



# Your Powerful Prayers WORKBOOK

*An In-Depth Bible Study*

*Reaching the Heart of God  
with a Bold and Humble Faith*

SUSIE LARSON

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This workbook is designed for use with Susie Larson's book *Your Powerful Prayers* (ISBN 978-0-7642-1332-8). A six-session DVD Companion (ISBN 978-0-7642-1354-0) is also available.

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FROM THE DESK OF SUSIE LARSON

*Dear friend,*

*I'm so glad you chose to take Your Powerful Prayers to the next level and to mine the treasures in Scripture with me! I pray that as you dig in to God's Word, you will gain a deeper understanding of how relentlessly Jesus pursues us. He truly wants to talk with you and to hear what you say.*

*Take your time working through these passages of Scripture. Don't feel pressured or boxed in by the days between your Bible study. These questions are here to serve you, so take them at a pace that allows for deep reflection and prayerful thought.*

*I'll be praying for you as you work your way through the study questions. Because of Jesus, you have access to the throne room of heaven. Trust that through prayer you can know God's overwhelming joy, power, and peace.*

*May you experience His presence in your life in ever-increasing measures and be especially blessed on this journey.*

*With you, for Him,*

*Susie Larson*

*\*A note to leaders: Please make this study work for you. Since the questions are extensive, feel free to pick and choose the ones that most reflect the content you want to highlight. May God bless you for stepping up and for leading well!*

Section One:  
God, Your Fortress



## Chapter One

# Dare to Pray Like You're Loved

## *You're Secure in Jesus*

*God invites us to a life marked by power and filled with conviction, one that abounds in love and pours out insight. As we walk with Him, talk with Him, read His Word, and trust His heart, we are changed from the inside out.<sup>1</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read Romans 8:31–34 and answer the following questions:
  - a. Verse 31 reminds us that though man may oppose us, God is always for us. He is our ultimate defender. How has God intervened on your behalf in the past? In what ways do you need Him to defend you now? Do you believe this verse enough to make it your own? Do you trust that He has you securely in His hand?

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<sup>1</sup> — Quote from chapter 1 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

- b. Verse 32 reminds us of the lengths God has already gone to provide for us. He sent His own Son to die our death, pay our penalty, and secure our way to be forever with Him throughout eternity. In light of that reality, what trial, hardship, or concern can you *faith-fully* entrust to Him today?

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- c. Verse 33 challenges us to remember that even when our accusers find fault with us (and they will sometimes), Jesus has already established our value and identity in Him. So even the condemnable parts of us are redeemed, accounted for, and forgiven. Write out a soul-reminder today telling yourself who you are because you're in Christ. That said, are there areas of inconsistency in your life that the Lord has been speaking to you about these days?

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- d. Finally, verse 34 charges us to remember that God's voice trumps all others! Jesus gets the final say when it comes to our standing before God. He loves us and even now sits at the Father's right hand and prays for us. How do you suppose Jesus intercedes for you these days? Imagine. Take a wild guess. What do you think is on His heart for you?

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2. Read Romans 8:35–37 and answer the following questions:

- a. Verse 35 challenges our sometimes immature or undeveloped perspective. Because we're such earthbound creatures, we sometimes interpret God's love through the lens of our current circumstances. Yet Jesus promised us life would be hard sometimes. Think about what you're walking through right now and read verse 35 again. Does it mean God no longer loves you because of what you're going through? Based on what you *do* know about God, what truth about God's love and His Word (and your character) is this trial teaching you, saying to you, and showing you?

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- b. In verse 36 Paul refers back to the Psalms to remind us that we *will* in fact suffer hardship, opposition, and persecution. For the Christian, life on earth is as hard as it gets. For the unbeliever, life on earth is as good as it gets. Even though we as Christians suffer, eternal glory awaits us. And so, especially in our hardship, may we reflect Christ's love in such a way that others look up and find Him for themselves. In what ways have you seen the evidence of God's love for you amidst this current chapter of your life?

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- c. Verse 37 powerfully reminds us that our critics, our hardships, and our heartbreaks will NOT have the last say. And when it's all said and done—by God's grace alone—we'll still be standing. Write out a prayer declaring that Christ's overwhelming victory on the cross is a part of your inheritance. He has made you an overcomer!

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3. Read Romans 8:38–39 and answer the following questions:

- a. Paul wrote verse 38 after walking through the threat of death, the promise of life, the opposition of demons, the help of angels, the fears of the day, and the worries about tomorrow. In each and every situation, God assured Paul of His great love for and commitment to Him. Read verse 38 and write out your own paraphrase of this passage inserting your own experiences. In other words, make a statement that declares, *“This is true—I’ve walked through these things. But truer still is God’s great love for me. And He’ll never lose sight of me and never loosen His grip on me!”* Does the thought of His love just make your heart beat faster? Mine too.

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*Something gets healed in us when we trust His love. Something comes alive in us when—amidst the pain we endure—we still believe that He is good. Something is mobilized in us when we understand that He wired us to partner with Him in a way that fits who we are.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> — Quote from chapter 1 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).



