

5 Ways to Pray in August

For many, the start of school heralds the end of summer, perhaps not on the calendar, but at home as parents, children, and teachers prepare themselves for the start of the school year. Hot weather still abounds, however, and state fairs are the activity of choice this month. As you enjoy the warm days of August, here's a few ways to pray with Only By Prayer.



1. National Senior Citizen's Day, August 21

As you can imagine, this day was set up to honor and support senior citizens and the contributions they have made to our society and our lives. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation making this an official holiday. It's important to give our senior citizens an honored place in our lives, but I am afraid the opposite is often actually true. We should make an effort to hear the stories and glean wisdom from those who have walked the path of life longer than we have. Not just today, but often let's seek out the elderly. Enjoy the company of grandparents and perhaps visit a nursing home. Ask about their lives and be prepared to listen, because we all enjoy sharing our stories. Post on social media using #SeniorCitizensDay.

Resources:

National Senior Citizen's Day

Verse: They [The righteous] will still bear fruit in old age,

*they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, "The Lord is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."
Psalm 92:14 NIV*

Prayer: Lord, this verse has always given me hope. Thank you that you still use us in our old age. We pray for our elderly. We ask that they will live close to you and that you will use them in a powerful way. We pray they will walk wisely and share the wisdom they have accumulated over the years with the younger generations. Give them a purpose, peace, and joy as they transition to their later years. Help the youth to treat them with respect. In Jesus' name. Amen.

2. Planned Parenthood Harvesting and Selling Body Parts of Aborted Babies

I can't believe we have come to the place in the United States where this practice is going on, but it is and we have. When this news came out through undercover videos taken by the Center for Medical Progress, I didn't want to believe it, but unfortunately, the proof is in the videos. Let's join in praying that this horrific illegal practice be stopped.

Resources:

Vote on Bill to Defund Planned Parenthood

Senate Phone numbers

Center for Medical Progress

Verse: Did not he who make me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers? Job 31:15 NIV

Prayer: Lord, we are sickened by the harvesting and sale of

these body parts from aborted babies. We confess this terrible sin and ask for your forgiveness. We ask that those involved would be convicted of their sin and confess it. We pray this practice – and that of abortion – would stop. May we be a nation that values the life of an unborn child and does everything possible to protect our children. In Jesus' name. Amen.

3. Teachers Preparing for Back to School

I know it's only the beginning of August, but in my state, several school districts are on a year-round schedule and started back to school the last week of July! Two of my sisters are school teachers and they are both already working on getting ready for the school year and setting up their rooms. Let's support our teachers through prayer at the start of this new school year. Remember, teachers are now held accountable for things that often times they have no control over.

Resources:

Free! Prayer Chart for Schools

A Prayer for Teachers

Verse: It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13 NIV

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for our teachers. They are on the front lines of our next generation serving and performing in

an often thankless job. We pray for wisdom and strength. We pray for a strong moral character built on the foundation of God. We ask for the support and the resources they need. May their students listen to and respect them. May they teach in such a way that their students can grasp the facts and learn their lessons. Please protect them, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen.

4. Nigerian Troops rescue 178 people from Boko Haram Camp

At the end of July, Nigerian forces rescued 101 children, 67 women, and 10 men, all of whom had been kidnapped over the last year by this terrorist group. None of the 219 Chibok school girls were among those rescued. This is a cause for praise and prayer; praise for those rescued and prayer because many, including those 219 school girls, are still missing.

Resources:

Nigerian Troops rescue 178 people from Boko Haram Camp

Verse: The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God." Exodus 2:23 NIV

Prayer: Lord, we praise and thank you for the rescue of these 178 people from the clutches of the Boko Haram terrorist group. We pray for physical, mental, and spiritual healing of the former captives. We pray for them to be reunited with families and friends. We ask for them to be able to be relocated to a safe area. We pray for the rescue of those still being held captive by terrorists. We pray for their safety and their release/escape from their captors. Give them courage and hope. In Jesus' name. Amen.

