



Believing Without Seeing

“Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!” “My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who haven’t seen me and believe anyway.”
John 20:27-29 (NLT)

Prayer Focus: Thomas needed proof and physical evidence that Jesus was alive. Granted, he had heard Jesus promise that He was the Messiah and that He would rise from the dead on the third day. But Thomas needed to know for himself (and not based on the stories of others) that Jesus had indeed fulfilled His promise to return. Jesus was gracious in letting Thomas touch His hands and examine His wounds to increase his faith and belief. But then Jesus spoke a profound proclamation for the future: Blessed are those who haven’t seen me and believe anyway. Jesus knows what faith it takes for us to believe and radically alter our lives to embrace His life, death, and resurrection, as well as His promise to come again as our King. Most likely there are days when we grow weary in the struggle to live as followers of Christ. Perhaps at times we doubt, especially when the kingdom of darkness seems to close in on us. Maybe we wonder if all of this is true when the rest of the world mocks those who believe in such absurd things. Jesus knows that faith without seeing is hard. But do not doubt or fear: He is coming again!

Day 1: Praise Jesus that He will keep His promise to return.

Day 2: Confess any moments of doubt or lack of faith in Him.

Day 3: Repent of times when you have wavered in believing Jesus in all His promises.

Day 4: Ask the Lord to give you an unwavering faith in Him.

Day 5: Rest in the blessing that Jesus gives to those who believe without seeing. Invite Jesus to speak that into your life.

Day 6: Pray that believers in your church will encourage each other to believe and trust through difficult times.

Day 7: Pray that the presence of Christ will be demonstrated in greater ways in your church and community.

*Taken from the book “Come, Lord Jesus: transformation prayer guide”
Published by Prayer Transformation Ministry, Minneapolis*

Jesus Christ as Our Coming King

King Jesus is coming back! As the disciples watched the Lord Jesus ascend into heaven, they were confronted by two angels. Luke records it this way:

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11, NIV).

The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is the Church's blessed hope. From the time of the disciples until today, we look and long for the return of our King Jesus. This time He will not come as the Gentle Shepherd. He will come as the Sovereign King over all creation.

What a wonderful cause for hope and rejoicing! For those who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, there can be no greater fulfillment of their faith than when they see their Savior face to face. He is the ultimate object of our faith, and we long for that day when our "faith will be sight." Every true believer has a heart filled with the longing and expectation of seeing Jesus in all His glory. His return as Coming King will be the completion of His role as our Savior, Sanctifier, and Healer.

The return of Jesus is a time of hope and expectation for those who belong to Him. But it should also be a challenge to sober reflection and self-examination. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be a motivation for holy living in this world. Every believer should desire to live a life pleasing to the Lord and worthy of the Lord's commendation of "well done, good and faithful servant" (Mathew 25:21, 23). When He comes as King, He will come in truth and power. He will fulfill His promises as the ultimate answer to the needs of this sinful world.

As believers, our lives should be lived in the light of our "blessed hope" of His return. From the time that He ascended to the Father, until this very day, the joyful expectation and cry of the Bride of Christ has been a prayer in concert with the Holy Spirit, as expressed in Revelation 22:20:
Come, Lord Jesus!

Transformation: Jesus in Our Midst

As we pray about transformation; we need a common definition of what a truly transformed community might look like:

A transformed community is:

- A neighbourhood, city, or nation whose values and institutions have been overrun by the grace and presence of God.
- A place where divine fire has not merely been summoned, but has fallen.
- A society in which natural change has been disrupted by invasive supernatural power.
- A culture that has been impacted comprehensively and undeniably by the Kingdom of God.
- A location where Kingdom values are celebrated publicly and passed on to future generations.

Community transformation is indicated when:

- Political leaders publicly acknowledge their sin and dependence on God. (2 Kings 11:17-18; 23:1-3; Jonah 3:6-9)
- New laws, curricula, and business practices are put into effect. (2 Chronicles 19:4-10; Nehemiah 10:31)
- The natural environment is restored to its original life-nurturing state. (Leviticus 26:4-5; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Ezekiel 34:27-31)
- Economic conditions improve and lead to a discernible lessening of poverty. (2 Chronicles 17:3-5; Psalm 144:13-14; Isaiah 60:5-7; Amos 9:13)
- There is a marked change in social entertainment and vices as Kingdom values are integrated into the rhythm of daily life. (Ezra 10:1-4; Nehemiah 8:10, 16-17; Acts 19:17-20)
- Crime and corruption diminish throughout the community. (2 Kings 12:13-15; Nehemiah 5:6-12; Isaiah 60:17-18)
- Volunteerism increases as Christians recognize their responsibility to heal and undergird the community. (Isaiah 58:10-12; 61:1-4)
- Restored hope and joy leads to a decline in divorce, bankruptcy, and suicide. (Nehemiah 12:27-28, 43; Isaiah 54:11-14; 61:3-7; Jeremiah 30:17-19; 31:11-13; Hosea 2:15)
- The spiritual nature of the growing socio-political renewal becomes a hot topic in secular media. (2 Chronicles 20:29; Nehemiah 6:16; Isaiah 55:5; Ezekiel 36:36; Acts 19:17).
- Overwhelmed by the goodness of God, grateful Christians take the embers of revival into surrounding communities and nations. (2 Chronicles 17:9; Isaiah 61:6; Acts 11:20-26).

(Source: The Sentinel Group)

About Prayer Transformation Ministries

This prayer guide is written and published by Prayer Transformation Ministries, a ministry located in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. Since 1993, Prayer Transformation Ministries (PTM) has worked with the prayer movement in the Twin Cities, the state of Minnesota, and the nation.

Prayer Transformation Ministries *provides Christ-centered awareness, training, and equipping for personal and societal transformation.*

About the Authors:

Steve Loopstra is the executive director of Prayer Transformation Ministries. He is also a member of the National Prayer Committee and serves on the Board of the National Church Prayer Leaders Network.

Steve's heart for prayer was demonstrated during his 20 years of pastoring prior to joining the PTM staff. He is a great encourager of pastors to develop "cultures of prayer" in their congregations. Steve also teaches and writes on prayer for revival and transformation. He and his wife Marilou have two children.

Carol Madison is the associate director of Prayer Transformation Ministries. She served in Christian publishing for 17 years before joining the PTM staff. Her experiences include editing a denominational magazine and creating a unique magazine designed to reach the unchurched. Carol writes and speaks on a variety of prayer topics, including the hope for revival and transformation. Her heart is to encourage believers to contend in prayer for their communities. She is a member of the National Prayer Committee.

Prayer Transformation Ministries serves by:

- Teaching/writing on principles of revival and transformation.
- Encouraging local churches to develop "cultures of prayer."
- Publishing prayer guides devoted to united prayer.
- Networking intercessors and prayer movements.
- Giving leadership to citywide catalytic prayer events.
- Producing *Call to Prayer* radio spots.
- Encouraging a children's prayer movement.
- Training and networking local church prayer leaders.

Website: www.prayertransformation.com