) You will have your own prayer team of dedicated intercessors holding your needs up before the Lord.

People often report an increased sense of peace during the prayer period. As you read this magazine, you will learn about many prayers that have been answered.

Catherine Marshall was given the inspiration for Breakthrough over 40 years ago. She was a best-selling Christian author who became concerned about the many prayer requests sent to her by her readers. At the same time, other readers were writing to tell her that they longed to be used by God but had no idea what they could do.

God gave Catherine the vision of matching these two groups of people: those with prayer needs and those Christians who wanted to be part of a ministry. Thus Catherine and her husband, Leonard LeSourd, began the Breakthrough ministry.

The 21-day prayer period was chosen based on the story in Daniel 10. Daniel prayed for three weeks before the angel of the Lord was able to come and help him. The angel had been detained by spiritual forces from the first day of Daniel's prayer. Our intercessors may receive scriptural insights from God for the prayer requester. Those messages, in the form of Scripture verses, are sent to the office and then forwarded to the person requesting prayer. In turn, prayer requesters send their answers to prayer to the staff, which are then forwarded to the intercessors as encouragement for their faithfulness in praying.

**We want to hear from you.** Pray about becoming one of our intercessors. It is a small expenditure of time compared to how greatly it will impact your life and change the lives of others. As you read this magazine, think of your own stories of answered prayer that you would like to share. Our editorial committee will consider them for publication in *The Breakthrough Intercessor*. Remember also to send us your prayer requests. It is our privilege and joy to pray for you.



Breakthrough's financial statement is available upon your written request to  
The Office of Charitable and Regulatory Programs,  
P.O. Box 526, Richmond, VA 23218





## Never, Ever Give Up

*“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” I Corinthians 15:58 ESV*

The reality of life is that it will be hard. Not only is it hard, but at times it seems unfair, especially when we see evil prevail. And the questions of the ages are: “God, when will You deal with this? Why is the enemy winning?” One of our children was especially keen on fairness. After hearing the “That’s not fair” refrain one too many times, I responded, “You’re right. Life is not fair, and it’s going to get worse.”

It was not a comforting response, but it is true. As a result, we can grow weary. We can be tempted to give up our faith, or at least lose our zeal to serve the Lord.

The “therefore” in the passage above was Paul’s response to the concern of the people as to their fate after death. They had certainly heard of the promised resurrection, but where was Jesus and his promised return to take his saints to heaven? To bolster their faith, Paul explained clearly how it all was going to end one day.

Then, he told them what they should be doing while in the slow process of dying, while waiting to meet the Lord in the air or following physical death. Of course, his words apply to us to be steadfast, not movable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Then the great promise is that if we remain faithful, our Lord’s work would not be in vain.

This promise should prompt us to remain zealous in producing good works for the Lord. There are many works of the Lord, but one we can lose sight of is PRAYER. Intercessory prayer is a work of the Lord.

What are the prerequisites for fruitful prayers? To be steadfast is to be strong, firm, and unrelenting in our faith in Jesus Christ and his promises, no matter how dark it looks. To be immovable has a similar meaning as steadfast, but expresses an even stronger will to resist the world, sin, and the devil. To be abounding is to be excited while working for the Lord. We heard the expression that something is a labor of love. Prayer is a labor of love. If not, we can ask the Lord to give us that excitement.

The promise that our work in the Lord will NEVER be in vain requires faith: the same faith we have in the resurrection. But some insist their prayers have never been answered. Prayers for healing before someone dies or prayers for our children's salvation without any change for the better cause us to question and doubt.

But God does not lie, and He says our prayers will NEVER be in vain. God is answering. We may even die feeling like our prayers have not been answered, but the Bible says that not only will God answer, but our prayers will be productive, which is the opposite of vanity.

My brothers and sisters, let us never give up, especially in our intercessory prayer life. The folks that are asking us to pray are at their wits' end and ready to give up. God has promised our prayers on their behalf will produce results. We may never see it, but we don't walk by sight but by faith.