## Chapter Two

# Dare to Pray for Perspective

### *You're Part of a Bigger Story*

*If we can know, going into the storms of life, that we are His daughters, His heirs, His prized possessions, we'll stand more sturdily on His truths when the storms hit. And we'll learn to live and pray with expectancy amidst those storms because we'll know in the depths of our souls that God wastes nothing and allows nothing He can't use, redeem, restore, and repurpose for His namesake.<sup>3</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read Psalm 106:24–25 and answer the following questions (I'm reading from the New Living Translation):
  - a. Verse 24 speaks of the Israelites' refusal to trust God. They refused to move forward because they didn't trust their Maker, even though He'd worked wonders in their midst to rescue them from captivity. Some scholars say that their "stuckness" resulted from their *rebellious* fears. Ever thought of it that way? God aches for us when we're afraid, but we defy Him when we cling to those fears and frustrations to the point that we refuse to lay hold of His promises. What do you suppose you're missing in this kingdom life because you've coddled your fears more than you've clung to the promises of God? I dare you to write it down and devise a prayer strategy to overcome (e.g., determine to pray daily, pray God's promises, pray with a trusted friend, journal the journey, do what God says, obey Him quickly).

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<sup>3</sup> — Quote from chapter 2 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

- b. Verse 25 shows us the fruit of unbelief. The Israelites stayed stuck and then grumbled because they were stuck. They refused to believe the promise, and then they griped because they experienced no promise in their lives! Look around for a moment. In what area of life are you most tempted to gripe, complain, or feel frustrated? What do you sense God saying to you here? Write down your thoughts.

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2. Over and over again we see this scenario play out in Scripture: God sees us in our obscurity. He calls us upward and onward for a greater purpose than we can see. We have a choice to make: will we trust Him? Then the giants appear or the wind blows or the answer seems delayed, and we have another choice to make: will we trust Him? What's your favorite story from Scripture in this regard? What about this story most resonates with you? Here are a few of the many examples from Scripture: Abraham and Sarah, Moses, Joseph, Hannah, Elijah, Saul (an example of someone who didn't believe what God said about him and thus defaulted to jealousy, insecurity, and grabbing for himself), David, Daniel, Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary (mother of Jesus), Peter, Paul, etc.

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3. Here are a few verses that will help you gain perspective today:  
Jeremiah 29:11  
Isaiah 55:8-9  
Isaiah 40:28-31

4. Nothing about this Christian life is easy or comes instinctively. Our flesh dies hard, our fears shout loud, and it feels contrary to nature to trust in a God we cannot see. But that's what makes this journey a *supernatural* one. And that's the invitation for those of us who call ourselves believers. We deeply trust and profoundly love this God we cannot see. Sometimes we sense His presence, sometimes we don't. But His promises are always true whether they feel true or not. So know this: *Whatever* troubles your heart today, God's heart not only breaks for you but for the countless others who suffer or struggle like you do. Part of your calling as one who is living and breathing on the earth today, is to see yourself in the bigger story God is writing for all eternity. Just like those mentioned in Scripture, we have a choice to make: Will we trust Him? We can either choose to live small, unbelieving lives, or we can rise up and trust God and participate in the greater kingdom story He is writing on the earth today. Write out a prayer, first, by declaring God's utter faithfulness to you, and second, by interceding for others as Christ daily intercedes for you.

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*We must remember that whenever God allows our hands to be empty for a season, it's because He intends to fill them.<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> Quote from chapter 2 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Three

# Dare to Pray With Endurance

### *How to Pray With a Broken Heart*

*In the midst of our not-yet seasons and times of heartbreak and disappointment, we must remember that there are aspects of our story that are significantly important to the greater story God is writing on the earth today—things that though we can't see with our eyes right now—are nevertheless in motion in the heavenly realm to bring about the purposes of Almighty God.<sup>5</sup>*

#### Study Questions

1. Read Psalm 27:13–14 and answer the following questions:
  - a. In verse 13, David made a faith declaration before he saw the breakthrough. How do you talk about the circumstances that trouble you these days? Do you have hope and faith that you will see a breakthrough? Is this battle making you a braver warrior? Write down your thoughts.

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<sup>5</sup> Quote from chapter 3 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

b. Verse 14 offers us a threefold charge. Let's take them one by one:

- Wait patiently: *Patience speaks of endurance, restraint, and depth.* How might God use your current heartbreak to cultivate endurance, restraint, and depth in your character? Write it down. Also, to wait patiently is to know that something better is coming; it's worth going without now so you can lay hold of the best later. Write down your thoughts on what God's best might look like for you.

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- Be brave: *Bravery speaks of courage and conviction, and endurance. This doesn't mean fearlessness, but rather conviction that upstages our fears.* What does bravery look like for you here? Write down how God might want you to embrace a heart of bravery.

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- Be courageous: *Courage speaks of strength in the face of our fears or opposition—the willingness to stand alone or stand strong when it'd be easier to cut and run.* What would courage look like for you here? God calls us to BE courageous, which implies that we have a choice in the matter. What does a more courageous you look like? Write it down.

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2. Read Psalm 34:18–19 and answer the following questions:

- a. One of the most difficult things about being brokenhearted or crushed in spirit is how far away God feels. And yet this verse tells us that Jesus is actually very near when our hearts are broken. How might you pray differently knowing that amidst your pain or hardship, Jesus is very near and intimately present in your trial? Write out a prayer and pour out your heart to Him.

