Define Your DESTINY through PRAYER

Your Journey to Divine Revelation

Sue Curran
Destiny Image Books by Sue Curran

Prayer in Another Dimension
Define Your DESTINY through PRAYER

Your Journey to Divine Revelation

Sue Curran
DEDICATION

Two of my greatest mentors have gone on to their reward in heaven. Dr. Judson Cornwall, my pastor for thirty-one years, and Dr. Fuchsia Pickett, my dear friend and colleague, walked out their lives before me in such a way that I understood what true fathers and mothers in the faith should be.

This book is dedicated to them with grateful and loving memories for the mark they both left on my life. The journey that God set for me required strong and faithful support and leadership from those who had travelled this way before me.
ENDORSEMENTS

It is a delight to recommend Sue’s book, Define Your Destiny Through Prayer. Sue is an amazing woman of God, who walks closely with the Holy Spirit. Her hunger for God’s presence and her desire for deep intimacy with Jesus flows through every page of this book. Sue’s personal journey of worship and prayer will challenge and encourage you to press in to your own encounters with Jesus.

I pray that as you read this book the Holy Spirit ignites your heart with greater passion and intimacy with Jesus and that you begin to bear exponential fruit all year round!

Heidi Baker, PhD
Founding Director, Iris Global

Define Your Destiny Through Prayer is a wonderful book, filled with inspiration and insight. Any time I have the privilege of reading about the journey of a seasoned prayer warrior like Dr. Sue Curran, I have the feeling I’m standing on holy ground. That is exactly what I felt with this book. Her quest for the heart of God is striking. It’s hard to read this book and remain unchanged. Sue’s story and insights will challenge every reader, as she gives us a glimpse into her intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, presented in an accessible way. Readers
will discover a practical and clear roadmap of how to begin to trust and hear the Holy Spirit for themselves. I highly recommend this book.

Bill Johnson
Bethel Church, Redding, California
Author, *When Heaven Invades Earth* and *Face to Face with God*

In her new book, Dr. Sue Curran x-rays our prayer lives and skillfully helps us identify and remove the obstacles. Then, like a surgeon, she inserts the stints that reopen the life-giving flow of successful communication with the Holy Spirit.

John Kilpatrick
Pastor, Church of His Presence
Daphne, Alabama

I am happy to recommend this book because it will inspire your own journey of vision and completion of what you are called to fulfill. Dr. Sue Curran takes you through the growing pains of learning how to pray by the leadership of the Holy Spirit. You will learn how to allow the Holy Spirit to speak through you the building blocks of success. Some of us put off praying due to lack of understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This book is not theory or just theology but an actual experiencing the reality of birthing the ministry that has come to be known as Shekinah. You too will be encouraged to see yourself growing as you read this spectacular account. I remember when the Lord gave me a prophetic word for Shekinah and it is exciting to see it threaded throughout this book.

Those who read this chronicle of Shekinah will develop a greater intimacy with Jesus and fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

Kerry Kirkwood
Senior Pastor, Trinity Fellowship
East Tyler, Texas
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Sue Curran does it again! This erudite, eloquent, and immensely thought-provoking work gets to the heart of the deepest passions and aspirations of the human heart, getting prayer answered.

This is indispensable reading for anyone who wants to live life above the norm and experience the exceptional prayer life. This is a profound authoritative work which spans the wisdom of the ages and yet breaks new ground in its approach and will possibly become a classic in this and the next generation.

This exceptional work by Dr. Sue Curran is one of the most profound, practical, principle-centered approaches to this subject of prayer I have read in a long time. The author’s approach to this timely issue brings a fresh breath of air that captivates the heart, engages the mind and inspires the spirit of the reader.

The author’s ability to leap over complicated theological and metaphysical jargon and reduce complex theories to simple practical principles that the least among us can understand is amazing.

This work will challenge the intellectual while embracing the laymen as it dismantles the mysterious of the soul search of mankind and delivers the profound in simplicity on the subject on Prayer.

Dr. Curran’s approach awakens in the reader the untapped inhibitters that retard our personal development and her antidotes empower us to
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rise above these self-defeating, self-limiting factors to a life of exploits in spiritual and mental advancement in the area of effective prayer.

The author also integrates into each chapter the time-tested precepts giving each principle a practical application to life, making the entire process people-friendly.

Every sentence of this book is pregnant with wisdom and I enjoyed the mind-expanding experience of this exciting book. I admonish you to plunge into this ocean of knowledge and watch your life change for the better.