Thanks for being faithful in praying and giving to Breakthrough. Lord willing, we will continue this ministry till Jesus comes back. It's only through your prayers and financial support that we are able to achieve our mission of making answered prayer possible for the many.

God Bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Michael Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "S" at the end.

**J. Michael Smith, Esq**  
Chairman of the Board

## When I Pray

BY JEWELL JOHNSON

*"Devote yourself to prayer."  
Colossians 4:2 NIV*

*When I pray,  
My load is lighter,  
The way smoother,  
The day cheerier,  
The pain more bearable.*

*When I pray,  
I am stronger,  
My mind more peaceful,  
My joy greater,  
The task easier.*

*When I pray,  
Jesus seems nearer,  
The Bible more precious,  
The will of God clearer—  
I enter His rest.*



## The Comforter

BY JEWELL JOHNSON

*"He will give you  
another Counselor."  
John 14:16 NIV*

I do not walk this path alone.  
When Jesus went away,  
He sent the Comforter  
To soothe my wounds  
and hurts,  
To help me overcome.

I do not walk this path alone.  
When Jesus went to heaven,  
He sent His Counselor,  
So I would have the  
mind of Christ,  
And do the will of God.

I do not walk this path alone.  
When Jesus  
ascended up on high,  
He sent the Holy Spirit  
To lead me into truth—  
To abide with me forever.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jewell Johnson lives in Arizona and is mother to six children and grandmother to nine. Besides writing, she enjoys reading, playing the piano, and quilting.





# An Honest Crook

BY ROY BORGES

I'd just paid for a couple bags of corn chips at the canteen at Mayo Correctional Institution, the prison where I was doing time for a first-degree robbery I committed 18 years ago.

On the way back to my dormitory, I noticed the canteen operator had given me three bags of chips, even though I'd only ordered and paid for two. It would have been easy to keep the additional bag; no one would have ever known. But I went back and returned it.

Three officers were standing in front of the canteen when I walked up to the window and said, "You gave me one bag too many."

"An honest crook," one of the officers chortled—and he didn't mean it as a compliment.

Although the bag of chips wasn't expensive, God wants me to be honest, even in the little things. An honest crook may be an oxymoron, but honesty is always God's policy.

The apostle Paul wrote, "Live such good lives...that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God" (1 Pet. 2:12 NIV).

A dishonest life is what led me to spend many years behind razor wire fences. I received a long sentence in 1990 for stealing a pair of jeans. It turned into a first degree robbery; a

little thing became a big thing because a bad decision led to a worse decision.

But I chose not to be chained to the past. Instead, I lived by the advice of the former Secretary of State Colin Powell, who once said he chose to “focus on the windshield and not on the rearview mirror of life.” Or, as the apostle Paul put it, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Cor. 5:17). Those simple words describe the change God made in my life. I once saw myself through my sins and mistakes, but now I see myself as a child of God.

No matter who we’ve been or what we’ve done in our past, when we trust Jesus for our salvation and receive the forgiveness offered through His cross, we become someone new.

Jesus liberates us from sin and its dominating power and restores us into a new relationship with God—where we’re free to no longer live for ourselves but for Him. His transforming love compels us to live with new identity and purpose. It helps us point others to our Savior, the One who can make them new people too.

Returning a bag of chips may not seem like a big deal, but for me, being honest with a little thing has set in motion opportunities to make other good choices.

Some people will always consider an inmate as a crook, but regrets of yesterday vanish when God’s grace pardons. His forgiveness keeps no accounts of past sins, no matter how grievous they have been. “If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?” (Psalm 130:3).



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After over 30 years in prison, Roy’s prayers were answered, and he was released in 2021. “God got me out of prison so I could be used out here. I am writing stories and articles. I plan to go to many churches and tell them about the things He did for me in prison and what He is doing now.”

Thank  
you for  
your  
support!

**Q:** How can Breakthrough maintain a network of nearly 4,000 intercessors who pray faithfully and individually for each request they receive?

**A:** Only through your support!

Ways  
to  
Give

### **Gifts of Stock**

Maximize tax-deductible contributions by making a charitable stock donation with an account you have owned for at least one year. You won't pay capital gains tax and will receive an income tax deduction for the asset's full fair market value.