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- b. Verse 19 reminds us that we will face many troubles during our time on this earth. But God has a plan amidst each and every battle we face. Write out your current battles or struggles in list form. Then, next to each of these, write out one of God’s promises to you. Determine never again to look at your problems apart from God’s promises. He’s with you. He’s involved. And He has a plan. Stay connected to His Word, His promises. And believe it from the bottom of your heart: He is present.

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3. Read Psalm 34:1–3 and answer the following questions:

- a. David saw many trials, some of his own making. Yet he learned the secret of the abiding life: staying in fellowship with God and declaring His greatness no matter the season. We see many trials in our lives as well (and some are of our own making). But may we stay in rich fellowship with God and may we declare His greatness and faithfulness no matter the season of our lives. This is good for our soul, great for our perspective, and helps us endure through the storms. And it gives God glory. Read verses 1–2 again and write out a prayer declaring who God is, who He has been, and who He will be in your life!

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- b. Read verse 3 and consider someone in your life who shares your passion for Jesus. Give them a call, send them a text, or shoot them an email and engage in a faith conversation. Tell them about this passage of Scripture (Psalm 34:3) and share how you’re simply doing what Scripture tells you to do: You’re magnifying the Lord and exalting His name with a fellow traveler. Tell your friend who God has been to you. Ask her to share about her faith journey with you. Write about that conversation here.

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*We need to crawl out of our smaller story so we can see all that God is up to in and around us. Because He is, and it’s awesome.*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> — Quote from chapter 3 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Four

# Dare to Pray and Say What's True

### *How to Pray When You Forget Who You Are*

*Don't race through life's moments forgetting who you are. "Heir-amnesia" will not only deprive you of the thriving life to which your soul is heir, it'll also keep you from spilling life onto those around you who desperately need to know how the Father feels about them. You have access for a purpose: to walk intimately with a loving-living God and to reflect His love to a world very much in need.<sup>7</sup>*

#### Study Questions

1. Read this passage and answer the following questions: 1 John 3:1–3
  - a. Verse 1 speaks of this juxtaposition—how God has set His affection upon us and established our identity in Him, but the world is unable to recognize who we are or that we belong to Him. Jesus dealt with this same thing. He understands when the world misses us. That's why He implores us to believe that no matter if the world sees or understands or loves us, *He* does! Write out a prayer declaring what's true about you according to God's perspective (not man's).

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<sup>7</sup> — Quote from chapter 4 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).



- b. Verse 2 is a beautiful reminder that we're still a work in process. Jesus already knows how beautiful we'll be when we finally see Him face to face. In fact, seeing Him will allow us to finally see ourselves as He does. Have you noticed how you are your best self around those who love you fully? And isn't it something how this verse reminds us that we belong to Him fully NOW, even though we're on our own journey to becoming more like Him? Write your thoughts on God's unhindered, unrelenting affection for you. How does the idea of God's love impact your perspective on prayer? Write it down.

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- c. Verse 3 requires some thought. How does our hope in Him purify our own hearts? Here is my second point: When we fixate on our failures or focus on our temptations, it always takes our gaze downward. But when we lift our eyes to heaven and consider that we're right now established with God, and that one day we'll see Him with that smile that reaches His eyes and we'll know only glory and gladness . . . well, that makes me want to live the other-worldly life He's called me to. How about you?

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2. Read Colossians 3:1–3 and answer the following questions:

- a. This whole passage supports the questions and answers we just explored in 1 John 1:1–3; let’s take things a bit deeper now. Verse 1 challenges us with a truth that calls for an action-oriented faith. In other words, the passage challenges us this way: “Since your spirit, your identity, your story, and your actions have been raised with Christ, since your *whole* life has been raised with Christ, since this is absolutely true about you, set your mind, your sights, and your goals on the realities of heaven, where Jesus sits in honor and authority, where He will have the last say, and where no one and nothing can snatch your inheritance from you. Since you now know the truth about you, live like it’s true for you!” Write out a prayer of thanksgiving and thank Jesus for what He accomplished by adopting you into the family of God. Ask Him to help you live with eternity in mind.

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- b. Consider what Scripture means when it says that you’ve died to this life and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. Do some cross-referencing if you need to (if you have a study Bible, read the study notes, but do what you can to dig deeper on this one). To the best of your ability, write a paraphrased, personalized version of this passage.

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3. Read Galatians 2:20 and answer the following questions.

- a. We live this life in the flesh, but as Paul writes, we live it by faith in the Son of God who gave Himself up for us because He loves us. We all deal with the tension of sin and purity, unbelief and faith. Write about the battle between our flesh and our spirit. What have you learned about this particular struggle? What helps you walk in the spirit so as not to fulfill the desires of flesh (see Galatians 5:16)?

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- b. John 3:6 reminds us that flesh gives birth to more flesh, while spirit gives birth to the spiritual things. In what ways do you feel pulled to indulge the flesh? In what ways is the Spirit breathing fresh life into your soul? How do you see Him working in and around you?

