

“*PRAYzing!* is AMAzing! This wonderful book puts in the hands of prayer leaders all the resources needed for creative, powerful prayer meetings. No one ever leaves a Daniel Henderson-led prayer meeting bored, and this book shows why.”

—DAVE BUTTS, chairman, America’s National Prayer Committee

“Daniel understands what prayer is really all about: worship! And nothing could be more needed in our spiritually starved world today than true worship. Daniel’s practical, creative ideas come from hours alone with God. He is a man of great passion—passion for fresh, exciting, and Spirit-led prayer. God is using him to awaken the church and lead us all to our knees. May this book renew our hearts and lead us to spiritual revival so that all the nations can worship Him!”

—VERNON BREWER, president, World Help; author of *The Forgotten Children* and *Why? Answers to Weather the Storms of Life*

“Daniel’s passion for prayer is contagious. He understands both the problem with corporate prayer gatherings and the solution! We couldn’t wait to finish the book so that we could go out and organize a grand PRAYzing gathering. Any church member who thinks prayer is boring should read this book. Then someday after we try to figure out how our nationwide revival began, we’ll track it down to Daniel Henderson! Don’t miss out!”

—JIM AND KAREN COVELL, film composers and TV producers; coauthors of *How to Talk About Jesus Without Freaking Out* and *The Day I Met God*

“I had the privilege of being Daniel Henderson’s pastor when he surrendered his life to become a preacher. He was then as he is now: deeply serious about his commitment to the Lord. I visited Arcade Church in Sacramento, California, where Daniel was pastor for ten years before moving to Grace Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. I found an entire church pulsating with prayer. Daniel has found the secret of turning his churches into houses of prayer, as Jesus suggested. He is truly a doer of the Word and not a hearer only.”

—DR. JAMES W. BRYANT, ThD, senior professor of pastoral theology, Criswell College

“Having written several books, spoken all over the world, and founded ministries devoted to prayer, I feel I have given my life to ever-deepening times alone with God. But as I finished chapter 4 of *PRAYzing!*, I had the strange feeling of being drawn up to a higher prayer level, intertwining the Word of God’s instructions with worship, praising, repenting, and commitment praying. This book’s simple yet incredibly profound prayer strategy inspires the heart, not just the head. No matter where you and I are in our prayer journey, God always has something creative to add. Perhaps here it is, for you.”

— EVELYN CHRISTENSON, speaker; author of
What Happens When Women Pray

“After establishing the need for a fresh approach to how we pray, Daniel Henderson offers a veritable A-Z of creative ideas for revitalizing our individual and corporate times of seeking the Lord. I appreciate in particular Daniel’s effort to ground his suggestions in Scripture and to share helpful anecdotes interspersed throughout the text to illustrate how those ideas may play out in practice.”

— DR. RANDALL ROBERTS, academic dean and professor of
spiritual formation, Western Seminary

“Daniel Henderson is a man of prayer and a pastor who has effectively encouraged and enabled his people to pray. I sincerely recommend this book to every Christian who wants to be more effective in prayer.”

— DR. PAUL CEDAR, chairman, Mission America Coalition

“‘When more people are attending our weeknight prayer meeting than the Sunday morning worship service, revival will come.’ Not only was it a daunting challenge put forth by Reverend McLeod to his congregation in the early 1970s, it was an intensely deliberate one. As a result, that day came. People prayed. Then they worshiped. Then God’s people all across Canada were quickened by an amazing work of God’s Holy Spirit. Today, in *PRAYzing!*, Daniel Henderson deliberately puts forth the same challenge to every serious Christian. Pray or perish. Seek Him or miss Him. Revival or ruin. This tool is practical. Inspiring. Helpful. And immensely needed. May God use it to draw us near to Himself and Himself near to us, until He deluges us with His manifest presence.”

— BYRON PAULUS, president, Life Action Ministries

PRAYzing!

CREATIVE PRAYER EXPERIENCES FROM A TO Z

DANIEL HENDERSON



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*To Rosemary, in honor of our
twenty-five years of grace-filled marriage
and priceless memories as partners in life and ministry.*

and

*To my brother, Dennis S. Henderson,
My childhood hero, lifelong friend, fellow pastor, and
treasured colaborer in the work of renewal.*

*Thank you for partnering with me in the vision for pastor-
led, local church-oriented movements of Christ-exalting,
worship-based prayer—leading to a full-scale revival, super-
natural evangelism, and cultural transformation.*

and

*To Pastor Jim Cymbala, whose example of
praying and pastoral leadership has inspired me
to persevere and to discover
countless experiences of PRAYzing!*

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FOREWORD

Some books are about theory. Others reflect the reality of practical life experience. This book is pure reality and packed with inspiration that applies to every life and congregation.