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Consider leaving Breakthrough a gift in your will to ensure that our ministry can continue calling, equipping, and encouraging people in the work of faithful intercession.

Include the following wording: "I give, devise, and bequeath to Breakthrough, Inc., tax identification number 23-7423474, P.O. Box 121, Lincoln, Virginia 20160 (insert amount, percentage, or nature of gift, or remainder of estate) to be used for its ministry purposes."



# MEMORIAL

*Theresa Newell and Family  
in memory of*

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# ADMIRAL BRUCE NEWELL

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*"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.' And he who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.'"*  
*-Revelation 21:3-5a ESV*



# *No More Tears*

BY ROY BORGES

Every Saturday morning for over 30 years, I called my mother from a prison phone. One morning stands out because Mom was very upset. Her dog of sixteen years had died. In a picture I have of Mom with her dog, you can see her love for this dog in her eyes.

We spent all of our time talking about her dog and the wonderful things she remembered about him. He was a faithful friend. She was glad he did not suffer. He died in his sleep. She was going to miss him. I let her reminisce about him the whole time. They were going to bury him in my nephew's backyard. She sounded sad, and I felt her pain.

I wanted to hold her tightly and comfort her, but I only had words to offer her.

"Don't cry, Mom," I said. "I love you, and although I can't be with you right now, one day we will be together forever. Don't cry."

Will pets go to heaven? I guess we will have to wait until we get there to find out. I do believe, however, that the loss of someone is greater when you don't know if you will ever see them again.

Mom turned 85 this February. From the age of 40 she has battled diabetes, and I dread losing her one day. But I am confident that we will be together one day. My faith tells me we will be reunited in heaven, because we both know Jesus. In First Thessalonians 4:16-18, the apostle Paul assured the Thessalonians that we will all live with Christ in heaven forever.

Because Jesus came back to life, so will all believers. All Christians, including those living when Christ returns, will live with Him forever. We need not despair, therefore, when a loved one dies or circumstances turn tragic. God will turn our tragedies to triumphs, our poverty to riches, our pain to glory, and our defeat to victory. All believers throughout history will stand united in God's very presence safe and secure. My home is not in this world. I have the blessed assurance that one day, all who claim the name of Jesus will go to a place where "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:4 NIV).

On the phone that day, I comforted and reassured my mother with this great hope. No more crying over the loss of a faithful dog or crying for a son who calls every Saturday morning from a Florida prison—no more tears. Mom!



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After over 30 years in prison, Roy's prayers were answered, and he was released in 2021. "God got me out of prison so I could be used out here. I am writing stories and articles. I plan to go to many churches and tell them about the things He did for me in prison and what He is doing now."



# *Are you a writer?*

The Intercessor welcomes submissions!

## Guidelines:

1. Articles should be 500-1,000 words.
2. Poems should be at least 12 lines.
3. Topics must focus on prayer: an experience or teaching supported in Scripture.
4. Authors give Breakthrough permission to edit material for length and content.



Has God taught you  
about prayer?  
Do you want to share  
your story of  
answered prayer?  
Do you write poetry  
about prayer?

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# Joseph Waited

BY JEWELL JOHNSON

**N**o one likes to wait. We suffer through supermarket lines. Waiting rooms bore us. We are people on the move—“now” people. We do not like to stand still.

Yet stalemate times come to all. A sickness lingers, a negative circumstance does not change, the mountain does not move, the tide does not diminish. The time between the prayer and the answer stretches on and on.

Joseph had an experience like that. While in prison he interpreted the dreams of two of Pharaoh’s chief servants, the butler and the baker; and it happened just as Joseph predicted. Before the men left prison, Joseph asked the butler, “Please remember me when you see Pharaoh.”

But the butler forgot.

So Joseph waited. For two full years he waited.

What did Joseph do while waiting? What did he think about? Did he grieve over the delay? Did he wallow in self-pity? Did he nurse a grudge against the butler?