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- c. In light of your answer to the above question, can you see why prayer, obedience, and faith are so interconnected with our beliefs and our actions? The enemy baits us into sin and the Holy Spirit invites us into a richer, deeper life in Christ than we ever thought possible. But we have to say no to one to say yes to the other. Remember who you are and follow the Spirit's lead in your life. What's He saying to you today?

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*God knows what we need more than we do and will time out His answers and breakthroughs in a way that strengthens our faith, sturdies our stance, and softens our heart.*<sup>8</sup>

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8 — Quote from chapter 4 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

# Section Two: God, Your Father



## Chapter Five

# Dare to Pray Like an Heir

## *You're Royalty*

*Think about it. What Jesus accomplished on the cross was not simply an invitation to think differently, nor was it a ticket to a hip Christian social club. Here's the life-changing truth about Christ's overwhelming victory on the cross: Jesus' triumph over the grave, over sin and death, blew the doors off the enemy's claim on us!<sup>9</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read Ephesians 2:8–9 (and if you've read this verse a thousand times, I encourage you to read it again with fresh eyes and an expectant heart). Answer the following questions:
  - a. Grace not only saves us, it empowers, enables, and sustains us. If you were to take an honest inventory of your life and your perspective, what percentage of your trust falls on your own efforts, and what percentage of your trust relies solely on the grace of God?

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<sup>9</sup> — Quote from chapter 5 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

- b. Can you see how when we rely on our own efforts we more easily succumb to “heir amnesia”? When we forget or lose sight of what God has done, we just as quickly lose sight of who we are because of what He has done. Take a moment and remind your soul of what He’s done and what that means for you and your identity.

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- c. We tend to boast in our strengths, which really makes us weak because we’ve moved ourselves from our sturdy place in Christ in an effort to stand on our own laurels. Don’t feel the need to write down this next answer, but I do challenge you to take an honest inventory: In what area of life do you tend to judge others’ weaknesses by your own strengths? Maybe spend some time with the Lord around that perspective and see what He has to say to you.

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2. Read Colossians 2:13–15 and answer the following questions:

- a. You and I were once dead in our sins and then Christ made us alive in Him! Isn't that spectacular news? Life, forgiveness, a cleared record, the Holy Spirit as a gift to guard and guide us and as a down payment of things to come. . . . How blessed are we to be a part of the family of faith? Ponder the supernatural transaction of your salvation. Write out a prayer of utter thanksgiving for what Christ has accomplished for *you*.

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- b. Consider that Jesus took the taunts and the threats of the enemy and He turned the table on him. Jesus made a public spectacle of the powers that oppose us to serve the enemy and the rest of the world notice: that no weapon formed against us will prosper (Isaiah 54:17) and no threat against us will prevail (Romans 8:37). In what areas of your life does the enemy consistently taunt you, accuse you, and threaten you?

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- c. He doesn't get to do that to God's children! The enemy has been defeated. And the only power he has is the power we give him. Spend some time in prayer and take back the ground you've handed over out of insecurity and fear. It is *for* freedom that Christ has set us free!

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3. Read 1 Peter 2:9–10 and answer the following questions:

- a. Do you see the declarations in this passage? *You are* a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession. Why? That *you* may declare the praises of the One who saved and redeemed you! You’re no longer lost, you’re found. You once were a spiritual orphan but *now* you’re an heir. In what area of your life do you tend to think like an heir?

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- b. In what area of life do you still think like an orphan? Write out a prayer of faith, asking God for a fresh glimpse of who you are.

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- c. How might your prayers grow more powerful when you get a firmer grasp on your identity in Him and on His tender, powerful heart for you? Dream a little, and write down your thoughts.

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*The more time you spend with Jesus and the more time you spend pondering His great and personal love for you, the more you'll find that His love heals your soul, makes you whole, and makes your heir status actually believable.<sup>10</sup>*

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10 — Quote from chapter 5 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Six

# Dare to Pray Without Condemnation

## *You're Forgiven*

*May you remember today that Jesus' overwhelming victory on the cross gave you a place at the table of grace. You GET to be there because Jesus unequivocally defeated sin, death, inferiority, insecurity, imperfection, isolation, and rejection, just to name a few. And He doesn't yank you from your seat at the table when you occasionally lose a battle or forget who you are.<sup>11</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read Romans 8:1–2 and answer the following questions:
  - a. It's a bit easier to comprehend that for us, when we're in heaven, forever with the Lord, there'll be no condemnation. Yet this passage reminds us that this promise is for us right now. There is NOW, NO condemnation for us who are in Christ Jesus. Why do suppose God wants us to grasp this truth now while we still grapple with our sinful tendencies?

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<sup>11</sup> — Quote from chapter 5 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

- b. If we allow our emotions and our behaviors to dictate our perspective, we'll never fully grasp who we are and what kind of standing we have before God because of Jesus. All emotions and inconsistent behaviors aside, write out a statement of faith declaring who you are—right standing and all—because of what Jesus has done for you.

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- c. Ask God for a fresh perspective on your sin tendencies—those things to which you constantly default to make yourself feel better. What might God have for you that's better and more life-giving than that particular indulgence?

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- d. Picture yourself approaching the throne of grace, praying with humble boldness because you have a firmer grasp on who you are. What would you pray for? Write out those bold, humble requests.