When I first read the early chapters of Daniel's book, I was sitting in a doctor's office waiting for some routine blood work. I actually laughed aloud. He describes the story of my life: trying to stay awake while praying. It is a battle we all face and an important issue for every church.

As a minister for over sixty years, I have known the challenge of trying to sustain prayer meetings and facing frustration and guilt. Somewhere along the way, it seems we have lost our way. This book provides a positive and practical path back to the heart of what God intended prayer to be. I cannot wait for you to read it and experience the same delight I did.

Not long ago, I enjoyed the blessing of being with Daniel and his great church. The presence of the Holy Spirit was obvious among the congregation. I sensed such warmth and deep enthusiasm for the Lord. They are a praying people and have discovered the excitement of real connection with God, due largely to Pastor Henderson's leadership.

Daniel's ideas have also been a personal help to my wife, Beverly, and me. For many years, we have read the Bible and prayed together as a couple. Daniel gave me some fresh ideas about how we could use



PRAYZING!

the Psalms in our devotional time. What a difference! We are grateful for Daniel's creative insights and can personally attest to their practical impact.

Beverly and I have worked for decades to bring spiritual vitality and hope to the American church and her families. This has been our passion. After all these years of intense effort and prayer, we feel that the need for a full-scale revival is greater today than ever before.

Prayer must take the central place in our churches and lives. This will require inspiring leadership and positive motivation. Daniel's years of pastoral experience and keen insights are just the kind of catalyst we need. That is why I believe God is going to use this book in a profound way to open new avenues of meaningful prayer and spark a desperately needed renewal.

If you are a pastor or church leader, please read Daniel's book carefully and put these principles into practice right away. If you know pastors who need fresh inspiration, get a copy of this book into their hands. This is the kind of book I wish I'd had many years ago as a tool to wake up our prayer meetings and inspire our people to pray with fresh vigor.

I am so glad to recommend *PRAYzing!: Creative Prayer Experiences from A to Z* to you and your entire congregation. It has been a help to my wife and me, and it will be a blessing to you. May God use it in a powerful way for His glory.

Dr. Tim LaHaye
minister, author, Christian educator

PREFACE

I rejoice to call Daniel Henderson my pastor and friend.

Daniel is rare. He is a gracious leader in love with God and God's people. I love to hear him preach and teach, and I read everything he writes, but my soul is stirred deeply when I hear him pray. The reformers of the past commonly referred to evangelical Christianity as "experiential religion." They meant that authentic Christianity is not a religion built on formulas, reason, propositional truths, codes of conduct, intellectual ascent to creedal confessions, or even scholarly exegesis, but an authentic, persistent, and glorious encounter with the living God, who reveals Himself in Christ and enlightens and empowers us through the Holy Spirit. Daniel's great delight is to guide men and women to the feet of Jesus and, because he holds tightly to the intrinsic beauty and power of the body of Christ, to do so collectively. The Scriptures come alive too.

Equally, his passion is to mentor others so that they can do the same as he. I have led prayer meetings for many, many years—some of the largest prayer meetings in history—but I welcome each opportunity to be led by and to learn from Daniel. His worship-based prayer meetings are the containment buildings for the nuclear power plant called the local church and the individual Christian life. Daniel is relentlessly calling others to join him and inviting leaders to imitate him, whether they

PRAYZING!

are in front of large crowds or before an audience of One. I have accepted his invitation. I recommend you join me in celebrating *PRAYzing!*, his most recent contribution to a renewal movement desperately needed and at the center of God's heart for His people.

Under Mercy,

Dr. Bob Bakke

North American Director of the Global Day of Prayer

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A writing project like this is never developed in a vacuum. It is the fruit of the labors of many dear people.

First, and always, I thank my wife, Rosemary, for her partnership in life and ministry for twenty-five years. Without her loving and loyal support, I would not be in ministry today. Great is her reward in heaven.

My children—Justin, Jordan, and Heather—have kept my life fresh and fulfilling in so many ways. I am proud of the unique ways in which each of them is pursuing Christ and honoring our spiritual investment in their lives.

