

THE
DANIEL
PRAYER

STUDY GUIDE

BOOKS BY ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ

The Daniel Prayer: Prayer That Moves Heaven and Changes Nations
Wounded by God's People: Discovering How God's Love Heals Our Hearts
Expecting to See Jesus: A Wake-Up Call for God's People
The Magnificent Obsession: Embracing the God-Filled Life
God's Story
Just Give Me Jesus
Pursuing More of Jesus
Why? Trusting God When You Don't Understand
Heaven: My Father's House (revised)
The Vision of His Glory: Finding Hope in the Revelation of Jesus Christ

VIDEO BIBLE STUDIES BY ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ

The Daniel Prayer (Study Guide and DVD)
Expecting to See Jesus (Study Guide and DVD)
The Magnificent Obsession (Study Guide and DVD)
God's Story (Study Guide and DVD)
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Heaven (Curriculum DVD and Children's DVD)
The Vision of His Glory (Study Guide and DVD)

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THE DANIEL PRAYER

PRAYER THAT MOVES HEAVEN
AND CHANGES NATIONS

STUDY GUIDE

SIX SESSIONS

ANNE
GRAHAM
LOTZ



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The Daniel Prayer Study Guide

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ABOUT ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ

Called “the best preacher in the family” by her father, Billy Graham, Anne Graham Lotz speaks around the globe with the wisdom and authority of years spent studying God’s Word.

The *New York Times* named Anne one of the five most influential evangelists of her generation. She’s been profiled on *60 Minutes* and has appeared on TV programs such as *Larry King Live*, *The Today Show*, and *Hannity Live*. Her *Just Give Me Jesus* revivals have been held in more than thirty cities in twelve different countries, to hundreds of thousands of attendees.

Whether a delegate to Davos’ Economic Forum, a commentator to the *Washington Post*, or a groundbreaking speaker on platforms throughout the world, Anne’s aim is clear—to bring revival to the hearts of God’s people. And her message is consistent—calling people into a personal relationship with God through His Word and through prayer.

In May 2016, Anne was named the Chairperson of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, a position held by only two other women, Shirley Dobson and Vonette Bright, since its inception in 1952.

Anne is a bestselling and award-winning author. Her most recent releases are *The Daniel Prayer*, *Wounded by God’s People*, *Fixing My Eyes on Jesus*, *Expecting to See Jesus*, and her first children’s book, *Heaven: God’s Promise for Me*.

Anne and her late husband, Danny Lotz, have three grown children and three grandchildren. She is the founder and president of AnGeL Ministries, an independent, non-profit organization based in Raleigh, North Carolina, that is committed to giving out messages of biblical exposition so God’s Word is personal and relevant to ordinary people.

The ministry’s name is derived from the initials of Anne Graham Lotz (AGL) and is especially fitting, as angels are messengers of God who go wherever He

sends, speak to whomever He directs, and faithfully deliver His Word. AnGeL Ministries serves as the umbrella organization for the diverse ministry of Anne Graham Lotz—including her many books, DVDs, CDs, speaking engagements, and special events.

To learn more about Anne and AnGeL Ministries, visit

www.annegrahamlotz.org

PREFACE

Do you ever long for a more effective prayer life? Have you ever become so discouraged that you wanted to give up even trying? I have!

I'm reminded of an old CD player I once had. Its carousel would take five CDs at a time. One day when I loaded it, it refused to play the CDs. When I pushed the button for it to eject them, nothing happened. So I banged and pried on the little door, but to no avail. I took it to the shop, and the technician said he would have it fixed in three days. When I went back to get it, the man said, "Mrs. Lotz, I'm sorry. I couldn't get it to work. I did break it open to get your CDs out, but the player won't work." So I threw it away.

When something doesn't fulfill its purpose, it's useless. Is that how you have come to feel about prayer? If so, I'm glad you have joined this Bible study! Because I, too, have struggled with prayer. In fact, it's been the biggest fight in my Christian walk. I have constantly seemed to struggle with concentration, content, and consistency. And that's the primary reason the Daniel Prayer has taught me and blessed me and encouraged me and inspired me and motivated me to pray as Daniel prayed!