5. Drought in California

For over 10 years, California and other western states have been contending with a drought. Half of the state is categorized as being in an “exceptional drought.” The drought is a springboard for other problems, like wild fires and farming difficulties. Governor Jerry Brown has called for 25 percent reductions in water usage by towns and cities. Let’s pray that God will send rain so that California can refill its reservoirs and have an adequate supply to support its citizens and industry. Let’s also not miss the chance to pray for droughts of other types in peoples lives, particularly that of God’s word and his presence.

Resources:

How Bad Is the Drought in California?

Verse: Then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and oil. Deuteronomy 11:14 NIV

Prayer: Dear Jesus, in the Bible times, you would send a drought upon Israel as a sign that they needed to turn from their sin back to you. Lord, we pray that this drought would also remind us to seek you to fulfill our spiritual thirst. We pray that we will turn from the sin of ignoring you and get our lives back on track by serving you. We pray also for periodic, steady rains to fall upon California and the others states experiencing drought. Amen.

Thank you for praying with Only By Prayer through the month of August. Feel free to add other requests in the comment section below.

Pray on!

5 Ways to Pray in July



Whether it feels like it or not where you live, summer has arrived in full force. In July we usually enjoy long, hot days with lots of sunshine. Summer evenings are illuminated by thousands of lightning bugs, and crickets and cicadas serenade us with a chorus of songs.

Thanks for taking some time to pray with Only By Prayer this month.

1. Independence Day, July 4 – In 1776, the American colonies won their independence from Great Britain, and we have enjoyed the privileges of a free nation ever since. As we consider the persecution that many are suffering around the world for personally held beliefs, our freedom is not to be taken lightly. In recent years, controversies regarding race, sexual orientation, religion, and politics have made us seem anything but the *United States of America*. We can pray for Americans to seek God and His plans for their lives and our

nation.

Resources:

Intercessors for America

Verse: If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV

Prayer: Jesus, we thank You for the freedom we have enjoyed for many years in America. We never want to take these for granted. May we keep a spirit of thankfulness ever before us. Many times, however, we have abused these freedoms and made ourselves an offense to You by our sin. We ask for Your forgiveness. May Americans repent and turn to You, seeking Your plans for us as individuals and for our nation as a whole. In Jesus' name. Amen.

2. Mission Trips – Churches frequently schedule mission trips during the summer months when individuals and families may have a bit more time to devote to this commitment. Let's pray that God prepares the hearts of all those involved. This can be a life-changing experience for both those going and those who are on the receiving end of the mission's work.

Resources:

Avoiding Pitfalls of Short-term Mission Trips

Verse: Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19 NIV

Prayer: Lord, may the short-termers' first thought be of preparing their hearts before You and seeking Your plans for the trip. We ask that those going would be aware of cultural

customs so as not to offend anyone and would be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We pray for safety and good health while traveling. For those whom the trip is planned, we pray for salvation, healing, and growth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

3. Ebola – Although it's been out of the news lately, Ebola continues to be a problem in certain parts of the world. Liberia, which the World Health Organization declared clear of Ebola in May 2015, has just confirmed two new cases. Neighboring countries Sierra Leone and Guinea are still reporting several cases every week. Let's pray that this disease can be wiped out and that another widespread outbreak does not occur.

Resources:

News Story

Verse: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases. Psalm 103:3 NIV

Prayer: Lord, we pray that the scourge of Ebola would be wiped off the earth. We ask for healing for those who are suffering from this illness. We pray it will not spread any more. We pray it will not cross the boundaries of cities and countries. We ask a hedge of protection around those who have contact with Ebola patients. Please give the doctors and health care workers wisdom as they treat those infected. In Jesus' name. Amen.

4. Shooting at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston – Nine people were killed at this black church when a lone, white gunman opened fire after a prayer meeting that he attended. Since then, three arson fires have been set at predominately black churches in the South. These tragedies should spur us on to pray against racism in the United States. We have always been a melting pot of different

races and cultures; rather than letting that divide us, let's be a force for prayer that can overcome prejudice and hate.

Resources:

Prayer Against Racism and Prejudice

Verse: A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34.

Prayer: Jesus, out of a heart filled with love, You died so that we might all have eternal life. When You look at us, You see your children. Help us to remember we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. May our hearts cultivate a spirit of love. We ask for healing at Emanuel Church and for the friends and families of those murdered. We pray for these other churches that were victims of arson. We pray that hearts of stone and hatred would be changed by your unfailing, color-blind love. May your church be leading the charge of changed hearts. Amen.

