

INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

PRAYER LETTER

January 2011

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“FATHER, THE TIME HAS COME...”

David Kubal

“Is there anybody else praying?” This question came from an incredible prayer warrior who called the office recently, admitting that she felt dejected and alone. Telling her about the thou-

sands who intercede for the nation, our staff had the privilege to spend the next 30 minutes encouraging this dear lady in the Lord. When the phone call ended, she knew the assurance of unity and joy.

This is exactly what Jesus prayed for the disciples in John 17. He realized that God’s protection is foundational for both unity and joy. His first request for the disciples in verse 11 was, “Holy Father, keep (protect) ... those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.” Protection from what? Protection from discouragement and anything that limits our effectiveness. He continued the prayer in verse 13 by asking that we might experience the full measure of His joy. He knew that the lives of His disciples, His intercessors, would be difficult—even impossible—without our Holy Father’s provision of protection, unity, and joy.

It could be easy to understand unity as a result of joy, but in reality the two are mutually dependent. This is found in verse 22, which is often overlooked, but very important. We have a chance at

“Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.”

—John 17:11

unity because “the glory which [the Father] gave [Jesus]” has been given to us, “that [we] may be one.” Experiencing God’s glory through each other is critical. Unity and joy are two sides to the same

coin, and God’s glory is the source of both.

Protection, joy, unity. As we consider how we are to intercede for our country this year, I challenge you to consider these foundational elements in the life of an intercessor. Ask yourself two questions: 1) Are you experiencing joy? 2) Are you experiencing unity with the body of Christ? Your answers may indicate the level of your need to pray for God’s protection.

I challenge you to pursue joy and unity with great effort. Like the faithful intercessor who called our office, take joy in the knowledge that your burden to pray is not an isolated task. You are not alone. While Jesus kept His team of disciples encouraged by His presence on earth, He prayed for believers to connect in Spirit-filled fellowship in His physical absence.

That day has come. Let’s ask that God’s destiny for our country would unfold through the unified prayers of His Church. Take time this year to pray for protection, experience His joy, and pursue unity in the Body.



HERITAGE OF CHARACTER

David Kubal

Encourage your family to pray for the nation this year with our eight-week historical devotional book for families. Paperback, \$7.99 each plus shipping. See our ordering information on page 4.

FIRST FRIDAY

January 7

PRAYER FOCUS

On the first Friday of the month we encourage all to fast and pray for our nation.

CHRIST-AWAKENING

Read and reflect upon Eph 1:15-23 and Col 1:9-18. Pray that the Lord grants you, your family members, your pastors and area church leaders, your city, state, and national officials a “spirit of wisdom and revelation” in the knowledge of the fullness of Christ, and of His magnificent centrality, supremacy, and “preeminence in all things.” Intercede for a Christ-awakening in our nation.

REPUBLIC VS. DEMOCRACY

Offer thanksgiving for how the Lord granted wisdom to our founders to anticipate the challenges we have experienced in recent elections, and for the Constitutional principles, and checks and balances they instituted to insure a peaceful transference of governmental power. Intercede that the Lord would continue to reinstruct and restore a proper understanding of the United States as a Constitutional Republic—of the necessity to maintain a “separation of powers”—and for our nation to follow and uphold the rule of law. Pray that the Lord grants wisdom to our newly elected 112th Congress as they debate and legislate laws to govern our nation in the fear of God and His laws.

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

Reflect upon Gen 1:26-27 and Ps 139:13-18. Offer thanksgiving that you and those you love were created in the “image and according to the likeness” of God. This biblical truth—that each human life conceived is sacred, and of equal worth and value in the sight of God—forms the basis for human dignity, freedom, rights, and justice. Pray that the Lord grants a full understanding of the sanctity of human life to you, your family members, your pastors and area church leaders, your city, state, and national officials.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Intercede that the Lord will inspire and direct churches, youth pastors, leaders, and ministries into more effective relational and trans-generational models of ministry and mentoring in this new year.

www.GetAmericaPraying.com



A PRAYER MOBILIZER'S JOURNEY

An Interview with Karren Wright by Nicole Arnoldbik

"I never heard the word 'intercessor' until I joined the organization," says Karren Wright, a member of Intercessors for America since 1976. She remembers how the vocabulary was a lesson in itself. "I never thought to pray for 'exposure' of something," she says, "but now, when I hear bad news I immediately pray, 'God, expose that thing.'"

After 34 years of committed intercession, Karren's prayer life has deepened beyond her expectations. She reflects on the discoveries that shaped her faith along the way, telling how she first met with two other young mothers at 6 AM for coffee and First Friday prayer by way of a neighborhood Bible study. Her two friends subscribed to IFA's newsletter and passed a copy to her, convinced that she would share their burden for the nation. Feeling unfamiliar with the discipline of intercession, all three women were especially thankful for the guided prayer points and articles. The newsletters provided not only topics to cover but also gave them the words to use as a springboard to further their own prayers, which touched on everything from family to legislative issues.