One key to praying like Daniel is to pray in response to God's Word. It's called "reversed thunder"—praying God's Word back to Him. So I always take my Bible into my prayer time, listening for God's voice to speak to me as I read it. Then I speak . . . or pray . . . back to Him regarding what He has said.

Does this bring up another issue for you? Do you find yourself wishing that God would speak audibly to you like He did with people in the Bible? He spoke to the prophets, the priests, the kings, the elderly, the apostles, the early church, and even to young children like little Samuel. Sometimes, He spoke to the enemies of His people. But whenever He spoke, His voice was so clear to the person listening that there was no mistaking what He had said. How can you hear God's voice today?

While God can speak any way He chooses, He speaks to me through His Word, as He did to Daniel in Daniel 9. In each of the six Bible study sessions, I'm going to lead you in a simple exercise that I use in order to listen to God's voice, which is a springboard into prayer. Then, in each video segment, I will share insights God has given me on that week's topic from Daniel's prayer. Following the video, you will participate in a discussion with your group as you seek ways that Daniel's story and effective prayer life applies to your own.

Commit now to spending time every day in God's Word in order to discover relevant insights for your life that will then become the content for your prayers. This will make each week's discussion time with your group more rewarding, and it will equip you to grow deeper in your faith and more effective in your own prayers. To help you do this, at the end of each session you will be asked to follow Daniel's example by writing out your personal prayers to God.

My prayer for you is that by the end of this study, your own prayers will have become much more vibrant and so effective that Heaven is moved and your world and our nation are changed. For the glory of His great name! So . . . get ready to pray in a way you may never have prayed before. Get ready to pray as Daniel did!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Chae Zaharah". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chae" and last name "Zaharah" clearly legible.

ABOUT THE STUDY

This study guide is to be used with the video-based course *The Daniel Prayer: Prayer That Moves Heaven and Changes Nations*. As an integral part of the course, it provides a format for Bible study that serves as the basis for both small group use (Sunday school classes, women's or men's groups, home or neighborhood studies, one-on-one discipleship) and individual use. This guide will lead you through a series of questions that will enable you to not only discover for yourself the eternal truths revealed by God in the Bible but also to hear God speaking personally to you through His Word. You will then be prepared to participate in a meaningful time of study and discussion with members of your small group.

INDIVIDUAL STUDY

The course begins with a Bible study workshop. After participating in the workshop, you will be familiar with an approach to Bible study that will challenge you to hear and apply God's Word as never before. Beginning in session 2, you will find several portions of Scripture reading to help you apply this method during the course.

Note: *Each session will require approximately sixty minutes of group meeting time to review the Pre-session Bible study readings, watch the video, discuss the content, and complete the "Choices" exercise. A Simplified and Abbreviated Bible Study plan has been included on pages 115–146 for groups with more limited meeting time, such as in a workplace lunchtime setting.*

It is important to complete each Scripture portion before your next session, as this will make the video presentation more meaningful to you during the small group time. Note that effective daily Bible study will occur if you:

- Set aside a regular place for private devotions.
- Set aside a regular time for private devotions.
- Pray before beginning the day's assignment, asking God to speak to you through His Word.
- Write out your answers for each step in sequence.
- Make the time to be still and listen, reflecting thoughtfully on your response in the final step.
- Don't rush—it may take time in prayerful meditation on a given passage to discover meaningful lessons and hear God speaking to you.

Spiritual discipline is an essential part of your ability to grow in your relationship with God through knowledge and understanding of His Word. So take your individual study seriously and allow God to speak to you from His Word.

GROUP STUDY

In session 1 of *The Daniel Prayer*, you will watch the video workshop and be introduced to this Bible study method. You will be given a passage of Scripture during the workshop to study to help you better understand this approach. At the start of each subsequent session, you will be given some time to share insights from your weekly reading before you and your group watch the video portion. (Note that if your group meets less frequently than once a week, you may want to extend your study time for each passage.)

Space is provided for you to take notes during the video presentation. After the message, you will then have time to discuss the key concepts with your small group using the questions in this guide. (Note that even though there are a number of questions listed for your small group to discuss, you don't need to use them all.

Your leader will focus on the ones that resonate most with your group and guide you from there.)

INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENT

At the end of the second session, you will be asked to make specific choices as it relates to praying the Daniel Prayer. In subsequent sessions, you will be asked to update your previous choices as you apply any new insights from the current lesson. At the conclusion of the study, you will be encouraged to review these choices as building blocks that have helped you grow in your faith. Your choices will help you develop your personal relationship with God and give you an increasingly richer and more meaningful prayer life.

Remember that the real growth in this study will happen during your quiet times with God during the week. During the group times, you will have the opportunity to process what you have learned with the other members, ask questions, and learn from them as you listen to what God is doing in their lives. In addition, keep in mind that the videos, discussions, and activities in this study are simply meant to sharpen your focus so that you are not only open to what God wants you to hear but also know how to apply that to your life.

***Note:** If you are the facilitator for the group, there are additional instructions and resources provided in the facilitator's guide included with the DVD. This separate guide will help you structure your meeting time, facilitate discussion times, and help you lead group members through the key points of the study.*

SIMPLIFIED AND ABBREVIATED BIBLE STUDY

As mentioned at the beginning of the guide, there is an alternate “track” that you and your group can follow if your meeting time is more limited (forty-five minutes in length). For this track, you will study only a few key verses with your group each session, and no homework assignments will be required.

Note: *The session 1 Bible Study Workshop will be the same regardless of which track you and your group take.*

You will find the complete simplified track for sessions one through six in the back of the full-length Daniel Prayer Study Guide.

SESSION 1



BIBLE STUDY WORKSHOP

This Bible study workshop has a single purpose: to present an approach that will help you learn to listen for God's voice, know Him in a personal relationship, and communicate with Him through His Word. The following information is introduced in detail in the video presentation. Use this section of the study guide as you view the workshop material. Underline key thoughts and take additional notes as you participate in the workshop. (Note that the passages Anne uses as examples in the video workshop are found on pages 20–23.)

WHAT YOU NEED

Before you begin the video workshop for this first session, you will need the following:

- ☐ a Bible
- ☐ this study guide
- ☐ pen or pencil
- ☐ time
- ☐ prayer
- ☐ an open heart

STEPS TO BIBLE STUDY

STEP 1: READ GOD'S WORD

The first step is *to read the Bible*. At the start of each session in this study guide, you will find the Scriptures listed in a column that you should read during the week.

When you have finished reading the passage for the day, move on to step 2.

STEP 2: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?*(List the facts.)*

After reading the passage, make a verse-by-verse list of the outstanding facts. Don't get caught up in the details—just pinpoint the most obvious facts as they appear to you. When you make your list, do not paraphrase the text but use actual words from the passage. Look for the nouns and the verbs.

STEP 3: WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD MEAN?*(Learn the lessons.)*

After reading the passage and listing the facts, look for a lesson to learn from each fact. Ask yourself the following questions:

- *Who is speaking?*
- *What is the subject?*
- *Where is it taking place?*
- *When did it happen?*
- *What can I learn from what is taking place or what is being said?*

It may also help to ask yourself these questions:

- *What are the people in the passage doing that I should be doing?*
- *Is there a command I should obey?*
- *Is there a promise I should claim?*
- *Is there a warning I should heed?*
- *Is there an example I should follow?*

Focus on spiritual lessons.

STEP 4: WHAT DOES GOD’S WORD MEAN IN MY LIFE?

(Listen to His voice.)

Although this step will be the most meaningful for you, you can’t do it effectively until you complete the first three steps. So, first rephrase the lessons you found in step 3 and put them in the form of questions you could ask yourself, your spouse, your child, your friend, your neighbor, or your coworker. As you write the questions, listen for God to speak to you through His Word.

Be aware that there are some challenging passages in this study. Don’t get hung up on what you don’t understand, but just look for the *general principles* and *lessons* that can be learned. The introduction prior to the passages you will study in sessions 2–6, as well as the examples offered in steps 2, 3, and 4 of this session, will help you get started.

Remember not to rush this process. It may take you several moments of prayerful meditation to discover meaningful lessons from the Scripture you are reading and hear God speaking to you. The object is not to “get through it” but to develop your personal relationship with God in order to grow in faith and learn to pray in ways that change the world.

STEP 5: HOW WILL I RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD?

(Live it out!)