Dr. Myles Munroe
BFM International
ITWLA
Nassau, Bahamas
INTRODUCTION

PRAYER DOES NOT HAVE TO BE a jungle of confusion. Neither does God intend for it to be difficult and beyond our reach. In fact, one of the important reasons He gave us the Holy Spirit is to help us pray. The Scriptures promise that He will dwell in believers and pray through us.

God called me into ministry immediately when He saved me. Early in my Christian life, He gave me a vision so expansive that it could only be accomplished through consistent, clear communication with Him to receive the direction and empowerment that was needed to fulfill it. As I sought to obey Him, to walk out what He showed me I should do for His name and glory, I developed an intimate relationship with Him in prayer.

Through this prayer lifestyle I learned that if I would call, He would answer (see Ps. 91:15). The vision God gave me involved establishing a conference and training center on a 160-acre campus. From the very beginning, I was pressed into discovering the path of prayer that would result in actually receiving answers for seemingly impossible goals.

You see, I understood that I was really in over my head. In order to succeed, I had to find out how to receive miracles that would create “something out of nothing.” The Holy Spirit came to my rescue. He taught me how to pray. He showed me how He would pray through me.
In my growing dependency on Him, He ushered me into a spiritual realm of being led and empowered by the gifts of the Spirit. He showed me how these gifts should be used to help me pray effectively.

It is natural for us to think that we should pray from our thoughts and be guided by our own wisdom. But God is Spirit, and we must connect with His wisdom through our born-again spirits, which are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. In this divine relationship, He has provided the means for us to pray prayers that are according to His desire and purpose. That is why it is imperative that we surrender ourselves to be His instruments of prayer. We must allow the Holy Spirit to teach us to pray.

During the last four decades, as I have traveled throughout our nation and many others in ministry, I have become aware that there are many who really are yearning to have an effective prayer life. They have a desire for a personal relationship with Jesus that is at the same time intimate and powerful so that they can please God in their prayers.

Most believers understand that the Word of God teaches that the purpose of prayer is to receive answers. Yet, their seeming lack of effectiveness has left them discouraged and asking the question, “What more can I do to be a person whose prayers are answered?”

I invite you to come with me as I retrace the steps of my journey that established me in a lifestyle of effectual prayer. Born out of a growing intimacy with Jesus Christ, my prayer life was the catalyst that thrust me into the fulfillment of His mandate on my life. The Holy Spirit taught me to pray according to the will of God. He is available to every believer, and He wants to reveal Jesus to you, lead you into all truth, and give you a powerful, effective, and productive life of prayer.
It seems God is limited by our prayer life—that He can do nothing for humanity unless someone asks Him.

—John Wesley¹
Chapter 1

HAVING TROUBLE PRAYING?

As a pastor, I understand that many people have problems cultivating an effective prayer life. And I believe, in their minds, those problems are real. Some sincere, born-again Christians say, “I don’t know how to begin. Can I really learn to pray?”

Others admit, “I feel awkward speaking to someone I can’t see, like I’m just putting words into the air. What should I say? Will God really hear me?”

Still others feel, “I’m not good enough to pray.” Unfortunately, there are also Christians who simply feel that prayer is boring.

You may desire to experience fellowship with God through prayer. However, because of these or other struggles, that desire may seem hopelessly out of reach for you. You may even wonder if intimate, divine relationship with God through prayer is real. Perhaps you reason that if it is, maybe it is just for a “gifted” few who are privileged to know how to pray.

I often hear such expressions of frustration from believers who have not “figured out” their own practical involvement in prayer. I am aware that often our enemy, the devil, enters this arena gleefully to aggravate a believer’s “mind battle” regarding prayer. He tries to persuade a person that pursuing a life of prayer is not really worth the effort. He may suggest subtly that, “It probably isn’t doing much good anyway.”
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However, the truth is that if you don’t develop a robust prayer life, it is inevitable that your Christian walk will suffer debilitation and a sense of powerlessness. Your half-hearted attempts to pray may seem so futile that you are tempted to give it up altogether. If that is true for you, these unresolved struggles will ultimately rob you of the intimate relationship with God that He desires for you to enjoy.

GOOD NEWS!

I have good news for you. God never intended for you to have to work through these problems concerning prayer on your own. He doesn’t expect you to “figure out” how to pray in order to succeed in enjoying communion with the Lord.

According to the Scriptures, God, the Father, sent Jesus to die for your sins and to reconcile you to Himself. When Jesus returned to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, to lead you into all truth (see John 16:13).

When you accepted Jesus as your Savior, God gave you the precious gift of His Holy Spirit. His express purpose for giving you the Holy Spirit was to help you resolve all of life’s issues, including your issues with your prayer life. One of the Holy Spirit’s assignments in your life is to teach you to pray:

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don’t even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God’s own will (Romans 8:26-27 NLT).