Or did he seethe with bitterness against Potiphar’s wife? “She’s the reason I’m here,” he could have reasoned.

Did hatred for his brothers fill his waking moments? After all, their insane jealousy had started this whole downward spiral.

Or did he lay on his cot at night, shaking his fist at the darkness and blaming God?

Joseph took a different route, by-passing grudges, bitterness, and frustration, so after two years, when he stood before Pharaoh, he could say, “God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires” (Genesis 41:16 NIV).

How could anyone come through an ordeal of such magnitude with a peerless spirit? “Joseph,” we ask, “how did you do it?”

More importantly, how do we treat our waiting periods? What do we do when heaven is silent and prayers go unanswered? The attitudes and actions we assume as we wait are important. They may influence the outcome.

**Let go!** Completely release the problem to God. Easy to do? No, but it’s worth trying once, twice—a hundred times, if necessary—until the problem is no longer yours, but God’s.

“Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this” (Psalm 37:5). *Commit* means “to consign to another.” It does not mean we stop praying about the situation. It does mean we say, “Work this out in Your own way, Lord—in Your own time.”

Joseph must have learned this secret, for he seemed to move through each new prison day free of frustration, filled with godly confidence.

**Use God’s special helps: the Bible, the church, and Christian friends.** A friend confided she stopped attending church when her teenage children had problems, but another mother took the opposite approach. She remained faithful to her church during a family crisis. When she attended, she reminded the group to pray for her sons. She received spiritual and emotional support, and eventually the difficulties were resolved.

Consistent Bible study, faithful church attendance, and uplifting Christian fellowship form an impregnable triangle that can take you through the waiting times in triumph.

**Keep busy!** Joseph did. Soon after his confinement began, the warden committed to him the responsibility of the entire prison populace. Faithfully he performed menial tasks, doing what he could where he was.

Others, too, have found that activity served a useful purpose as they waited. The apostle Paul wrote letters to Christians while waiting in Roman chains. John Bunyan authored *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in a dreary prison cell. Memorizing Scripture verses and hymns have proved to be a beneficial activity to other “waiting” believers.

**Become involved in the lives of others.** As trying situations weave about us, they tend to blind us to the needs of others. We isolate ourselves to our own circumstances and seem paralyzed, unable to reach out. Joseph overcame this hurdle, too.

One morning while attending to the butler and baker, he was struck by their dejected look.

“Why do you look so sad today?” Joseph asked. He listened to their strange dreams. Forgetting his own painful dilemma, he became involved in the tangled web that surrounded their lives.

Joseph’s waiting time eventually ended. After two years, the butler’s mind was jogged, Joseph was released, and he was ultimately elevated to vice presidency of Egypt.

Your waiting time, like his, has boundaries; it will end. David said, “I



waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry” (Psalm 40:1).

Be assured: release is on the way!



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jewell Johnson lives in Arizona and is mother to six children and grandmother to nine. Besides writing, she enjoys reading, playing the piano, and quilting.



# Will Being Successful Keep You from Going to Heaven?

BY DAVID SOWARDS

**D**id Jesus dislike rich people? In many of his teachings, the wealthy were not heroes. In his story of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man is sent to hell largely because he is rich, and he begs to be given the chance to save his brothers from the same fate (Luke 16:19-30).

Of course, we have heard the quote, "[I]t is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:25 NIV). While there may be exceptions in this case for really large needles or really small camels, the message that Jesus seems to be giving us is that since you can't take it with you, you should give it all away before you go.

According to His word, giving generously was even more important than the amount given. When a poor woman gave two copper coins to the temple treasury, Jesus praised her more than He did the wealthy donors who gave more, saying, "I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on" (Mark 12:43-44). Clearly, He had the most admiration for those who gave till it hurt over those who were giving from their surpluses.

In other teachings, Jesus said that dedication to the word of God was more important than being successful. He said that some people hear "the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22).

In other lessons, he asks people to make great sacrifices for their faith. "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart

will be also" (Luke 12:33-34). While selling everything that we have and giving all of the money to the poor is not a feasible option for most people with families to support, Jesus believed that people should seek wealth in the form of spiritual obedience rather than in worldly possessions.