Read the assigned Scripture passages prayerfully, objectively, thoughtfully, and attentively as you listen for God to speak. Note that He may not speak to you through *every* verse, but He *will* speak. When He does, record the verse number (if applicable), what it is that God seems to be saying to you, and your response to Him. You might like to date these pages as a means not only of keeping a spiritual journal but also of holding yourself accountable to follow through in obedience. (See pages 20–21 for the example that Anne demonstrates in the video.)

YOUR TURN

Now that you have seen this example from Jonah 1:1–2, it is your turn to try this method on your own using Luke 11:1–4. As you read this passage on pages 22–23, remember to wipe your mind clean of anything others have told you about it or things you have learned before. Keep your mind open, come to the passage looking for fresh insight, and listen for the Lord to speak to you through it.

BIBLE STUDY EXAMPLE

STEP 1

Read God's Word

Passage: Jonah 2:1–2

¹ From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God.

² He said: “In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave. I called for help, and you listened to my cry.”

STEP 2

What Does God's Word Say?

(List the facts.)

v. 1: From inside the fish, Jonah prayed.

v. 1: Jonah prayed to his God.

v. 2: In distress I called to the Lord, and he answered.

v. 2: From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened.

STEP 3*What Does God's Word Mean?**(Learn the lessons.)**v. 1: We can pray anywhere.**v. 1: We need to establish a relationship with God before a crisis so we can pray with confidence in a crisis.**v. 2: God responds to our distress calls even when it's our fault that we are in that crisis in the first place.**v. 2: There is no place so low that God doesn't hear our call and cries for help!***STEP 4***What Does God's Word Mean in My Life?**(Listen to His voice.)**v. 1: In what place do I think prayer is off limits?**v. 1: How confident am I in my relationship with God that He will answer me in any situation?**v. 2: Why do I sometimes think that God will not respond to my distress call?**v. 2: If God heard Jonah from the belly of a fish, why don't I think He will hear my call from the depths of depression, addiction, humiliation, or grief?***STEP 5***How Will I Respond to God's Word?**(Live it out!)**Regardless of where I am or what I am going through, I know that God will hear me when I call out to Him. Therefore, I will go to God with confidence, knowing that He will hear and answer me when I seek to pray in ways that move Heaven and change nations.*

Name: _____ Date: _____

“YOUR TURN” STUDY

STEP 1

Read God's Word

Passage: Luke 11:1–4

¹ One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

² He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

³ “Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴ “Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.”

STEP 2

What Does God's Word Say?

(List the facts.)

STEP 3

What Does God's Word Mean?
(Learn the lessons.)

STEP 4

What Does God's Word Mean in My Life?
(Listen to His voice.)

STEP 5

How Will I Respond to God's Word?
(Live it out!)

Name: _____ Date: _____

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PRAYER

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AND CHANGES NATIONS

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LOTZ

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IT'S TIME TO PRAY THE DANIEL PRAYER

The air was electric.

People were shouting, crying, pleading with God. Some were standing with raised hands, others were on their knees, and still others were prostrate on the floor. My brother Franklin had just entered the auditorium, and I remember glimpsing his face at the doorway, his eyes wide as he mouthed, “What’s going on?”

We were in Suva, Fiji, where Samaritan’s Purse was hosting a conference for church workers. Six hundred people had come in from the dozens of surrounding islands to attend. I had just finished speaking on the prophet Samuel, presenting the tragic truth that while he was a judge, a prophet, and a kingmaker extraordinaire, Samuel was not a good father. His sons did not follow the Lord. My challenge to the mostly male audience was not to be so focused on ministry that they neglected their own wives and children.

When I issued the invitation to repent of their sin and to commit to training up their children in the Lord, almost the entire audience of pastors and church leaders surged forward. They began pouring out their hearts in an urgent, desperate, passionate pleading with God to forgive, to have mercy, to bless. They were not praying in other languages. I could understand what they were saying, but the atmosphere itself was thick with the presence of God.

I remember a woman seizing me by the arm and pulling me into her circle for prayer. *Pray?* I was totally intimidated to pray in such a group. For good reason. When I opened my mouth and tried, my voice sounded hollow. My prayer seemed wretchedly anemic in the midst of such fervent intensity.