5. The Feast of Mary and Martha of Bethany, July 29 – This church feast day celebrates the story of Mary and Martha offering hospitality to Jesus as He was visiting and teaching at their home. We can cull many lessons from this vignette of Jesus' life. First of all, we can see the importance of offering hospitality and sharing our home with others, just as Mary and Martha did. Perhaps even more, we see the importance of priorities and how we spend our time as we study Jesus' words to the worried Martha.

Resources:

She Sat by Mary Kane

Mary and Martha at Lectionary.com

Verses: Now as Jesus and his disciples went on their way, he

entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:38-42 NIV

Prayer: Jesus, we ask for the trait of hospitality that Mary and Martha demonstrated. Help us to freely share our homes and resources as they did. And we pray for the focus that Mary had on what is important – You. May we set our eyes on You as she did; align our priorities with Yours. Amen.

Thank you for praying with us this month, and be sure to add other requests in the comment section.

Pray on!

Jane

5 Ways to Pray in June



June bursts with the fresh air and sunshine that marks the beginning of summer. Students take a break from school, graduates throw their caps into the air, and many brides and grooms say “I do!” As we welcome the arrival of summer, here’s a few ways you can pray with Only By Prayer through June.

1. National Cancer Survivor’s Day, June 7 – I included this event because of the sheer number of people who are battling/have fought cancer. I can’t imagine that there is a person who exists that doesn’t have someone in his or her life who is fighting this disease. I’ve lost dearly loved ones to cancer and know people in the throes of chemo right now, as I am sure you do too. Here is what the National Cancer Survivor’s Day website says about this day: “National Cancer Survivors Day® is a CELEBRATION for those who have survived, an INSPIRATION for those recently diagnosed, a gathering of SUPPORT for families, and an OUTREACH to the community.” Be sure to check out their suggestions; if you are putting together an event for this day, register it on their website.

Resources:

National Cancer Survivor’s Day website

American Cancer Society

Ways to Prevent Cancer

Verse: “Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.” James 5:14

Prayer: Lord, we ask for your healing touch upon those battling the scourge of cancer. We pray that in Jesus' name the cancer cells would be decimated and that their bodies would be free of this disease. Please comfort and strengthen the sick and their families and friends. We ask for wisdom for doctors who are treating patients and for researchers trying to find a cure. Amen.

2. Summer Vacation – Unless schools are on a year-round calendar, they will be taking a break starting in June. Let's pray that kids will be healthily occupied this summer with jobs, enriching activities, and times for rest and play. Intercede against unhealthy associations, gang activities, violence, and criminal activity. We also need to remember the teachers who give so much of themselves and their personal resources throughout the year, while having to deal with ever-evolving rules and regulations in the schools.

Resources:

Avoiding Power Struggles with Defiant Children

Summer Break Is Here: Now What?

Keeping Your Teen From Getting Bored (and in trouble) this summer

Verse: "My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity." Proverbs 3:1

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for the break from a rushed schedule that summer gives us. May parents and kids find a healthy balance in the schedule where there is time for rest but also times of active engagement and work. We pray that there will not be an increase in violence. We pray for our teachers to receive rest, wisdom, and recharging for the next year's work. In Jesus' name. Amen.

3. Graduates – This is the time of year to celebrate high school and college graduations. For the graduates, it's an exciting and stressful time. Most graduates are pursuing higher education and/or entering the job market and taking bigger steps toward independence. Some may also be getting married. Either way, it's a transitional time of life filled with decisions.

Resources:

College Planning with Rachel Cruze

Real Life on A Budget with Rachel Cruze

Verse: "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." Proverbs 16:3

Prayer: Lord, we pray for our graduates. We ask for those a little further along the road of life to speak into their lives. We pray for wisdom. We ask that they will work hard, plan well, and manage their money wisely. Keep them from paths that would derail them in life, and help them to make decisions that bring life and health. May they know you as Lord and Savior of their lives. Amen.