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2. Read Romans 8:12–14 and answer the following questions:

- a. Even though we have the heir-privilege of a no-condemnation status, it doesn't mean that we'll not still suffer with sin's consequences when we default to the "deeds of the flesh." Is there a particular habit, perspective, or statement of unbelief that God wants you to put under your feet? Remember, our own sin weakens us. And God wants us strong. Picture His gentle, scarred hand out before you. What will you give Him today so you can lay hold of more of what *He* has for you?

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- b. You and I cannot defeat our sin nature and/or tendencies in our own strength. It's only by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can lay hold of freedom and walk in freedom. Invite the Holy Spirit into your current struggle with sin and remind your soul while you're at it that you're under NO condemnation—even amidst your battle.

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- c. When was the last time you sensed God's leading in your life? When was the last time He whispered to your soul? Read verse 14 again and write out a prayer of thanks that you belong to the King.

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3. Read Romans 8:15–17 and answer the following questions:

- a. Scripture says you've not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. He has not given us a spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7). Think about it: fear is a spirit that makes us cower in the corner, self protect, play "not to lose" rather than playing to win. And Jesus has not given us such a spirit. So when we feel like a fearful slave, guess who's behind it! In what area of your life do you struggle with fear? Write it down.

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- b. So often we long for relief from the fear or the circumstance when what Jesus really wants for us is freedom before the relief ever comes. We are not slaves. We are not made to cower in fear. We are called to be full of faith and courage and conviction and boldness and humility and expectancy! Write out a faith-filled statement: speak to your fears and put faith back into your perspective.

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- c. As you read the full passage you'll find that just as we're heirs, we're also going to suffer during our time on this earth. That can be an unnerving thought unless we remember how "for us" God is. He won't let anything slip through His hands that will destroy us. Every trial will one day serve us well in the end. And think about heaven for a moment: *Everything in us that's condemnable will be gone forever. And everything that's redeemable will be ours forever.* In the face of your fears about suffering and/or amidst your current suffering, write your thoughts on heaven and on God's promise to one day redeem your story.

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*If we stay humbly grateful for our place at the table of grace, we will be powerful in prayer and protected from the self-sins that threaten to derail us. If the Spirit of God convicts us for our wandering ways, we're wise to humbly respond and thank Jesus for His mercy and grace.<sup>12</sup>*

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12 — Quote from chapter 6 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Seven

# Dare to Pray God's Promises

## *You're Anchored*

*You will have to fight for some of the things He has promised you. You will have to stand on His Word even when it doesn't feel true. But the battle will be worth it. And, when it's all over but the shouting, you can be assured that Jesus will get you safely home because that's exactly what He promised He'd do.<sup>13</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read Matthew 11:1–6 and answer the following questions:
  - a. Jesus described John the Baptist as one of the greatest men who ever lived. Yet, as John sat in prison, he not only forgot who he was, he forgot who Jesus was too. In John's obscurity he battled discouragement. Ever been there? Me too. Let's look at three important lessons we can take away from Jesus' response to John's questions:
    - We need to remember the things we've already seen God do. We have a history with God. Write down some of the ways God has come through for you in the past. What answers do you enjoy now from prayers you prayed in the past?

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13      Quote from chapter 7 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).



- We need to *believe* that God is still working in our midst even though we cannot see it. Write down some of the ways you believe He's working, even though you cannot see such evidence yet.

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- We need to guard our hearts from getting offended when God doesn't give us what we want, when we want it. *Blessed* is the one who is not offended with Him (that's what Jesus said). In what ways do you tend to get angry or impatient with God? Write out a prayer of reconciliation, reconciling your heart with His so you're on the same page once again.

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2. Read Ephesians 3:12 and answer the following questions:
  - a. Because of Christ and our faith in Him, we can *now* come boldly and confidently into His presence. Isn't that just spectacular? What's the boldest, most confident prayer you've ever prayed?

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- b. What keeps you from consistently coming before the throne with that same humble, bold confidence?

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- c. Imagine Jesus, with His smile that reaches up to His eyes, sitting at the Father's right hand. Imagine Almighty God on His throne exuding power and love and kindness. Imagine the angels singing, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!" Now picture yourself coming boldly and confidently into *that* throne room because you belong there and know that you get to be there. How might you pray differently? Write down your thoughts.

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3. Prayerfully read Hebrews 6:16–19 and then answer the following questions:
- a. God's nature is unchangeable, His promises are unshakable, and He has made a promise to *you*. His hold on you is stronger than your hold on Him. He is committed to you. May your soul be both encouraged and empowered to hold fast to His promises based on His character. What's your area of greatest angst right now? Write it down. Now find an inheritance promise and make it your own. Memorize it, pray it, say it, and even sing it if you have to. Tether yourself to God's faithfulness, for it's impossible for Him to fail you.

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- b. The Amplified version of verse 19 reads this way: *This hope [this confident assurance] we have as an anchor of the soul [it cannot slip and it cannot break down under whatever pressure bears upon it]—a safe and steadfast hope that enters within the veil [of the heavenly temple, that most Holy Place in which the very presence of God dwells].* Read this again, one more time for good measure. Isn't this just a stunning reality? No matter what life throws our way, our anchor holds because Jesus can not and will not break His promise to us. Write out a prayer of thanks to Him today.