I had never before heard prayer like I heard on that day in Suva, Fiji. Actually, rarely have I ever heard prayer like that anywhere, which has led me to wonder why our prayers often lack that kind of power, passion, and persuasion. What are we missing? What was *I missing*?

While there may be more than one answer to my question, could it be that one key ingredient that is missing is an all-out, no-holds-barred, go-for-broke, nothing-held-back, old-fashioned commitment to pray? The kind of commitment that's born out of desperation. Intense aspiration. Soulful longing. The kind of commitment athletes make to win the race or the game or the trophy or the medal. The kind of commitment that makes sacrifices, accepts responsibility, keeps obligations, and overcomes obstacles.

The kind of urgent plea we find in the Daniel Prayer.

This is not a casual, every-day, pray-as-you-feel-like-it, run-of-the-mill, garden-variety type of prayer. It is not even a flare sent up as a distress call for help. The Daniel Prayer is a commitment. A commitment that perseveres over any and every obstacle until Heaven is moved and nations are changed.

The original Daniel Prayer was a desperate plea uttered by one man, Daniel, on behalf of his nation—Judah—that had come under God's judgment. For an entire generation—for seventy years—his people were held in captivity by their enemy, the Babylonians, and separated from God's place of blessing.

The sad reality was that God had repeatedly forewarned the

nation that if there was no national repentance of sin, judgment would fall.

Daniel's people would have to have known that this was no idle warning. Because when the ten northern tribes of Israel had embraced idolatry, refusing to heed God's repeated warnings of judgment, God had sent in the Assyrians who destroyed the Northern Kingdom.¹ The Southern Kingdom of Judah, with the smaller tribe of Benjamin, was the remaining remnant of what had been the nation of Israel under King David and his successor, Solomon.

Now God was issuing those same warnings to Judah. He had sent messenger after messenger, including Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, who had each faithfully delivered the message with every conceivable emphasis and nuance. The messengers spoke clearly, powerfully, visually, audibly, emotionally, factually, accurately, and truthfully. The people were left with no excuse and no defense for not "getting it." But the nation of Judah refused to heed God's warnings, and so judgment fell.

Judgment came in the form of the Babylonians who were ruled by the ruthless emperor Nebuchadnezzar. They had previously conquered Assyria, then Egypt. Following their conquest of those two major world powers, they swept through Judah, leveled Jerusalem, looted the temple treasures, and forcibly took God's people to Babylon in a series of three deportations, effectively enslaving the entire population. In a relatively short period of time, Judah was erased from the national scene. She no longer existed as she had for over five hundred years. She was a people and a nation in exile.

Daniel was approximately fifteen years of age when he was captured by the Babylonians and deported eight hundred miles

east of Jerusalem to serve as a slave in Nebuchadnezzar's court. His situation seemed utterly hopeless and helpless. He had no human rights commission to appeal to, no friendly government to seek intervention from, no international criminal court to take up his case, no dream team of lawyers to represent him. He was abducted to serve an emperor who had absolute world power and was accountable to no one.

Yet through it all, Daniel glorified God by his character and his conduct. His service was so extraordinary that he rapidly rose up through the ranks to become a national leader as well as a counselor to kings. As young as he was, Daniel may not have known about the power of prayer from experience. But as his story unfolds, it's clear he knew something about the power of his God, although his knowledge may have been based not on his own experience, but on his nation's history. It didn't take long for Daniel, in the desperate situations he faced, to discover the power of God through prayer. Because God was all that Daniel had. Again and again he threw himself upon God with such complete faith and utter dependence that God came through for him. Powerfully. Personally. Dramatically. Repeatedly.

Daniel's meteoric rise to prominence remains even more remarkable because when he arrived in Babylon as a young teenager, he was subjected to its strange customs, unfamiliar language, elaborate dress, exotic foods, and pagan gods—a kind of cultural brainwashing. He was stripped of his identity and given a new name, Belteshazzar.² The purpose of the new name, which was a tribute to a Babylonian god, would have been to destroy Daniel's loyalty and allegiance to his own God. He was also cruelly stripped of his masculinity and forced to become a eunuch to make him more subservient to his new master.³ And he was

commanded to honor false gods by eating food that had been first sacrificed to them.