4. Father's Day, June 21 – While the modern world seems to minimize the importance of fathers in the lives of families, that is simply a lie the enemy perpetuates. A father's presence in a family is critical to the development of children. Let's pray for dads today that they will not be minimized or devalued, and that they will be active and involved in the lives of their kids.

Resources:

My View: How Badly Do We Really Need Dad by James McQuivey

Why Do People Continue to Believe Children Don't Need Fathers?

Verse: "Listen to your father who gave you life." Proverbs

23:22

Prayer: Lord, we pray that fathers would be a strong, loving presence in the lives of their children. Restore the dignity to manhood and a man's proper place in the family, which is being denigrated in the mainstream media. We pray that our families will remain healthy and intact. We ask for wisdom for dads to be the godly leaders that you meant for them to be in a family. In Jesus' name. Amen.

5. Prayer for Storm Victims in Texas – As you probably know, a huge storm dumped 10 inches of rain in one hour at the end of May, causing terrible flooding, damage, and the loss of several lives. Let's be in prayer for all those affected by the recent storms moving through the country.

Resources:

Texas Flooding

Verse: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalm 116:15

Prayer: Lord, our hearts ache for those suffering losses because of this storm: loss of homes, properties, and lives. We pray for healing, comfort, and peace for those grieving. We pray for needs to be met and help to arrive. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Thanks for praying with us through this month. Please add any other requests below.

Pray on!

Jane

5 Ways to Pray in May



May brings blooming flowers and warmer temperatures as we shake

off the remnants of winter's cold and embrace new life. As you're busy with spring cleaning, wrapping up the school year, and landscaping chores, remember to spend a few minutes each day with Only By Prayer praying for some of the following concerns.

1. **National Day of Prayer, May 7** – This year is the 64th annual National Day of Prayer. The theme for 2015 is Lord, Hear Our Cry. The emphasis is that people place their faith in the unfailing character of our Creator, who is sovereign over all. The scripture for this year is “Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day,” from 1 Kings 8:28. Let's pray

for our nation, our leaders, and our people that we will depend upon the Lord. We are facing challenges on every front: politically, morally, spiritually, and economically. We also see looming threats to our national security. With so much to pray about, we need to remember to intercede for our nation as often as possible. I've included resources below so that you can check to see what community events may be scheduled in your area.

Resources:

- Prayer Guides and curriculum
- Post or Find an event
- National Prayer

Verse: "Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day." 1 Kings 8:28 NIV

Prayer: Lord, we intercede for our nation. We confess our sins of idolatry, abortion, pride, greed, perversions, jealousy, and hatred. We ask for your forgiveness. We pray that our nation will turn to you. We pray for your intervention in our lives. Please work as only You can to restore the moral fabric of our families, communities, states, and country. We ask for your hedge of protection around us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

2. **Mother's Day, May 10** – Some of us have mothers who are still with us and others of us do not. Perhaps we had/have a wonderful relationship with them, and maybe we didn't/don't. Whether your mother is currently living or has passed away, you can probably think of a woman who has been a stand-in mom to you and has encouraged you in your life in some way. Today is the day set aside to honor her. Let's think of a way to connect with our moms today. For those who live far away, perhaps it's a long phone call to chat and catch up. A handwritten card detailing what you love about her will touch any

mother's heart. When my children were little and we lived in the area, we arranged a Mother's Day picnic at the local park for all the moms in our family. Need some more ideas? Here's some resources for you.

Resources:

- Mother's Day Ideas
- Mom's Fill in the Blank Questionnaire

*Verse: "Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."
Exodus 20:12 NIV*

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for our mothers. Even if the relationship is contentious, we acknowledge that they have given us the gift of life. We ask Your blessing upon our mothers. We pray for health and spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical healing where needed. May our relationships with them be strong and loving. As mothers, help us to be an example of Your love to our children. In Jesus' name. Amen.

3. Pentecost, May 24 – Pentecost means "fiftieth day" (after Passover), and it is the day that the Holy Spirit came in tongues of fire and filled the believers. Acts chapter 2 tells of this powerful story. It is pivotal to our faith, because from that point on and to this day, the Holy Spirit is the one who equips us, teaches us, and transforms us into Christ's likeness. Jesus could not be everywhere at the same time while He was on earth, but after The Resurrection, He sent the Holy Spirit who lives in each believer. What an amazing reality this is! We can ask ourselves if we are creating a welcoming home for the Spirit to reside in, or if we might be grieving Him through our behavior. Check out the resources below to delve further into this topic.