Although she had always prayed for personal needs, it wasn't until America's celebration of its Bicenten-

nial in 1976 that Karren felt a "tug" toward corporate intercession. The needs of the country seemed to be multiplying by the hour, and she had a new awareness that prayer was the only way to keep pace with all of the changes occurring around her. Not surprisingly, the circumstances of her life gave her the opportunity to put awareness into action. After moving with her husband from Washington to Sacramento, CA, God ordained her steps by planting her in a neighborhood with Christians who affirmed her desire to pray.

"I wasn't into politics that much, I just wanted to make sure we had good leaders and were obedient."

For years, the First Friday circle continued to meet in Karren's home. Stealing time away from sleeping children, the mothers' Friday-6 AM prayer hour became a non-negotiable appointment in their busy schedules, and the friends formed a bond that couldn't be shaken. Soon, Karren found that her prayers became more focused, more dedicated and informed. What began as a simple desire to pray for the country to go down the right path transformed into specific, strategic prayer concerns. "I wasn't into politics that much," she says about starting out, "I just wanted to make

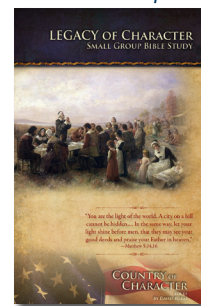
sure we had good leaders and were obedient." But she gained confidence through the practice of prayer, and was encouraged and inspired through the materials she received from IFA, even keeping a personal prayer journal where she tracked God's work through ongoing events.

Perhaps the real turning point in her prayer journey came when one prayer partner moved to Louisiana and the meetings weren't cancelled. Karren and her friend invited another woman to join the prayer circle, and today—more than 30 years later—Karren still prays over the phone each week with her friend in Louisiana. In spite of the distance, the spiritual connection remains alive, and she still invites others to pray along with her. "It amazes me how you can be connected to people within your own country and in other countries," she says, excited about the new opportunities for members to connect with friends and fellow intercessors through IFA's website and social media.

Recently, after receiving IFA's Get America Praying DVD, Karren showed her Bible study group the film about Hungary's prayer revival. "Before, I always felt like I had to convince people to get involved, but with IFA's Mobilization Kit . . . I just show people the film and the Holy Spirit works in their lives."

DO YOU HAVE A PRAYER MOBILIZATION STORY THAT WOULD ENCOURAGE OTHERS? LET US KNOW. CALL 800-USA-PRAY!

LEGACY OF CHARACTER *Small Group Bible Study*



This historical eight-week Bible study will bring to light incredible stories of character that the founding fathers of this country displayed. This is a perfect resource for small groups, Sunday School classes, etc. Enjoy this resource as you rediscover our "Country of Character." Paperback, \$7.99 + shipping. See page 4 for ordering information.

GET AMERICA PRAYING MOBILIZATION KIT

Find out how you can more effectively encourage others to start fasting and praying for America. Our Mobilization Kit will show you the way with easy, short training segments and practical ideas. \$29.99 + shipping. See page 4 for ordering information.

Items included in the Mobilization Kit: *The Liberty New Testament, Heritage of Character, Legacy of Character, Mobilization Manual, Get America Praying DVD, 30 Ways to Pray bookmark, 130 Top Officials bookmark, Pray Button, C4 Explosive Prayer notepad, window stickers, sample Church Pray!, sample On Watch in Washington alert, and other helpful promotional tools.*



THE FREEDOM OF RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION: Historical Perspective

The debate over religious expression in our public schools continues. Recently, Montana's Supreme Court ruled in favor of a former Montana high school valedictorian (2008) who was banned from speaking at her graduation because her speech contained religious references. The Rutherford Institute's president, John Whitehead helped to argue this case on behalf of Renee Griffith.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which set aside federal property in the territory for schools and which was passed again by Congress in 1789 (the same Congress that drafted the Constitution), states:

Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of learning shall forever be encouraged.

From this foundation our nation's schools were born. Part of that foundation—according to the Northwest Ordinance—was religion.

In looking at the historical record, one sees that religion was integrated into the public school curriculum. Textbooks referred to God without embarrassment, and public schools considered one of their major tasks to be the development of character through the teaching of religion. For example, the *New England Primer* opened with certain religious admonitions followed by the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the names of the books of the Bible.