In the end, we know that Jesus did not hate rich people or anyone else. In fact, he loves everyone. He did disagree with some people and he did not hesitate to say so. His rules are very simple: obedience is not easy, and one's heart posture before God is all that truly matters.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Sowards is a published novelist and freelance writer who sings with the adult choir at a Fort Wayne Church. He is the author of the religious-themed allegory, "The Land of Dreams," available at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)





# The Importance of Importunity

BY CONNIE WILLIAMS

Jesus gives us the ultimate tutorial on prayer in Luke 11:1-13. Many of us have studied it at length, particularly verses 1-4 regarding the Lord's prayer. Similarly, verses 9-10 are highly familiar, where we are told to ask, seek, and knock. Tucked in the middle are verses 5-8: "And he said unto them, which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth" (KJV).

Yes, the story conveys the idea of persistence, but the passion of the persistence is lost, especially in the King James Version with the unfamiliarity of the word importunity. To be importune is to harass someone persistently, even to the point of annoyance. To beg, entreat, implore with annoying persistence to try to break down resistance. To make repeated, forceful requests for something. The dictionary example given is that



of a reporter insistently asking questions, demanding a response.

That visual almost seems disrespectful, yet Jesus himself describes it when asked here by his disciples how to pray. It must hold some importance if he found it worth mentioning. It is interesting in this example that the seeker is not a stranger to the one with the provision, but a friend. That implies that a relational standing alone is not always enough for answered prayer. There were obstacles to overcome. The timing was inconvenient, at midnight, and others were involved, as his children were in bed and would be disturbed. The initial answer was no. Jesus says that while a one-time ask, even from a friend, would not be enough to open the door, the importunity of repeated, forceful asking would motivate the friend to act. The door would be opened, and he would give him as much as he needed or, in other words, as much as he was requesting.

It's not coincidental that this instruction in prayer follows the illustration of the Lord's prayer, where we are reverencing the Lord and seeking the fulfillment of His will on the earth. It would be disrespectful to simply make our demands without that balance. It is clear, however, from Jesus' own words that there are times when importunity is desired, and we should approach prayer with this "won't take no for an answer" determination. We aren't always aware of the obstacles in the way or the activity going on in the spirit realm. Daniel 10:12-17 reinforces this principle, as Daniel's prayers were heard the first day but warfare continued for 21 days. In 1 Kings 18, Elijah prayed fervently seven times before any results were "seen."

It is also not coincidental that he shared this story immediately before his instructions to ask, seek and knock, implying that our asking should not be casual and half-hearted but with passionate persistence. With the verse 8 attitude of importunity, we then follow verses 9 and 10. We ask until we receive, seek until we find, and knock—until the doors open.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Connie Williams is a wife and mother of three currently residing in West Virginia. She has written for *LIVE*, *The Gem*, *Purpose*, *Evangel*, *The Vision*, and other publications. She has authored a book entitled *Journeys*. She is an avid reader whose quest is to do what Wordsworth eloquently stated: "to fill your paper with the breathings of your heart."

# What Can Grandparents Do?

BY JEWELL JOHNSON



“Mom? Janet and I are getting a divorce.” The voice on the phone paused.

“No...no!” I shouted at our son. “Something must be done.”

My husband and I had sensed for some time that our son and daughter-in-law were having marital problems, yet we were not prepared for this news.

Although we lived 800 miles from our son and his family, we immediately flew to their city to try to help reconcile the couple. Our efforts were unsuccessful. Our hearts especially grieved for our grandchildren. *What will become of 4-year-old Lisa, and Blaine, age 2?*

## ***Supporting Our Grandchildren***

Through the next tumultuous years we attempted to support our grandchildren; we sent them gifts and cards for their birthdays and at Christmas. We frequently called them. But it proved to be an almost impossible task. Miles separated us and we were saddened, when for a time our son, angry because of the chaos he had created, would not allow us to speak to the children.