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*Picture your soul's anchor leading upward. Remember that God's hold on you is stronger than your hold on Him. He's relying on Himself (not you) to get you safely home.<sup>14</sup>*

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14 — Quote from chapter 7 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Eight

# Dare to Pray From Victory

### *You're a Warrior*

*We all have our battles. Without them we'd be weak-kneed saints who too quickly lose our footing. Trials train us to stand. Battles teach us how to fight. And God's promises remind us of what's true about us and about God.<sup>15</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. We explored this particular passage in the Chapter 1 study notes, but it bears revisiting given how far we've come in grasping our heir status. Romans 8:37 reads this way: "No, despite *all these things*, overwhelming victory is ours in Jesus Christ." Despite all *what* things? Go back and read Romans 8:35–37 and read Paul's list of hardships and setbacks. Now write down your own list of struggles and setbacks. Finish your list with your own personalized version of Romans 8:37—and read it out loud until your focus shifts from your troubles to the God who promises you victory.

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<sup>15</sup> — Quote from chapter 8 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

2. Read Psalm 138:1–3 (from the New Living Translation if possible) and answer the following questions:

- a. Verse 1 invites you simply to thank God with all your heart. Take a moment to consider the parts of your life and your battle that you're *sincerely* thankful for. Write those things down either in list form or in the form of a personal prayer to God. The Bible charges us to be thankful in all things (because it honors God and it's good for us), and, interestingly, neuroscience has learned that a grateful heart and mind is the shortest path to a healed soul.

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- b. Verse 2 invites us to humble ourselves and to look up in awe at the wonder of God's love and faithfulness. This verse also reminds us that *all* of God's promises are backed by the honor of His name! Ponder that for a moment. Scripture tells us that God's name is a strong tower, a refuge, a place of safety, and a place where we can dwell. Connect the sturdiness of His promises to the steadiness of His great name. Then write out a prayer of renewed confidence in Him. Declare to your own soul that He will indeed come through for you!

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- c. Verse 3 tells us that as soon as we pray, God answers us, and He encourages us by giving us the strength we need. Yet, it doesn't always appear that way or feel that way. This is where trust comes in. If you've prayed, God has already begun the process of answering your heart's cry. To pray from victory is to pray with confidence that God hears and moves when His people pray. Write out a faith statement regarding the prayers you've already prayed. Declare God's faithfulness over your circumstances. Ask God for a renewed sense of perspective and perseverance to stay the course.

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3. Read 1 John 5:14–15 and answer the following questions:

- a. When I first got ahold of this passage as a young mom, it changed everything for me. If we know we're praying God's will, we can know we're in step with God and we can embrace a fierce expectancy that He will answer in a powerful way (almost always in a different way than we imagine, but the answer is always better than we can understand this side of heaven). Here's a very thought-provoking question: Have you created a bulls-eye in your prayers that God must hit with His answer, or else? Is there any prayer on your list that you're not sure is exactly God's will? If you've come to God with conditions and expectations, I challenge you to surrender those to Him right now—one by one—by name. Give God your earthbound perspective and ask Him for an eternal one.

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- b. What about the prayers you're sure of? Write down the prayers that you *know* God has given you permission to go after. Where are you in the process? Have you gained some ground? Seen any kind of breakthrough? Write down your thoughts and thank God for the small victories you've seen along the way.

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- c. What is He saying to you now? What are your next steps? How are you managing to keep perspective? What attitudes and thoughts do you need to guard against?

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*The only way we can consistently pray from victory is to remind our souls—again and again—who God is to us and who we are to Him. Take some time in prayer to do just that. I challenge you to humbly bow before Him and open your hands as you pray. Remember, God can't resist a humble heart, and the devil can't win against one either.<sup>16</sup>*

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16 — Quote from chapter 8 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

# Section Three: Jesus, Your King





## Chapter Nine

# Dare to Ask

### *With Humility*

*Prayer is ultimately about becoming who we were always meant to be in Christ. It's about an ongoing, intimate dialogue with the One who put the stars in their place. He is the King. He's returning as the King. He's placed us on the earth for a very distinct purpose. And our calling requires a listening ear and a humble heart.<sup>17</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read James 4:7 and then go to pages 140–141 of the book *Your Powerful Prayers*. Read what it means to get out of rank and then answer the following questions:
  - a. Do you sense in your heart that you've stepped out of rank in any way? If so, spend some time doing business with God. Do the first part of James 4:7 and submit to God.

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<sup>17</sup> — Quote from chapter 9 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

- b. In what ways is the enemy taunting you and threatening you? As you consider your current battle, can you more clearly see how consistently he lies to you? Now (either with a friend, a loved one, or on your own), resist the devil. Pray something like this: *In the name of Jesus and with the authority of Christ in me, I resist you, devil! You have NO authority over me! You don't get to taunt me. You don't get to harass me! I resist you and your lies, and I command that you flee. You are a defeated foe and you are under my feet because I am under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

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2. Read Hebrews 11:1, 6 and answer the following questions:

- a. Hebrews 11:1 reminds us that faith starts out as blind. We trust a God we cannot see for things we do not yet have. Yet it's faith that bears fruit. Unbelief does not. It's faith that plants the seeds. Unbelief digs them back up again. Faith plans for the future right in the face of fear. Faith is your substance, your evidence of things you cannot yet see. So what are you believing God for? Write down your faith list.

