

The Power of a
PRAYING®
WOMAN

STORMIE
OMARTIAN



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All the stories related in this book are true, but most of the names have been changed to protect the privacy of the people mentioned.

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*Lord, Draw Me into
a Closer Walk with You*

Before I came to know the Lord, I was involved in all kinds of occult practices and Eastern and New Age religions. I searched for God in each one of them, hoping to find some meaning or purpose for my life. I was desperate to find a way out of the emotional pain, fear, and depression I had experienced on a daily basis since I was a child. I thought there surely must be a God, and if I could just be good enough to get close to Him, perhaps something of His greatness would rub off on me, and then I could feel better about myself and my life.

Of course I was never able to do that because the gods I chased after were distant, cold, and remote. And this depressed me all the more because I was raised by a mother who was distant, cold, and remote, not to mention abusive, frightening, and cruel. It was later determined that she was mentally ill, and I have since forgiven her for all that I suffered at her hand. Nevertheless, the memories of my childhood eventually snowballed into an avalanche of pain that became so unbearable that I ended up being suffocated by my own hopelessness and crushed into suicidal despair.

But it was here at the lowest point in my life, when I was 28 years old, that I learned who God really is and received Jesus as my Savior. This began a process of deliverance, healing, and restoration, the likes of which I had never dreamed possible.

From the time I received the Lord and began to feel His life working *in* me, I could see the common thread in all those *other* religions and practices I had dabbled in previously. This similarity was that the gods of each of those religions had no power to save or transform a human life. But the God of the *Bible* did. *He* is the one, true, living God. And when we find *Him* and receive *Him*, His Spirit comes to dwell *in* us. By the power of His spirit, He transforms us from the inside out and miraculously changes our circumstances and our lives.

I also learned that He is a God who can be found. A God who can be known. A God who wants to be close to us. That's why He is called Immanuel, which means "God *with* us." But He draws close to *us* as we draw close to *Him* (James 4:8).

If I could sit down and talk with you in person about your life, I would tell you that if you have received the Lord, the answer to what you need is within you. That's because the Holy Spirit of God is within you, and He will lead you in all things and teach you everything you need to know. He will transform you and your circumstances beyond your wildest dreams if you will give up trying to do it on your own and let *Him* do it *His* way and in *His* time.

This is not about striving to be good enough to get to God, for there is no way any of us can be. This is about letting all of the goodness of God be *in* you. It's about drawing closer to God and sensing Him drawing closer to you. This

is about an intimate walk with God and the wholeness that will be worked in you because of it.

I Know What You Want

I traveled all over the United States speaking to women's groups during three of the last four years. Nearly everywhere I went in that period of time, I took a survey for a book I was writing called *The Power of a Praying® Husband*. I wanted to know how women most wanted to be prayed for. Their response was not surprising, but the fact that it was unanimous in every city and every state was amazing. The number one personal need of all women surveyed was that they would grow spiritually and have a deep, strong, vital, life-changing, faith-filled walk with God. I eventually stopped taking the survey because the results were always the same. I got the point!

I'm sure that you, like me and many women, want a deep, intimate, loving relationship with God. You wouldn't be reading this book if you didn't. You long for the closeness, the connection, the affirmation that who you are is good and desirable. But God is the only one who can give all that to you all of the time. Your deepest needs and longing will only be met in an intimate relationship with Him. No person will ever reach as deeply into you as God will. No one can ever know you as well or love you as much. That insatiable longing for more that you feel, the emptiness you want those closest to you to fill, is put there by God so that *He* can fill it.

God wants us to want Him. And when we realize that it's Him that we want, we become free. We are free to identify the longings, loneliness, and emptiness inside of us as our signal that we need to draw near to God with open arms and ask Him to fill us with more of Himself. But this deep and intimate relationship with God that we all desire and

can't live without doesn't just happen. It must be sought after, prayed for, nurtured, and treasured. And we must *continually* seek after, pray for, nurture, and treasure it.