For Lisa and Blaine, the home had failed. I hoped our son and his ex-wife, would involve the children in the programs the church offered. This did not happen. As Lisa and Blaine were tossed from one parent to the other, church attendance was not one of the mom and dad’s priorities.

## ***Prayer: Our Only Recourse***

In our struggle to know how to help, we realized our only recourse was prayer; we could pray for our grandchildren. We placed the children’s pictures in a prominent place to remind us to pray for them daily. Among the requests we made, one prayer surfaced repeatedly: “God, place caring people around Lisa and Blaine, people willing to step forward to serve as their mentors.”

## *A Haven for Lisa*

Now, years later, we recognize how God answered that prayer. In junior high our granddaughter's French teacher, sensing Lisa's unstable home situation, took a special interest in her. The teacher asked her to help grade papers after school and took Lisa to lunch for special occasions. The parents continued to fight, court cases ensued, but God created a haven for Lisa in a classroom at school. Our prayers were answered as the teacher served as a mentor and friend to our granddaughter.

## *A Mentor for Blaine*

When our grandson was in sixth grade, a friend invited Blaine to a Christian club that met before school. The friend's father picked up Blaine and took the boys to the meeting. The leader of the club led the students in a Bible study.

One evening we received a call. "Grandma, guess what happened to me today?"

"What is it?" I said.

"I asked Jesus into my heart." Blaine went on to tell me how the leader of the club had extended an invitation to the young people to accept Christ as their Savior. Our grandson had responded.

We now enjoy a good relationship with our grandchildren, who are well-adjusted Christian teenagers. Their father, with whom they live, attends church with his children. Lisa and Blaine see their mother frequently.

## *Willing Servants*

When the door closed for us to have a positive influence upon our grandchildren, when their home was in disarray, we prayed and our prayers were answered. Over the years, God found willing servants—Christian mentors—who stepped alongside two bewildered children, giving them stability, helping guide them into faith in Christ.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jewell Johnson lives in Arizona and is mother to six children and grandmother to nine. Besides writing, she enjoys reading, playing the piano, and quilting.





# *All the Way to Heaven:* A Book Review

By Dr. Theresa Newell

After reading Claudette Ammons' lovely tribute and memory of Elizabeth Sherrill in *The Breakthrough Intercessor*, I retrieved the copy of her autobiography, *All the Way to Heaven*, from my downstairs bookshelf and re-read it. Tib, or "Tibby" as we knew and loved Elizabeth, was a woman brilliant beyond measure, with a quiet, kind demeanor. I had forgotten that Tib had inscribed the book to my husband Bruce "with love" in her distinctive artistic penmanship. I had seen that writing in manuscripts of Catherine Marshall's when Tib had carefully edited page after page in that same clearly hand-written font of hers.

Memories of the early days of the formation of Breakthrough Prayer Ministry and the many board meetings we shared at the Lincoln, Virginia, headquarters and occasionally at a retreat center near Boynton Beach, Florida, came back to me as I read her story. John and Elizabeth Sherrill had been long time friends, colleagues at *Guidепosts* magazine and neighbors of Len LeSourd and Catherine Marshall in Chappaqua, New York. I was blessedly astounded at God's good plan to bring me into such company when in the mid-80s I became an assistant to Mr. LeSourd and then Director of Breakthrough.

*All the Way to Heaven* is an insight into Tib's personal spiritual search—from Unitarian family background to writing the testimonies of contemporary saints such as David Wilkerson, Corrie ten Boom, and Brother Andrew. Tib wrote of herself as an introvert, who was much happier with books, a desk, and a typewriter than with crowds of people. I imagine Tib herself may have been a bit surprised that she found the motivation to write

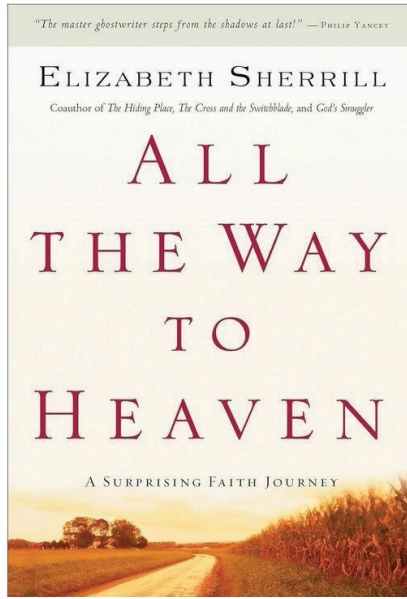


her own story after telling others' so well.