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- b. Verse 6 reminds us that it's impossible to please God without faith. And that He rewards those who earnestly, sincerely seek His face, His will, and His involvement in their lives. Take inventory of your thought life, your prayer life, and your current perspective, and consider this: God *wants* to reward you! This question may be uncomfortable to answer, but I pray you'll give it a try: In what ways do you think God is pleased with your faith? In what ways have you engaged your faith, held onto His promises, and continued to live with expectancy? Write it down.

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- c. How do you suppose God rewards our faith? What does that look like?

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- d. God's rewards are both earthly and eternal. Take a moment to imagine a multiplied reward in heaven for the faith you engaged on earth. Really let that in for a moment. Picture God grabbing your shoulders and smiling as He looks in your eyes, and then showing you what rich rewards He's prepared *for you*. This is partly what it means to set our sights on the realities of heaven (see Colossians 3:1). Write down a prayer of thanks for the rewards that are already stored up for you (that no one can snatch from you). Then write out a prayer of faith amidst your current battles.

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3. Read Hebrews 12:12–13 and answer the following questions:

- a. This passage charges us to take a new grip with our tired hands and to strengthen our weak knees. Faith requires tenacity in the face of opposition and discouragement. It involves perseverance in the face of delays and distractions. Are there promises from Scripture that you've lost sight of? Maybe loosened your grip on? Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that when we wait on the Lord, we will most definitely find new strength and the power we need to keep going. Ask the Lord to show you a couple of promises you can hang on to; wait on the Lord and ask Him for new strength. Then wrap your fingers around those promises and don't let go. Write your verses here.

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- b. Read verses 12–13 once more and notice the last part of this passage. God calls you to strengthen your grip, to sturdy your steps, to reclaim your focus. Why? So that those who are watching you or following you will not fall but become strong in the process. Who's watching you that you know of? Write down their first names. Pray for them and for yourself that many people will be inspired and equipped by the way you walk out this faith journey.

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*May we stretch out our hands, stand on our tiptoes, and pray. Let's pray big, audacious, impossible prayers. And may we continue to listen, to learn, and to obey. Anything is possible with God.*<sup>18</sup>

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18 — Quote from chapter 9 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Ten

# Dare to Seek

### *With Passion*

*To live with expectancy is to throw away our puny picture frame and give God time and space to work out His plans for us with the understanding that there's always a mystery to following God. He's a miracle-working God, and He often breaks through in ways we couldn't have imagined and at a time we least expect.<sup>19</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read Psalm 65 and answer the following questions:
  - a. When you face your current hardship and you consider God's profound ability to care for the earth and for your heart at the same time, does it impact your faith perspective? Yes? No? Explain.

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<sup>19</sup> — Quote from chapter 10 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

- b. Read verse 5 of Psalm 65. God answers prayers in awesome and profound ways, which means that sometimes the answer we “see” is only a tip of the iceberg. His answers go deep and wide, are wise and thoughtful. Write down a few of your most meaningful answers to prayer and then pause and ask God to give you a deeper insight into their impact on the earth today (and to the greater kingdom story).

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- c. Sometimes we get so lost in our everyday battles that we forget how great and mighty our God really is. Dare to look above the battles to the God who fights for you. Consider that though you have troubles, the Lord *will*—one day—deliver you from them all. Take time now, before the breakthrough comes, and thank Him for His attention to detail, His concern for your story, and for His commitment to get you safely home. He is good and He’ll continue to be.

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2. Read Psalm 66 and answer the following questions:

- a. What worship song has especially ministered to you these days? Take a moment now to play that song (go to YouTube if you have to) and worship God with your whole heart, voice, and passion. Engage in worship in a way you haven’t in a long time. He draws near when we worship. He is worthy to be praised. He is God. And we’re made to worship Him!

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- b. Read verses 9–10 and consider how your recent tests and trials have actually sturdi- ed your stance of faith. Though you wouldn’t want to go through them again, would you trade them? Write out a prayer thanking God for His *good* work in you.

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- c. Read verses 16–20 and consider that though God has asked for absolute honesty about your needs and missteps, He is more than willing to forgive and to hear your prayers. God takes all of who we are—our weakness, our selfishness, our fears, our failures, our hopes, and our dreams—and He makes something beautiful out of us. And when we passionately seek Him, we find Him to be more than we dreamed He could be. In what area of your life do you sense He’s asking you to trust Him? What part of your self-life are you tempted to hide but invited to trust Him with? Read the whole psalm again if you need a fresh perspective on how worth-it it is to trust Him!

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3. Read Mark 6:45–52 and answer the following questions:

- a. First of all, to establish context, you may want to read Mark 6:30–44 where Jesus multiplies the loaves and fishes for the multitudes. The disciples were faced with an impossible task (the need to feed thousands). They had insufficient resources. But they had Jesus. They gave Him what they had. He lifted the offering to heaven and thanked God. And then the miracle happened. Everybody had enough food and there were leftovers! Now we're at the scene of the disciples in trouble out in a boat and Jesus knows they're starting to panic, so He walks on the water toward them. The disciples had seen Jesus provide for their needs, but this was a new test. Would He also provide for their *deliverance*? How about you? In what areas of life do you tend to trust Him and in what areas do you still panic when trouble sets in?