The living laboratory of the local church has been the “discovery zone” of virtually all my creative praying. For eleven years, the leaders and saints at Arcade Church in Sacramento, California, walked eagerly and faithfully with me in the path of innovative prayer. Since February 2004, the dear people of Grace Church have grown with me to the next level of creative experience. In so doing, they have fueled my vision. Their willingness to “do something different” has made all the difference in the world, as we have experienced the sufficiency of the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the people of God in the context of a praying church.

The team at Strategic Renewal provides essential coordination for our growing ministry around the world. I am deeply indebted to Lori Lane Bergenstock, our ministry director, for her consistent leadership and persevering passion for our vision. The office ladies (Joyce, Mary

Ann, Sarah, Ginger, and Debby) serve with profound dedication. The board of directors provides essential guidance and accountability for all we do. Thank you, my friends. You are a treasure.

International Renewal Ministries (*PrayerSummits.Net*) first introduced me to the concept of “prayer summits” back in the early nineties. Since then, God has allowed me to implement this approach in a local church context. Today, I am honored to partner with Dennis Fuqua and his team in a variety of prayer endeavors. I thank God for their clear vision and persevering desire to call the church to Scripture-fed, Spirit-led prayer.

The team at *Pray!* Books has been a delight to work with, as always. Dave Wilson urged me to keep writing and believed in the project from the beginning. He even went to bat for my “cheesy” title. I deeply appreciate the insight and sensitivity of Susan Hay Miller in providing editorial expertise, along with so many other team members at NavPress who brought this project to fruition.

A few individuals have made unique contributions to my journey. Connie Acker provided extraordinary administrative coordination to my prayer ministry for so many years. Without her help, much of what we learned would have been squandered in the disorganization of my spontaneous approach. Alice Moss has inspired me over and over again as we have cofacilitated many prayer experiences. When it comes to prayer, we are truly “peas in a pod.” Pastor Mark Vroegop graciously reviewed and improved my manuscript. He is a treasured friend, a trusted advisor, and a profoundly promising leader for a new generation of pastors.

Finally, I thank you, the reader. Your willingness to incorporate the truths and practices of this book into the fabric of your life and congregation is vital to the passion we all share for genuine revival in our land. Thank you, in advance, for taking this call seriously. I look forward to hearing your stories of PRAYzing! as we labor together for the fame of His glorious name.

Daniel Henderson

INTRODUCTION

ENCOUNTERING THE SPIRIT OF CREATIVITY

I held a familiar square of unleavened bread with the small cup of grape juice and turned to face Eugenia Mauzy. As I looked into her wise, gentle eyes, an unanticipated wave of emotion began to overwhelm my soul.

Mrs. Mauzy, a widow well into her eighties, was a humble and godly woman. Physically, Eugenia was frail. I knew it was only the Lord's strength and her sheer will to participate that allowed her to even attend this intensive three-day prayer summit. She had won my pastoral heart as she faithfully supported me on her knees during the early years of my ministry at the church.

Our group of about a hundred people sat around the rustic tables in the dining area of a Christian camp in the Sierra Nevada foothills. In a spontaneous moment of inspiration, I asked everyone to take the bread and cup and serve the person on their left. I clarified, "As you serve one another, explain what the symbols mean, how much the Lord loves the person you're serving, and why you love the person too." It seemed a good idea at the time.

It turned out to be a great idea.

Still, I could hardly contain myself as I looked into the seasoned, expectant face of this dear woman who had endured many trials in the eight decades of her life. I tried to articulate the unfathomable love and grace of Christ, then broke down as I told her how much I loved and

appreciated her. We wept freely and hugged like there was no tomorrow, and we both experienced a new sense of what the Lord had in mind when He told us to remember Him. I watched with amazement as a similar sense of overwhelming commemoration became the all-encompassing experience among the entire group.

This Communion moment was just one of many Spirit-inspired “zingers” I encountered as I facilitated my first three-day prayer summit with brothers and sisters from my congregation. Throughout the event, the Lord moved my heart with creative ways to pray, worship, and respond to the Scriptures—most of which I had never even pondered and had not planned.

Even though I had previously led multiple corporate prayer times virtually every week for the past ten years, never before had I sensed this kind of direction and insight in leading other people into such meaningful, participatory experiences. Each came straight from the Bible and, I believe, straight from the heart of God through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. It was indeed the genesis of a new understanding of prayer in my pastoral ministry.

Those who know me understand that I am a “word guy.” I am not much impressed with trendy church-growth movements. I study hard and try to stick close to the Book in everything I do. Of course, I have always believed and preached about the power of the Holy Spirit. Never before had I experienced the ignition of Word and Spirit in such transformational applications.