The cumulative message was clear. Daniel was to serve the emperor with all his heart, mind, soul, body, and strength. He was to so immerse himself in Babylon that he would be severed from his past in order to embrace the present as the only reality. Everything was designed to force Daniel to conform to the Babylonian mold to serve at Nebuchadnezzar's pleasure.

*But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself . . .*⁴ And thus he began his remarkable career that spanned two world empires and the entire time of his nation's captivity. At great risk to himself, again and again, he maintained his undivided devotion to God. In turn, God gave him *knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.*⁵ He rose to be the equivalent of prime minister under four emperors: Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus.

And yet Daniel never forgot the temple that had been the heart of Jerusalem and of the nation. Even at the end of his life, he remained mindful of the sacrifices that had been offered to God there as an act of obedient worship. He longed for Jerusalem every day of his life, evidenced by the fact that three times daily, when he prayed, he turned his face in the direction of his beloved city that once had been.

Again and again Daniel's life was threatened and seemed on the verge of annihilation. But each time, in response to Daniel's remarkable, steadfast faith, God demonstrated His supernatural power to honor the one who honored Him.⁶ He miraculously intervened to save Daniel from Nebuchadnezzar's fury, Belshazzar's folly, and Darius' fanaticism until He performed the greatest miracle of all in answer to Daniel's prayer. God moved

Cyrus to issue the decree that after seventy years of captivity, every Jew living in Babylon could go home.

What kind of prayer was it that when offered by one person on behalf of a people who were under God's judgment, Heaven was moved and a nation was changed?⁷ What was the secret to the spiritual restoration, renewal, and revival of Judah? What can we learn today from Daniel's prayer that would move Heaven and change our beloved nation? Even after a full generation of apostasy and separation from national faith in the living God, is it possible that the prayer of one person could bring renewal, restoration, and revival to America?

That's what I want to find out.

I believe it's time to pray like Daniel.

Now.

Make no mistake: our nation—and our world—are coming under the judgment of God. By the time this book is released, this reality may be even more apparent than it is now as I write. God uses dramatic world events to get people's attention. Revelation 6-19, and many other Scriptures⁸, reveal that such indicators will be intertwined with His judgment in the end. The signs are all around us.

When natural disasters—hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, avalanches, wildfires, floods, droughts, and tornadoes—repeatedly break records and claim lives . . .

When rumors of war encircle the globe daily because mercurial leaders break treaties and shatter alliances, bully other nations, and disregard sovereign borders . . .

When terrorists slaughter innocent people, creating widespread chaos and fear . . .

When our culture obsesses about celebrities without moral scruples who blatantly sensationalize their sinful exploits . . .

When women and children are trafficked and degraded for billions of dollars in pornographic profit . . .

When work, sports, movies, video games, and tech toys consume our thoughts with no time left to focus on what matters most . . .

When political solutions repeatedly fail to remedy what must begin with wet eyes, broken hearts, and bent knees . . .

It's time to look up. It's time to cry out. It's time to pray.

I realize we must be cautious when interpreting current events and natural disasters. The rain falls on the just and on the unjust. Bad things often happen to good people for no obvious reason we can discern. But God has not called me to speak tentatively or without a sound biblical basis for what I see happening around us today. There are three reasons I believe God's patience may be running out.

One: We have willingly, intentionally, deliberately taken the lives of almost 60 million children. Most of these abortions were not done for medical reasons, but for the convenience of the mother as a means of birth control.⁹

Two: Our defiance of God's institution of marriage.

Three: Our abandonment of the nation of Israel.

I use "we" and "our" to refer to our nation in these three reasons for God's judgment. Certainly, these three national sins would bring God's judgment to any group of people practicing them. But it is especially concerning to see the United States of America, a nation founded on faith in God and dedicated to His

glory by our first President and the Continental Congress, defy Him, seek to remove Him from public life, and rebel against His ways.¹⁰

There's only one solution.

When faced with God's righteous judgment, there is nothing . . . *nothing* . . . no politics or president, no government or agreement, no institution or organization, no media or ministry, no economy or military, no alliance or treaty . . . *nothing* will turn our nation around except prayer.

Heartfelt, desperate prayer. Prayer where the pray-ers rend their hearts, return to the Cross, and repent of personal and national sin. Only prayer that moves Heaven can change a nation.