BEGINNING MY JOURNEY INTO PRAYER

Looking back over my Christian life, I realize that I learned to pray early in my ministry because I desperately needed God’s help for what
He had called me to do. On that memorable day in 1967, when I gave my heart to Jesus Christ, He startled me by calling me into ministry. God radically changed my career plans that day. Instinctively, I knew I needed God to give me faith for what He had called me to do. I understood that, for me, it was learn to pray—or perish. But, I am ahead of the story.

It all began when I married my high school sweetheart, John. Shortly after we were married, John enlisted in the U.S. Army. I remember the day when he came home on his first leave. We drove out to the lake and sat in the car, discussing our immediate future for several hours. We wanted so much to be together. But we realized that was not going to be feasible, financially.

John and I addressed the problem logically, calculating what it would cost for both of us to live at Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina, where he was stationed. We wisely concluded that we could never make it on his pay as an Army Private, First Class. We convinced each other that the only sensible thing to do was me to stay in Kingsport, Tennessee, and for John to go back to Fort Jackson—alone.

“All right,” I concurred, “then that’s that.”

John agreed, “It’s the only thing that makes sense.”

Having both accepted our “wise” decision, we drove home, packed all our earthly belongings (which wasn’t much), put them into our little car, and drove together to Fort Jackson—that day.

Amazingly, we survived. We even saved enough money during the three years of his enlistment to pay for John’s entire college education (before the GI Bill). After John’s discharge from the Army, we returned home to Kingsport. I got a job as secretary to the president of a large local industry, and John entered college, studying to become a chemist.

We also began attending a large Methodist church in our city. My mother was an earnest Pentecostal believer. I had attended church with her as a child. She was a living witness to me of her fervent love for Jesus. Her life was a convincing testimony that she trusted the Lord and had committed her life to Him.
Still, I had never followed her example of commitment to the Lord by giving my heart to Jesus. I had actually determined to keep my distance from truly committed believers. In my heart, I knew I was not ready to “count the cost” as Jesus had taught we must do in order to follow Him (see Luke 14).

TAPPED FOR LEADERSHIP

In spite of the fact that we were not born-again Christians, my husband and I were asked to be youth leaders in our Methodist church. We accepted the opportunity to serve our church youth. For one of their activities, we took our group of eighty teens to a weekend retreat. As it turned out, we were being “set up” by the Holy Spirit, who was about to change all our lives—eternally.

Part of the program that weekend involved another group of young people giving their testimonies. They had recently accepted Christ as their personal Savior. Their radiant faces, youthful enthusiasm, and the joy they expressed at knowing that their sins were forgiven was mesmerizing. They shared how their lives were completely changed by simply receiving Jesus as their Savior. They declared their determination to commit their whole lives to Him to do His will. Their love for the Lord was intoxicating.

That weekend, many of our teens were inspired by these vibrant young Christians to surrender their lives to Jesus. And so were my husband and I! When I walked out the door of my cabin the next morning, I really was a “new creature.” It seemed to me that God had painted the sky just for me. The dewdrops looked like diamonds sparkling in the grass. Nature all around me looked as washed and clean as I felt. It seemed like I had just stepped into a new world. In a very real way, I had done just that.

I remember hearing an old story of a revival where the preacher got saved. The people of the church were so excited that they ran from house to house exclaiming, “The parson got saved! The parson got
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saved!” Our Methodist youth were just as excited that John and I, their youth leaders, were experiencing that same reality of salvation along with them. It was a high moment in all of our lives.

Needless to say, we returned home with a “new” youth group. John and I were also new creatures in Christ, as the Scriptures say:

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new* *(2 Corinthians 5:17)*.

We knew we had been changed by the wonderful, saving grace of God. But we could not imagine how different our lives were to become, nor how soon it would begin to happen.

Our youth group now exuded the same joy and enthusiasm we had witnessed in the young people at the retreat who had given their testimonies. They could not wait to share their joyful experience of being born again. When we told our pastor what had happened at the retreat, he rejoiced with us. Then he gave the youth group the entire Sunday morning service to share their testimonies.

We watched in amazement as adults were moved to tears when they listened to these excited young people tell how they had met Jesus. And we were astounded to see the altar filled that morning with many people coming to receive salvation. Others came to ask God to touch their lives again with His presence.

Methodist churches in our area began to hear the news of the “revival” in our church (I didn’t even know the term *revival* at the time). Pastors began to invite us to their churches to give our testimonies. For seventeen straight nights, we took our youth group to neighboring churches to share what Jesus had done for them.

Everywhere we went, many youth and adults were receiving salvation after hearing the joyful testimonies of our youth. Our entire city was buzzing with the news of this strange and wonderful thing that was happening as hundreds of people were finding Jesus as their personal Savior.
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PRAY...SOMEthing!