Five Good Ways to Tell if Your Walk with God Is Shallow

1. *If you follow the Lord for only what He can do for you, your walk with Him is shallow. If you love Him enough to ask Him what you can do for Him, then your relationship is growing deep.*

2. *If you only pray to God when things are tough or you need something, then your walk with Him is shallow. If you find yourself praying to Him many times a day just because you love to be in His presence, then your relationship is growing deep.*

3. *If you get mad at God or disappointed in Him when He doesn't do what you want, then your walk with Him is shallow. If you can praise God no matter what is going on in your life, then your relationship with Him is growing deep.*

4. *If you love God only because of what He does, then your walk with Him is shallow. If you love and reverence Him for who He is, then your relationship with Him is growing deep.*

5. *If you think you have to beg God or twist His arm to get Him to answer your prayers, then your walk with Him is shallow. If you believe that God wants to answer the prayers you pray in line with His will, then your relationship with Him is growing deep.*

Spending Time Alone with Him

We can never draw close to God and get to know Him well, or develop the kind of intimate relationship we want,

unless we spend time alone with Him. It's in those private times that we are refreshed, strengthened, and rejuvenated. It's then we can see our lives from God's perspective and discover what is really important. That's where we understand who it is we belong to and believe in.

God has so much to speak into your life. But if you don't draw apart from the busyness of your day and spend time alone with Him in quietness and solitude, you will not hear it. Jesus Himself spent much time alone with God. If anyone could get away with not doing it, surely it would have been Him. How much more important must it be for us?

I know finding time alone to pray can be difficult. Especially when the enemy of your soul doesn't want you to do that. But if you will make it a priority by setting a specific time to pray daily, perhaps writing it in your calendar the way you would any other important date, and determine to keep that standing appointment with God, you'll see answers to your prayers like never before.

Remember, if you haven't been praying much, you can't expect things to change overnight. It takes a while to get the enormous ocean liner of your life turned around and headed in a different direction. It doesn't immediately reposition itself the moment you begin steering. In fact, you may hardly see any changes at first. It's the same way with prayer. Prayer can turn your life around, but it doesn't always happen the moment you utter your first words. It may take a time of continued prayer before you actually see the scenery change. This is normal, so don't give up. You will soon be heading full speed in a new direction. Far too often people give up just before their breakthrough into the realm of answered prayer. Remember, this trip is not a mini-vacation tour around the harbor, it's a lifelong voyage to meet your destiny. Giving up is not an option.

Naming Names

Do you ever have trouble remembering names? I know I do. Especially when I meet a large number of people at one time. I can remember faces and names separately, but I don't always put the right ones together. And that can get me into trouble. With God it's a different situation. He has only one face, but many, many names. But if we don't know all of His names, we may not understand all the aspects of His character.

God has literally hundreds of names. Sometimes, though, it seems we often have trouble just remembering a few of the basic ones. We may forget one just when we need to remember it. For example, we may think of God as our heavenly *Father*, but forget that He is also our *Husband* and *Friend*. Or we may remember Him as our *Comforter*, but forget that He is our *Deliverer*. We might think of Him as our *Protector*, but fail to remember Him as our *Healer*. Some people never think of God beyond being their Savior, which in itself is more than we deserve. But God wants to be even more than that to us. He wants us to know all the aspects of His character because the way we recognize God will affect the way we live our lives.

Each of God's names in the Bible represents a way He wants us to trust Him. Do you trust Him to be your *Strength* (Psalm 18:1)? Is He your *Peace* (Ephesians 2:14)? Is He the *Lifter of Your Head* when you are down (Psalm 3:3)? Is He your *Refiner* (Malachi 3:2-3)? Your *Wisdom* (1 Corinthians 1:24)? Your *Counselor* (Psalm 16:7)? Your *Resting Place* (Jeremiah 50:6)? Each of His names is sacred, and we must treat each one as such.

When I worked in the secular entertainment world in Los Angeles, I heard the word "Jesus" a hundred times a day, spoken as a curse word by people with no reverence, love,

or understanding of Him. It wasn't until I received Jesus that I realized exactly how much of a curse word that name was when it was used profanely. Taking God's name in vain brings a curse on whoever uses it in that manner because it breaks one of the Ten Commandments. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain" (Exodus 20:7). It also violates God's *greatest* commandment, which is "you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). No one who loves God uses His name in vain.

However, this same word—"Jesus"—when spoken in love by one who reverences Him, has great power in it. Power to save, deliver, heal, provide, protect, and so much more. Using it profanely shuts off these very things from our lives. There is also great power in each one of God's names, and when spoken with faith, love, understanding, and reverence, it brings a blessing and increases your faith.