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- b. Read how Jesus responds to His disciples in the storm (verse 50) and picture Jesus saying those same words to you. Write out a paraphrased statement of what you think Jesus would say to you about your current situation.

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- c. Read verses 51–52 and consider the idea that Jesus will in due time calm your storm. But when He does will His involvement bring you more than relief? Will it also bring a deeper awareness of the kind of God you serve? Consider verse 52 again: *The disciples still didn't understand the significance or the miracle of the loaves because their hearts were too hard to take it in.* Wow. These were Christ's closest followers and they missed much of His majesty due to a hardness of heart! First of all, you're not alone when you struggle with unbelief or an earthbound perspective. But secondly, and more importantly, don't you so desperately want to perceive and comprehend and grasp the significance of God's involvement in your life? Me too. Spend some time in prayer; ask God to open the eyes of your heart because you don't want to miss a thing. Write down some of the insights He shows you during this time.

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*Maybe it's time to up your game and seek God earnestly regarding your life, your future, and His promises. If you seek Him, you will find Him. He rewards those who earnestly seek after Him.*<sup>20</sup>

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20 — Quote from chapter 10 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Eleven

# Dare to Knock

### *With Confidence*

*How often does shame keep us from audaciously running into the arms of our Father not only to receive grace just after we've blown it, but to dare to ask for things we could never earn, deserve, or acquire on our own?<sup>21</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. We've looked at Ephesians 3:12 once already, but let's read it again in the context of the enemy's constant taunts of shame. What does God say about our ability to come before Him with gladness and confidence? Tell yourself why it is that you *get* to come before Jesus. And then ask yourself if you're as bold and confident as Jesus invites you to be. Write down your thoughts (dare to ask God for a fresh gift of holy boldness and confidence).

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<sup>21</sup> — Quote from chapter 11 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

2. Read Hebrews 4:14–16 and answer these questions: Since we have a high priest, what does this passage charge us to do? Have you loosened your hold on the promises of God? Have you lost your momentum when it comes to chasing after the heart of God? Or do you have a strong sense of expectancy when it comes to God’s presence, His power, and His promises? Write down your thoughts.

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- a. Look at the passage in Hebrews again and consider who Jesus is to you according to Scripture. What keeps you from boldly, confidently going after *everything* He’s promised you? Write down your thoughts.

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3. Read Hebrews 7:24–25 and consider this: No one will ever overpower Jesus. No one will ever upstage Him. No one will ever displace Him. He is our high King, eternal God, advocate, and Savior, *forever*. And He *lives* to make intercession for *you*. How do you suppose He prays for you? What do His prayers for you sound like? Just try this exercise. Write out your best idea of what Jesus’ prayer for you would sound like. May the Holy Spirit breathe life in and through you so you can comprehend how *for you* God is.

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*We don't have to try and convince God to be good to us. In fact, HE'S the one trying to convince us to receive and walk in His goodness.<sup>22</sup>*

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22 — Quote from chapter 11 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

## Chapter Twelve

# Dare to Dream

### *Expect to Persevere*

*There's no battle, no scheme, no attack of the enemy that can keep us from God's love, His presence, and His power. And (if we let them), our trials will always serve us, teach us, and strengthen us in the end.<sup>23</sup>*

### Study Questions

1. Read John 15:16 and consider why Jesus connected the abiding life (that bears much fruit) with audacious prayer. Write down your thoughts.

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2. Read John 1:16 and write down at least twenty blessings you enjoy because God is good.

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<sup>23</sup> — Quote from chapter 12 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).

3. Read 2 Corinthians 4:13–18 and answer the following questions:

- a. Look at verse 13 again. How we speak says a whole lot about what we believe. Take inventory of what you've been saying about your life, especially regarding your difficult circumstances. Is it time for a reset? Ask God for a fresh perspective.

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- b. Look at verses 14–15 and consider the idea that your own fight of faith is spilling over onto those around you. Our trials, if handled in faith, will move all of God's kingdom purposes forward. Who is watching you persevere? What do they see?

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- c. Look at verse 16 and consider how predictable the enemy is when it comes to tempting you to lose heart and to want to give up. Identify his mode of operation, put your foot down, and determine that you're made for eternity, for faith, and God will give you what you need to persevere. Write out a faith-declaration stating that bold truth!

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- d. Finally, look at verses 17–18 and consider this: Your current troubles, though temporary, are achieving a weightiness in your character, a song for God’s glory, and an outcome you cannot imagine. Your troubles are temporary. And yet, they’ll serve you well in the end. Thank God now for the amazing rewards and answers that await you because of your faith!

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*Persevering prayer is not for the faint of heart. It’s far easier to give up than it is to go forward. It’s much easier to complain than it is to contend. Gripping about your circumstances is natural. Grabbing hold of promises that defy our circumstances? Well, that’s gritty and supernatural.<sup>24</sup>*

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24 — Quote from chapter 12 of *Your Powerful Prayers* by Susie Larson (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2016).