With the altars of churches continually filling with people of all ages seeking to receive Jesus as their Savior, we were called upon to pray for them. But we had only been saved for a few weeks; we were not trained to lead someone to Christ. That was when I first realized I had to learn to pray—or perish!

As young people flooded the altars, they sobbed and cried out, “We want what you have. We want to know Jesus like you do!” Good. Wonderful. That is what we wanted for them. But they were expecting me to pray to help them receive Jesus as their Savior. I had no idea what to pray.

Then, in one church, where the altars once again filled with youth crying out to God, I looked around desperately for help. As I did, I noticed an elderly man praying and crying with the kids as they poured their hearts out to God. Later, I learned that he was a retired preacher who loved God and was thrilled with what was happening.

If I can just get over there beside him, I thought, I can find out what to pray. So I worked my way around the people at the altar to get to where he was praying with someone. I listened to what he prayed. His simple prayer went like this: “Lord, look in tender mercy on this one who has come to You tonight.”

Ecstatic, I thought, I can do this! So, I practiced his prayer a few times to myself, “Lord, look in tender mercy...” I didn’t know exactly what it meant, but I prayed those words sincerely for these young people, and they left the altar happy.

In spite of my ignorance, God did have mercy as He has promised to do for all who seek Him. His Word declares that “everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved” (Acts 2:21 NLT). Later I would understand that it was not a “prayer formula” that brought His salvation to their hearts; it was simply a genuine heart cry. I was learning to pray.
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The Holy Spirit was moving so mightily in conviction on the hearts of these youth. I just needed to pray something—to acknowledge the mercy of God that was bringing them to salvation. That was my first lesson from the Holy Spirit teaching me to pray. I smile now remembering that I used a “borrowed prayer” from a godly preacher in my first lesson on prayer.

God was always faithful to send help to me exactly when I needed it. In those first years of my ministry, He led me to people who would teach me principles of obeying His Word. As I sought God, desiring to fulfill His purposes, He brought amazing people into my life who would mentor me, teaching me how to be led by the Spirit. And I would go anywhere I heard God was doing something wonderful in people’s lives.

In fact, from the very beginning, this pattern for my future ministry was established. I would hear that God was doing wonderful things in a certain place, and I determined to find out for myself what He was doing. In time, I was traveling to different nations and continents to continue my lifelong pursuit of learning to live in the presence and power of God. But more about that later...
ENDNOTES

Chapter 1: Having Trouble Praying?

Chapter 2: A Devotional Prayer Lifestyle
2. William Carey, quoted in Ibid.

Chapter 3: Salvation Is Wonderful...But There’s More!

Chapter 4: Learning to Fast and Pray
RECOMMENDED READING

Bounds, E.M.

Carre, Captain E.G.

Cho, Paul Yonggi.

Cornwall, Judson.

Curran, Sue.

Facius, Johannes.

Goll, Jim W.

Grubb, Norman.
Hagin, Kenneth E.

Liardon, Roberts.

Lindsay, Gordon.

MacIntyre, David M.

Mueller, George.

Murray, Andrew.

Sheets, Dutch.

Torrey, R.A.
Dr. Sue Curran, along with her husband John, is the founder and pastor of Shekinah Church in Blountville, Tennessee. Shekinah hosts annual conferences for leadership development and prayer and worship summits for the Body of Christ. Their local church has grown in influence around the world through the work of a praying and worshiping leadership and congregation. As a result, Dr. Curran has been propelled into a strong teaching and apostolic ministry that focuses on strategic prayer and addresses root causes of ineffectiveness in prayer.

Dr. Curran holds both Master and Doctor of Divinity degrees from Christian Life School of Theology and is an adjunct professor for Christian Life Educator's Network. She is an internationally recognized conference speaker and an effective minister in areas of prayer, spiritual freedom and revival.

From the outset of her teaching ministry, authentic revival has accompanied Dr. Curran's presentation of the full gospel in its simplicity. Her ministry has extended to all continents, crossing many cultural and ethnic boundaries with the same revival impact.

The author of two other powerful books on prayer, Dr. Curran teaches biblical principles that contrast the reserved prayer posture of the Western church with the bold, fervent, effective prayers of Christians in other nations. Define Your Destiny Through Prayer reveals how
Shekinah, an international ministry, came from nothing to a ministry with worldwide influence. The Holy Spirit taught her to pray out of the necessity of learning how to touch God for miracles of every kind to see the work established.
OTHER BOOKS BY DR. SUE CURRAN

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A complete list of books, CDs and DVDs are available from:
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