For example, God's name is always a safe place to run to any time you need help. "The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe" (Proverbs 18:10). If you are sick, run to your Healer. If you can't pay your bills, run to your Provider. If you are afraid, run to your Hiding Place. If you are going through a dark time, run to your Everlasting Light. By speaking His name with reverence and thanksgiving, you invite Him to be that to you. Often there is so much we don't have in our lives simply because we do not acknowledge God as the answer to that need. How can you be healed if you don't acknowledge God as the Healer?

In the following list of God's names, I have included only 30. But there are hundreds more in His Word. Though

He is one God, there are so many dimensions to Him that in order for us to comprehend them all, He has given Himself many names. It's the only way we, who are so *small*, can begin to understand Him, who is so *great*. I suggest that every time you come across another name for God in the Bible, underline it or jot it in the margin or add it to a list. It will remind you of who God wants to be to you. As you read the following list, invite God to be each one of these names to you in a new, real, and life-changing way.

Thirty Good Names to Call Your God

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>Healer</i> (Psalm 103:3) | 18. <i>Spirit of Truth</i> (John 16:13) |
| 2. <i>Redeemer</i> (Isaiah 59:20) | 19. <i>Refuge from the Storm</i> (Isaiah 25:4) |
| 3. <i>Deliverer</i> (Psalm 70:5) | 20. <i>Eternal Life</i> (1 John 5:20) |
| 4. <i>My Strength</i> (Psalm 43:2) | 21. <i>The Lord Who Provides</i> (Genesis 22:14) |
| 5. <i>Shelter</i> (Joel 3:16) | 22. <i>Lord of Peace</i> (2 Thessalonians 3:16) |
| 6. <i>Friend</i> (John 15:15) | 23. <i>Living Water</i> (John 4:10) |
| 7. <i>Advocate</i> (1 John 2:1) | 24. <i>My Shield</i> (Psalm 144:2) |
| 8. <i>Restorer</i> (Psalm 23:3) | 25. <i>Husband</i> (Isaiah 54:5) |
| 9. <i>Everlasting Father</i> (Isaiah 9:6) | 26. <i>Helper</i> (Hebrews 13:6) |
| 10. <i>Love</i> (1 John 4:16) | 27. <i>Wonderful Counselor</i> (Isaiah 9:6) |
| 11. <i>Mediator</i> (1 Timothy 2:5-6) | 28. <i>The Lord Who Heals</i> (Exodus 15:26) |
| 12. <i>Stronghold</i> (Nahum 1:7) | 29. <i>Hope</i> (Psalm 71:5) |
| 13. <i>Bread of Life</i> (John 6:35) | 30. <i>God of Comfort</i> (Romans 15:5) |
| 14. <i>Hiding Place</i> (Psalm 32:7) | |
| 15. <i>Everlasting Light</i> (Isaiah 60:20) | |
| 16. <i>Strong Tower</i> (Proverbs 18:10) | |
| 17. <i>Resting Place</i> (Jeremiah 50:6) | |

If you will go through this list of names periodically and speak each of them out loud, thanking God for being that to you, you'll be amazed at how your faith will grow and how much closer to God you will feel.

My Prayer to God

Lord, I draw close to You today, grateful that You will draw close to me as You have promised in Your Word (James 4:8). I long to dwell in Your presence, and my desire is for a deeper and more intimate relationship with You. I want to know You in every way You can be known. Teach me what I need to learn in order to know You better. I don't want to be a person who is "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7). I want to know the truth about who You are, because I know that You are near to all who call upon You in truth (Psalm 145:18).

I am open to whatever You want to do in me. I don't want to limit You by neglecting to acknowledge You in every way possible. I declare this day that You are my Healer, my Deliverer, my Redeemer, and my Comforter. Today I especially need to know You as (put in a name of the Lord). I believe You will be that to me.

God, help me to set aside time each day to meet with You alone. Enable me to resist and eliminate all that would keep me from it. Teach me to pray the way You want me to. Help me to learn more about You. Lord, you have said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37). I thirst for more of You because I am in a dry place without You. I come to You this day and drink deeply of Your Spirit.

I know You are everywhere, but I also know that there are deeper manifestations of Your presence that I long to experience. Draw me close so that I may dwell in Your presence like never before.

❧ *GOD'S PROMISES TO ME* ❧

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

JAMES 4:8

I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

JOHN 14:16-17

It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

LUKE 12:32

Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

JOHN 16:24

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

HEBREWS 10:23