Resources:

- Take 5, By My Spirit by Mary Kane
- Pentecost

Verse: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Prayer: Lord, we thank you that you have thought of everything to help your children to lead victorious lives. Help us to be filled with the Holy Spirit and equipped to live each day, not in our own power, but in yours. Help us to listen to His conviction and leading, confessing sin when we are at fault and following his prompting in other areas of our lives. Amen.

4. Memorial Day, May 25 – Memorial Day is the day set aside to honor those who died while in active military service. When I was a child, every year we celebrated Memorial Day two ways. First of all, we walked to our local cemetery where a service was held to honor the people from our city who died while in the military. It was a dignified ceremony, and even as a child, I felt the importance of remembering those who were no longer with us. Following that, we then attended the Memorial Day parade that went through the center of our little town. My sisters and I loved this parade and even participated in it as we got older through the Girl Scouts or as members of the marching band. Perhaps you do something similar. Here's a few other ideas to celebrate this day:

Resources:

- 10 Memorial Day Celebrations That Are More Important ...

Verse: "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

Prayer: Lord, help us to never take for granted those who have given their lives while serving our country, and therefore us. May we live our lives with intention, honor, and purpose in

memory of those who sacrificed everything so that we can have such a precious freedom. May we teach these truths to our children and instill in them a spirit of gratitude for this country you have blessed us with. Amen.

5. Supreme Court Justices – Not nearly often enough do I stop to pray for these nine men and women who make such critical decisions concerning our nation. They decide cases they affect the very fabric of our lives and set the tone for the direction of our country. As you are reading this, one of the main issues that is being decided is the issue of gay marriage. A ruling is expected sometime during June of 2015.

Resources:

- The Supreme Court Justices
- Gay Marriage Debate

Verse: "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." James 1:5 NIV

Prayer: Lord, we pray for wisdom for these men and women whose decisions reach far into our lives and set the tone of our nation. We ask that they would each have a heart for you and your concerns. We pray for discernment and clear thinking as they puzzle through issues and ask questions. Please guard their hearts and minds. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thank you for praying with us today. Please feel free to share any of your prayers below in the comment section.

Pray on!

Jane

A special thank you to Amber Miller from Live and Laugh Loud for the use of her tulip photo.

5 Ways to Pray in April



April is a transition month. Birds return from their winter travels, the early spring flowers shake off their sleepy lethargy, and the sun's rays warm us for the first time in months. The earth starts to reawaken, and us with it. Why not use some of that new-found energy to pray with **Only By Prayer** through the month of April.

1. Maundy Thursday, April 2 – Today we remember Jesus celebrating the Last Supper with his disciples. During this meal, **Jesus** set two important precedents that, as His followers, we still live out today.

First of all, as they were preparing to eat the meal, Jesus, the Teacher, took on the role of servant. He wrapped a towel around His waist and filled a basin with water; then he went around and lovingly washed each of his disciple's feet. Peter, especially, was uncomfortable with this and protested, but

Jesus explained the reason for his actions. He was setting an example for them: As He had done for them, so they needed to do for others. On this special day, **Holy Thursday**, Jesus introduced the Christian virtue of **service**.

Secondly, Jesus shares the evening meal with his disciples. It, however, was not quite an ordinary supper. He foretold of His upcoming sacrifice on the cross by using the metaphor of the bread as his body and the wine as His blood. His disciples would not understand the significance of this until later after His death and resurrection. Today we celebrate communion at church in memory of the Last Supper.

Resources:

- Amazing Grace

Verse: *“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.” John 13:14-15 NIV*

Prayer: Dear Lord, You never ask us to do anything that You have not done Yourself. Thank You for setting the example of serving others. Help us to carry on that mission in our own lives. Give us opportunities daily to serve others, as well as regular acts of service. May we also realize the importance of meeting regularly with believers, encouraging and communing with each other. Amen.