Elizabeth Sherrill was a master wordsmith with a genius for painting scenes with such details that the reader is brought into each scene she pens—one hears the conversations she reports as if one is simply eavesdropping from across the room. The short sections about how she and her husband John ventured around the world, interviewing and writing the tales of both ordinary and not-so-ordinary folks are woven in with personal challenges, family history, and her early bouts of depression. Her transparency and vulnerability in the telling comes from a humble, honest heart—which touches the reader's heart at every turn of the page.

"How do we think about heaven?" she asks. Her exploration leads her to understand that heaven was always with her—before her meeting with Jesus, during the walk with Him and up to the final moments when she left this earth. "We are . . . heirs through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom" she quoted from the *Book of Common Prayer* which she loved, realizing that the liturgy of that book spoke to her spirit as a former Shakespeare literature major in college. You see, she says, He was always there, always "the way to heaven."

I join Claudette in encouraging you to get a copy, read, and be blessed.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Theresa Newell served as assistant to Len LeSourd (1986-89) and was called as first Breakthrough director in 1989. She and her husband Bruce served on the Breakthrough Board (Bruce was Chairman in the 1990s). Theresa has a Masters in Biblical Studies and a Doctor of Ministry in Missions. She has worked in Jewish missions for 40 years and leads Bible study tours to Israel each year.

# Two Unforgettable Days

BY ROY BORGES

In my 75 years of life on this earth, God has been so good to me. He has done so many things for me that only He could do. But two unforgettable things He has done I will treasure forever. They were days that made my faith in Him stronger than I ever could have imagined.

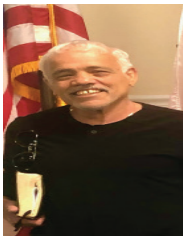
The first one happened on Christmas Eve in 1989 at the Dade County Jail, when I was arrested for robbery. After I was put in an overcrowded cell, an officer opened the cell door and yelled, “Chapel services!” I went just to get out of the overcrowded jail cell.

At the chapel service held at the auditorium, an ex-inmate came back to tell us how good God has been to him. He told us that he now had a beautiful wife and two lovable children. He talked about God’s goodness, and he touched my heart with his words.

When he asked us to come to the altar to accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, I went unashamedly, with tears running down from my eyes like a waterfall. It was a day I have never forgotten, and nothing has been the same since. Christ came into my heart and changed me. I began to write stories and articles about the things God was teaching me. They were published all over the country and the world. Today I have a book with 101 short stories written from my prison cell that God is using to bring others to Him.

The second unforgettable day that I will never forget happened on August 27, 2022. It was the day I married the joy of my life, Patty. It happened at Landmark Baptist Church. God sent her to me to spend the rest of my life with her. Nothing could have made me happier, and together we will tell everyone about the goodness of God.

One thing I know for sure is that the second unforgettable day could not have happened without the first. People who die with their life of sin unforgiven separate themselves eternally from God. God wants them to live with Him forever, but He cannot take them into His holy presence unless their sin is removed. The most important issue in this life is our eternal destiny. Only through faith in Christ can we have eternal life. The Lord can save you if you turn to Him.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After over 30 years in prison, Roy’s prayers were answered, and he was released in 2021. “God got me out of prison so I could be used out here. I am writing stories and articles. I plan to go to many churches and tell them about the things He did for me in prison and what He is doing now.”

# Come Rest Awhile

BY PETER CALIGIURI

*“Then Jesus said, ‘Let’s go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.’”  
Mark 6:31 NLT*

Come rest awhile from worry through the night,  
From old regrets, and every hidden doubt,  
From troubled minds where worries stalk about.  
Come rest with Me where burdens become light.