Since that summit, well over a decade ago, I have led hundreds of prayer times. Some have been small and nondescript, others very large, but each marked with a new sense of the creativity of the Holy Spirit springing from the pages of Scripture.

Over the years, hundreds of pastors have attended our church-sponsored prayer summits and “Fresh Encounter” prayer meetings. At a particular summit, pastors had traveled from faraway communities, several states, and even Canada to experience this PRAYzing! Throughout those

days, I noticed the pastors taking copious notes. I assumed these were primarily journal entries about personal spiritual lessons. I discovered later that, much to my surprise, they were trying to capture and describe the particulars of these exciting moments of spontaneous prayers.

I have come to understand the extraordinary value of fresh and creative ways to use Scripture in order to engage people in meaningful, participatory prayer. I sense the time has come for me to write a book that will equip pastors, prayer leaders, and other eager Christians with the tools for experiencing a fresh creativity in prayer.

Researchers tell us that more than 90 percent of Americans pray—or at least try.¹ Most are stuck in a mode of occasional crisis-oriented requests. Many would love to learn to pray more effectively, with energy and creativity. Scripture and the Spirit can help every believer integrate innovation and practical application into every prayer experience. I earnestly hope this book will be the tool to help you do this in a new way—and for a lifetime.

With this earnest desire, I humbly offer *PRAYzing!* to you and your circle of fellow believers. Part 1 will give you a biblical foundation and fresh motivation

for creative prayer. In part 2, I will illustrate *PRAYzing!* with twenty-six specific examples of how creative prayer can occur.

God longs for us to experience a fresh sense of His presence every day and every time we gather with others to seek Him. There is no limit to His creativity and no boundaries to the treasures of His Word. With the Holy Spirit's help, we can enjoy unending innovation in our prayer lives. Our hearts, our homes, our congregations, our nation, and our world will never be the same. God has entrusted that power to us through the privilege of effective prayer.

Scripture and the Spirit can help every believer integrate innovation and practical application into every prayer experience.

PART ONE

DISCOVERING THE POWER OF PRAYZING!

CHAPTER 1

NO MORE SLEEPY PRAYER MEETINGS

“God is not the author of boredom — especially when we are conversing with Him.”

— DANIEL HENDERSON

Let me be the first to admit that I have the problem. I have fallen asleep in my share of prayer meetings. Sadly, I have even led some of these supplication siestas.

My problem started as a child. It was complicated by a serious drug issue. My parents *drug* me to church several times a week. The Wednesday evening prayer time provided a special occasion for napping. After a few hymns, the group commenced a long litany of boring, gossip-laden, and seemingly tedious prayer requests. My eyes grew heavy. By the time the people gathered in huddles, sluggishly recounting the lists of names and problems, I had the problem. I was out like a light.

I still remember the old rousing Wednesday evening rally cry, “Sweet Hour of Prayer.” It was sweet all right. After a long day at school, stretching my brain and wearing myself out on the playground, prayer meeting offered a sweet and welcomed nap.

One time in college, I had a particularly embarrassing prayer nap. I sang tenor in a traveling chorale that represented our school. We had played at the beach all day. That night, toward the end of our church concert, the team leader stepped to the platform to offer a closing

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challenge, followed by what seemed to me to be a protracted prayer. The next thing I knew, I woke up to see the entire team (minus a tenor) standing on the platform performing the closing song. I had been out like a light, head in lap, in front of the entire church. No one on the team tried to wake me. They just enjoyed a good laugh at the expense of my drowsy nonparticipation.

SAD, SLEEPY TRADITIONS

In these and many other heavy-eyed moments of divine communion, my only comfort was in knowing that I was following the ignoble tradition of Peter, James, and John dozing on the Savior in the garden. Certainly my prayer naps were not as rude as their lethargic intercession for Jesus on His way to the cross.

Do you remember the details of this all-time low moment in the history of intercession? Jesus told His inner circle of stalwart supporters to wait in the garden while He went a little farther to pour out His soul before the Father as He paced to His agonizing death.

Within minutes, the three disciples were sawing logs. He told them, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:40-41). The Greek term for “watch” literally refers to staying awake. In essence, Jesus said, “Couldn’t you even stay awake with Me one hour? Wake up and pray!”

It gets worse. Two more times they dozed off on the Master. Finally, He stirred them and said, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners” (Matthew 26:45).