The influence of William Holmes McGuffey, a philosopher and a professor at the University of Virginia, was remarkable. His *Eclectic Readers* were published in 1836, and from that year until 1920—two years after Mississippi became the last state to institute a public school system—his books sold more than 120 million copies, a total that put them in a class with only the Bible and *Webster's Dictionary*. McGuffey's Readers stressed, as did the Northwest Ordinance, “religion, morality, and knowledge” in that order. Historian Henry Steele Commager, in an introduc-

John W. Whitehead

“[A]ll freedoms hang together.... Civil liberties scarcely thrive when religious liberties are disregarded, and the reverse is equally true. Beneath them all is a philosophy of liberty which assumes a measure of variety in human behavior, honors integrity, respects the dignity of man, and seeks to exemplify the compassion of God.

—Historian Roland Brantton

tion for a reissue of *McGuffey's Fifth Reader*, writes:

What was the nature of the morality that permeated the Readers? It was deeply religious, and ... religion then meant a Protestant Christianity.... The world of the McGuffeys was a world where no one questioned the truths of the Bible or their relevance to everyday contact.... The Readers, therefore, are filled with stories from the Bible, and tributes to its truth and beauty.

The great men who built this country from the ground up sat under McGuffey-type teaching. This type of teaching produced a spirit of accommodation toward the exercise of religion in early America. This is especially apparent in the men who drafted the Constitution.

For example, one of the first acts of the first House of Representatives was to elect a chaplain. On May 1, 1789, the House elected as chaplain the Rev. William Linn.

Congress proposed a joint resolution on September 24, 1789, which was intended to allow the people of the United States an opportunity to thank God for affording them an opportunity to establish this country. This proclamation was submitted to President George Washington the very day after Congress had voted to recommend to the states the final text of what has become the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. As President, James Madison likewise issued four prayer proclamations.

While Thomas Jefferson undoubtedly believed that church and state should be

separate, his actions in public life demonstrate that he did not espouse the absolute separation advocated by some modern proponents of separation of church and state. For example, on October 31, 1803, President Jefferson proposed to the United States Senate a treaty with the Kaskaskian Indians. This treaty provided that federal money be used to support a Catholic priest and to build a church (a Catholic mission) for the ministry of the Kaskaskian Indians. The treaty was ratified by Congress on December 23, 1803.

When Congress initially authorized the public schools for the nation's capital, the first president of the Washington, D.C. school board was Thomas Jefferson himself. In fact, he “was the chief author of the first plan of public education adopted for the city of Washington.” The first official report on file indicates that the Bible and the *Watts Hymnal* were the principal, if not the only, books then in use for reading by the Washington, D.C. public school student.

As one can readily see, history clearly teaches that from our country's inception the prevailing mood toward religion has been one of accommodation. The founding fathers and those who administered and taught in the public schools throughout the nineteenth century defended and perpetuated this accommodation.

Without this view, the freedom of expression of those in the religious minority is severely restricted. As James Madison once told Congress, the Bill of Rights points “sometimes against the abuse of executive power, sometimes against the legislative, and, in some cases, against the community itself; or, in other words, against the majority in favor of the minority.”

—This article is excerpted from the book *The Freedom of Religious Expression in Public High Schools*. Copyright © 1983 by John W. Whitehead. Published by Crossway Books. Reprint from IFA First Friday Prayer Letter February, 1984. Used with permission.

SEEK GOD FOR THE CITY MARCH 9 – APRIL 17, 2011

★ AUSTIN, TX – Prayer guides are available for the 2011 Forty Days to Palm Sunday prayer vigil. www.waymakers.org

PROGRESS ON THE BORDER

★ MEXICO CITY – Cooperation between Mexican and U.S. military is unprecedented, marking a historic change since the mid-19th century Mexican-American war. The arrest of Arturo Gallegos Castellon, a gang leader said to be behind 80% of the killings (potentially 2,000 murders) in Ciudad Juarez in 2010, sparked hope for the ongoing crackdown on drug cartels. Officials emphasize that U.S. military presence in Mexico is intended to play a support role—to offer instruction to Mexican officers on how to plan operations and use intelligence to hunt traffickers while observing human rights.

ARLINGTON, TX – Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott told the Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force in November that a solid effort is underway to make the state “a hostile territory for human traffickers and a safe haven for the victims they target.” Given that Houston is one of the main points of illegal entry in the U.S., Texas accounts for 25% of all human trafficking victims. Thousands of women and minors are brought over the border each year and forced to repay their “debt” through labor and/or sexual exploitation. Abbott reports that U.S. agencies are actively pursuing criminals and identifying victims. Recently, five men and one woman were arrested for operating one of the largest sex-trafficking rings in the history of the southern district of Texas. (FN 11/17/10, WP 11/10/10, CBS 11/30/10)