Resting in faith that sees beyond our sight,  
We rest in Christ from others’ expectations,  
A rest not based upon our own foundations,  
But on promises unchangeable and bright.

When in the storms that we are going through,  
We pray, and think that maybe God’s asleep.  
He asks, “Where is your faith? For I will surely keep  
All who rest, as you have seen Me do.”



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter and his wife Nancy have been married for 50 years and have two sons, six lively grandsons, and one wonderful granddaughter. He loves to serve in nursing home ministry and write devotionals, poetry, and songs.



God has healed  
my pastor and his  
wife. Thank you!  
-Anonymous

I sent in a request for my son,  
Paul, last week. He had a stroke  
and was having  
trouble swallowing food. He had  
to eat soup and liquids. When he  
went for a checkup a few months  
ago, the doctor told him he was  
free to drive again and go back to  
work. He is retired and has a part-  
time job. Thanks to everyone for  
praying!  
-Mildred

My husband Armin has come  
through surgery well. We will  
be receiving the results of the  
biopsy soon. May God richly  
bless you!  
-Leonor

Claudia is free  
from breast cancer!  
-Charlie

Joshua has moved in with his older  
brother so that he can receive more  
care. God is a good provider!  
-Janice

Good news! Rodney finished his rehab well and moved to a halfway  
house that was a good place. Now he moved to an independent living  
sober house. He also recently got a job. Hallelujah!  
-Helena



I recently requested prayer for a U.S. Air Force officer in Syria. He has reported to me this morning that he has returned safely from his mission. I am so grateful for all your prayers. I give God thanks for answering our request and returning him safely to his base.

-Joan

Our daughter made it through gallbladder surgery!

-Cathy

God has blessed her throat surgery! Her esophagus tears were repaired. Thank you for your prayers!

-Anonymous

Thank you for praying for Cesar. His creatine level is now lower and within the normal range.

-Gala

Praise the Lord—alcohol is no longer a problem for our child!

-Barbara

God has removed the lesion in my mouth's lower right side!

-Ilona

My niece is off the ventilator and talking. Praise God!

-Judi

Our daughter, by God's grace and mercy, has turned her life around. She is a new person. Thank you for all your prayers for her through the years.

-Debbie

The roots of PTSD trauma have been exposed and perpetrators forgiven.  
-Cindy

Months back, I sent a prayer request that they would stop a bar called Fusion from coming to a store near our house. They have drag queens and other unfavorable shows at the bar. It was set to open near our house this month. Praise God, I got word that the city decided to deny them whatever it is they needed to do so. They won't be opening here!  
-Loralei

My granddaughter received Jesus last week when I was visiting with her. God delivered her from darkness to the Kingdom of Light!  
-Theresa

My dad has quit drinking!  
-Molly

My daughter has received a good job offer on this difficult market. Your prayers have worked a miracle!  
-Sheila

The pain I suffered for years due to shingles has ceased substantially, plus the nightly pain in my right leg is gone! Praise the Lord!  
-Bertha

After five years, God provided money for my move.  
-Nancy



At the end of February, I asked for prayer for my daughter-in-law's overdue hysterectomy because of insurance problems. The surgery was accomplished despite a severe blizzard that shortened staff. All is well now, and my daughter-in-law is healing from several unexpected conditions the surgery revealed. Thank you!

-Sandra

Dave survived the heart crisis and is now doing very well.

-Janice

Praise God for assisting me in finding a new apartment that is affordable and keeping me safe.

-Victoria

My son Adam got born again recently. Breakthrough prayed for my family for over ten years.

-Julie

The bank helped me file a fraud charge against the company.

-Suzette

My son's unjust felony charges were expunged after over two years.

-Georgia

My pastor recovered completely from paralysis.

-Cindy

My daughter's tumor is completely gone. Praise God! As of her third checkup, it went from a melon size to a hand-size ball to disappearing altogether!

-Joe

Fall/Winter 2024



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