I cannot imagine the disappointment the Lord must have felt. As for the disciples, they were missing the real action at one of the most important moments in biblical history. I wonder how many times I have missed what God was doing because I retreated to

slumberland when I should have advanced on my knees to the front lines of battle.

DECLARING WAR ON SLEEPY PRAYER MEETINGS

Over the decades, I have been in prayer meetings where participants drooled, fell over, snored, and even snorted. You have probably seen it—and done it. Somehow, I do not think God had this in mind when He commanded us to “pray in the Spirit” (Jude 20).

I have declared war on sleepy prayer meetings! As a pastor, I have been exasperated with lethargic, dozy gatherings. I do not want to attend, and I certainly do not want to lead, these dead-in-the-water prayer times.

I have discovered an approach I call worship-based prayer. These prayer times are participatory, encouraging, God-centered, and biblical. Instead of an hour of drowsy requests and pitiful pleading, fresh doses of Scripture reading and Spirit-led worship invigorate these gatherings. The foundation of these experiences is the character and Word of God, followed by spontaneous, Spirit-led surrender, intercession, and participation. My book *Fresh Encounters* tells about my journey and the dynamic ways to experience worship-based prayer.¹

Over the years, I have learned a lot about keeping people engaged and energized in prayer. There is still much to learn, but this book will help you join me on the march against nodding off in the prayer room. This is also an important biblical command for all prayer leaders and participants.

THE BIBLICAL CALL TO PRAYING!

When Paul wrote to the young New Testament churches, he said much about prayer. He commanded the saints to gather collectively in passionate, Spirit-guided, energized prayer. He also challenged them to stay awake!

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Colossians 4:2 tells us, “Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving” (NASB). “Keeping alert” means “to stay awake.” A more literal reading of Colossians 4:2 says, “Be earnest and unwearied and steadfast in your prayer [life], being [both] alert and intent in [your praying] with thanksgiving” (AMP). Eugene Peterson’s rendering says, “Pray diligently. Stay alert, with your eyes wide open in gratitude” (MSG).

I’m sure Paul had heard about the heavy-eyed exploits of Peter, James, and John. He probably knew his own tendency to drift off. The Holy Spirit certainly had us in mind when He inspired this command.

In fact, this issue is so important, it is included in the great spiritual warfare passage of Ephesians 6, appearing as an exclamation point on Paul’s instructions for overcoming the devil. Paul tells us that we should be “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, *being watchful* to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:18, emphasis added). Again, “being watchful” is a literal command to stay awake. *The Message* translates this imperative point as, “Prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. *Keep your eyes open*. Keep each other’s spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out” (emphasis added).

The idea is clear. Stay awake and alert! Encourage one another to wakefulness at all times and in every prayer meeting.

WHAT MUST I DO TO STAY AWAKE?

Knowing our tendency to get sleepy, remembering our Lord’s disappointment with His dreamy disciples, and understanding the clear commands of the New Testament on this issue, let me ask, *Why are so many of our prayer meetings boring and lethargic? Why do we lead such drowsy prayer times?*

It may even be that sleepy, disengaged prayer meetings are sinful. Now, that thought will wake you up, won’t it?

Here's the good news. Our Lord has provided everything we need to enjoy vibrant, spirited prayer meetings. His Word is a supernatural and inexhaustible guide to effective, participatory prayer. His Spirit lives within us, providing all the wisdom and creativity we need for unlimited vitality and meaningful responsiveness in our prayers. The Spirit is eagerly waiting to provide every ounce of insight we need for dynamic encounters in prayer. I like to call those moments of inspiration "PRAYzing!"—creative and transforming prayer experiences fueled by Scripture and prompted by the Holy Spirit.

A seminary degree, superior intelligence, or decades of practice are not the sources for effectiveness in prayer. Your enjoyment in prayer is not a matter of some special gift or personality style. God has provided everything for every one of us so we can pray with an alert effectiveness.

Yet, as a pastor, I had to learn this through experience. I have been humbled by the privilege of instructing multiplied thousands of believers in this

dynamic journey of energized praying. I have even had the joy of helping countless fellow pastors with this discovery.

Most important, it will be my privilege to walk with you, in the pages of this book, with your eyes on the Scriptures and your heart yielded to the Spirit. We will discover fresh PRAYzing! for the glory of God and the good of His people.

Are you awake?

*It may even be that
sleepy, disengaged
prayer meetings
are sinful.*