HOMEGROWN TERROR PREVENTED

★ PORTLAND, OR – Federal agents saved an annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony in downtown Portland from potential disaster when they arrested 19-year-old Mohamed Osman Mohamud for allegedly trying to set off a car bomb. An FBI investigation reported that the Somali naturalized U.S. citizen was “absolutely committed to carrying out an attack on a very grand scale.” Mohamud, an author of several Jihadist articles, allegedly told agents that he intended his attack to target families celebrating the holidays. The teenager was arraigned in federal court on charges of attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction. (FN 12/3/10, AOL 11/27/10)

FBI REPORTS HATE CRIMES DROPPED

★ FBI records show that in 2009, the number of reported hate crimes dropped to their lowest point in 15 years, in spite of the lingering recession and increasing social tensions. Anti-religious offenses also took a dive—although anti-Semitic attacks were much more frequent than others. Some observers question whether 2010 will be as positive, taking note of the political upheaval leading up to the midterm elections, and turmoil surrounding the so-called ground zero mosque and the Koran-burning threats. While religious groups give thanks for last year’s report, analysts say there is no clear explanation for the improvement in 2009. (PD 11/27/10)

In America Today...



COURT AFFIRMS GRADUATE’S FAITH

★ Montana’s Supreme Court ruled 5-1 that officials at Butte High School violated former valedictorian Renee Griffith’s rights to free speech and to freedom of religion under the U.S. and Montana constitutions. In 2008, when Griffith refused to revise a graduation speech that explicitly referred to her commitment to Jesus Christ, school officials forbade her participation in the ceremony, claiming that her words crossed the line of “separation of church and state.” The Rutherford Institute argued Griffith’s case and won, even after the lower court had ruled that her civil rights had not been violated. Rutherford’s president, John Whitehead, countered the lower court’s ruling by maintaining that all public school students have a right to talk about what’s important to them, regardless of religion. Now, more than two years later, Griffith is finally vindicated, knowing that the state’s highest court called her attempted expression of faith “reasonable” and not at all disruptive to the ceremony. (ONN 11/30/10)

MOM’S DAY OF PRAYER, JAN 16

★ FT. SMITH, AR – Expanding the organization’s vision to connect mothers in prayer for our nation’s children, MDOP announced a New Year’s resolution for 2011: to dedicate 47 Saturdays to prayer, seeking God to release a rich inheritance for the next generation. www.momsdayofprayer.com

SANCTITY OF LIFE SUNDAY, JAN 23

★ Care Net (care-net.org), Focus on the Family (family.org), Lutherans for Life (lutheransforlife.org) and other groups are calling on churches to observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (SOHLS), a day to celebrate the value of all human life.

38TH MARCH FOR LIFE, JAN 24

★ Washington, DC – The 38th annual March for Life will rally at noon on Jan. 24 at the Mall in Washington, DC. More than 54 million pre-born humans have been killed through abortion since the Roe vs. Wade decision on Jan. 22, 1973. For more information about the rally and seminars, go to www.marchforlife.org.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE, MARCH 9-APRIL 17

★ FREDERICKSBURG, VA – The next 40 Days for Life campaign (prayer and fasting vigil) will be from March 9 to April 17, 2011. In an international teleconference webcast, National Director David Bereit reported that the pro-life movement may have reached a “tipping point” in 2010, with unprecedented mobilization making way for massive social transformation. Record numbers of participants are helping to save thousands of unborn babies around the country. www.40daysforlife.com

ELECTION: A MATTER OF THE HEART

★ WASHINGTON, DC – While many view the Tea Party-fueled election as a major fork in the road guided entirely by economic signposts, Gary Bauer, president of American Values, said the election also exposed a corporate hunger to see family values restored to America. Taking a sample of 834 voters, Bauer’s non-profit poll found the culture’s moral pulse. The survey showed that 77% believed America was headed in the wrong direction and, of those, 59% believed the direction was “due to the decline in moral and family values in society.” Bauer stressed that with so much consensus, it would be wrong for elected officials in 2011 to address fiscal deficit without also addressing our nation’s moral deficit. (UT 11/16/10)

★ = An answer or development to an IFA First Friday or On Watch in Washington prayer point. Publication index: AOL=America Online News; CBS=CBS News; FN=Fox News; ONN=One News Now; PD=Politics Daily; UT=USA TODAY; WP=Washington Post

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Setting the Record Straight by Elyahu Ben-Haim – The question of Israel’s legitimacy as a nation in the family of nations is an issue that is being raised more frequently every day and even in the Church. In many circles, present day Israel as a fulfillment of God’s prophetic word is denied as a false interpretation of Scripture. This is a battle that is not going away, but to the contrary, is increasing in intensity. These questions and negative attitudes toward Israel’s legitimacy as a nation need answers. This book provides a historical, legal, and scriptural response. 36 pages, \$7.00 + \$3.50 shipping. See ordering information above.

THE MISSION OF INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA: Uniting Believers in Effective Prayer and Fasting for America – Since 1973.

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