2. Good Friday, April 3 – Today is the darkest day of the Christian calendar, for it was on this day that Jesus was crucified and buried. It is so very tempting to want to skip over this day and go straight to the celebration of Easter, but it would also be so very wrong. We need to reflect on the pain and sacrifice that Jesus endured when He took our sins upon Himself. We need to follow his path to the cross so that we can more fully appreciate the mercy, grace, and

righteousness that God gives us for His sake. Please spend a few minutes on the following resources and/or participate in a Good Friday service at your church today.

Resources:

- Following Jesus to the Cross by Mary Kane
- Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?

Verse: *“When he had received the drink, Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” John 19:30 NIV*

Prayer: Dear Jesus, we offer You our deepest thanks for taking the punishment of our sins on the cross. We can never repay You for Your suffering; we accept this gift with a humble spirit. The greatest gift we can give back is to share the gospel with others. Help us to overcome any reticence in sharing about the eternal life that waits for them also. Amen.

3. Easter Sunday, April 5 – The most joyous event on the Christian calendar, Easter, is a day for celebrating The Resurrection. I never tire of imagining the look on the faces of the women who went to Jesus’ tomb, only to find the stone blocking the entrance rolled away and the tomb empty. It is this miracle that makes Christianity different from every other religion, because that same power of God that raised Jesus from the dead is available to us, His followers, (Ephesians 1:18-19) in our own ministries! God does not want us living in weakness, but in the resurrection power of Jesus. Imagine what we could do for Him if we truly believed this.

Resources:

- He Is Risen
- Youth Group Easter Drama

Verse: *“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!” Luke 24:5-6 NIV*

Prayer: Dear Jesus, Our hearts are filled with joy this morning. You have triumphed over evil and death. Because of this victory, we have the certainty of eternal life in heaven. And we also have many promises for our life on earth. May we spend our lives filled with Your Holy Spirit, equipped to live an abundant life. We praise You that You have broken the power of death. Amen.

4. Tax Day, April 15 – This many seem a silly thing to pray about, but when you consider the stress that finances put on families, states, and countries, we need to focus some prayer power on this issue. Tax Day is a day that people dread because of the many hassles involved in the preparation and filing of taxes. Money itself is a cause for concern in America with our ballooning national debt. Just watching the National Debt Clock rise is enough to make your blood pressure rise along with it. Along with national debt, many people are drowning in personal debt. With maxed-out credit cards, expensive cars, home mortgages, and college bills, too many of us are overextended and underfunded. Learning to budget and live within our means is a skill to be learned and practiced. As Dave Ramsey always says, “Act your wage!”

We also need to pray for those who are enduring financial stress because of circumstances beyond their control. Job loss, illness, and fraud are just a few of the reasons for an unexpected financial crisis. Let’s pray for all circumstances today.

Resources:

- Dave Ramsey
- Tax Questions Answered

Verse: *“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”*
Matthew 6:24 NIV

Prayer: Dear Lord, help us to give You first place in our hearts. It's easy to want all the trappings the world has to give, but may we manage our money with wisdom and discernment. Help us not to make emotional, quick spending decisions. We pray for our government that the authorities would work on a balanced budget and stop spending more than we have. For those innocent victims suffering financial stress, we ask for wisdom and resources to help them recover from the loss. In Jesus name. Amen.

5. Iran Talks – Talks drag on in Switzerland, albeit without the foreign ministers of China, France, and Russia, who left earlier this week for home. “The negotiators’ intention is to produce a joint statement outlining general political commitments to resolving concerns about the Iranians’ nuclear program in exchange for relief of economic sanctions against Iran. In addition, they are trying to fashion other documents that would lay out in more detail the steps they must take by June 30 to meet those goals,” FoxNews.com said in an article published on April 2 on their website. Let’s pray for wisdom for our leaders that they make the right decision regarding these negotiations.

Resources:

- Iran Talks News Story

Verse: *“Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of the age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?” 1 Corinthians 1:20 NIV*

Prayer: Lord, we need Your wisdom and discernment to make the right decision. We pray that what is hidden will be brought to light and that our leaders will make a decision based on truth and facts; we pray for Your protection. Amen.

Thank you for praying with us today. Feel free to use this as a reminder throughout the month, and please add any of your

prayer suggestions in the comment section below.

Pray on!

Jane