And that's the Daniel Prayer.



THE ORIGINAL DANIEL PRAYER

DANIEL 9:1–23

In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed:

“O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

“Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the men of Judah and the people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. O LORD, we and our kings, our princes and our ancestors are covered with shame because we have sinned against you. The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; we

have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets. All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you.

“Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing on us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.

“Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. O Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our fathers have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.

“Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, O Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.”

While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill—while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, “Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed.”

PART ONE



PREPARING FOR PRAYER

*Devote yourselves to prayer,
being watchful and thankful.*

COLOSSIANS 4:2



COMMITTED TO PRAY

It is said that Susanna Wesley, mother to nineteen children, including John and Charles, used to throw her apron up over her face to have a few private moments for her prayers. I once heard a Bible teacher share that when her three children were small she let them run loose in the house; then she would climb into their playpen to grab a few moments of private prayer. My own mother encouraged me to “pray on the hoof”—wherever I was and in whatever I was doing. It was her paraphrase of what the apostle Paul told the Thessalonian followers of Jesus when he instructed them to “pray without ceasing.”¹

While I am well aware that we can pray anytime, anywhere, about anything, the Daniel Prayer is different. It’s a commitment. And I am convinced our commitments, or lack of them, change our lives.

The most important commitment I have ever made has been to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. It has affected every area of my life, as well as every fiber of my being—mental, emotional, physical, as well as spiritual. It’s a commitment that I continue to live out on a moment-by-moment, day-to-day basis. That commitment determines the way I spend my money and my time, the friends I have and the enemies I make, the habits I establish and the habits that I break, where I go and what I do. It’s a commitment that has been life-altering and life-shaping.

I also made another very significant, life-altering, life-shaping commitment when I said yes to the marriage proposal offered by Danny Lotz. It led me to a milestone moment on September 2, 1966, at 8:00 in the evening. I stood in the double doorway of Gaither Chapel in Montreat, North Carolina, the small Presbyterian church in which I had been raised, baptized, and had given my first public testimony.

My hand was looped through Daddy's arm as we waited for the wedding director to give the signal that it was time to walk down the aisle. The stone chapel was packed with hundreds of special friends and guests whose heads were twisting and turning to catch a first glimpse of us. With the candlelight giving a soft, romantic feel and the profusion of white flowers giving off a subtle floral scent, the entire scene looked like something out of my dreams.

Daddy and I proceeded to walk on the same aisle cloth that he and my mother had walked over in the very same chapel where twenty-three years earlier they had been married. With my tall, eager bridegroom grinning from ear to ear ahead of us, we met him at the front of the chapel. My father kissed my cheek, placed my hand in Danny's, then stepped in front of us and led us through our wedding vows, pronouncing us man and wife. When I said, "I do," I knew there was no turning back. Because marriage is a commitment.

Now, almost fifty years later, I am still living out that commitment. It has required time. Energy. Sacrifice. It has affected me in every way, at every level, on every day. It hasn't been easy, but God has blessed our relationship. It has been challenging at times to maintain, especially when I became Danny's full-time caregiver. But I made the commitment to be his wife. I followed

through on that commitment until Jesus came and took him home.² The duration and depth of my marriage commitment help me to understand the divine dynamic of love and sacrifice that are requirements if we are to experience God's faithfulness throughout life's mountains and valleys.

And that's the Daniel Prayer. It's a commitment to pray until the prayer is answered. It's not easy. It requires time. Energy. Sacrifice. It involves reading and pleading God's promises. It's motivated by a wholehearted love that's willing to suffer, to repent, to sacrifice—to do whatever it takes to get an answer. But whatever you have to sacrifice or invest to make the commitment, the Daniel Prayer will be worth it one hundred times over when Heaven is moved and this nation is changed.

Daniel teaches us about prayer by his own example. One thing he teaches us is that his commitment to pray required preparation. Just as an athlete can't expect to win by showing up at game time without having practiced, the commitment to pray doesn't just happen. It requires preparation.

A PREPARED PLACE FOR PRAYER



Daniel had a specific place that he designated for prayer, which was an upstairs room in his home to which he withdrew three times every day.³ We don't know anything else about this room except that it had windows facing west. His preparations may have been as simple as setting aside this particular place for prayer where he could be undistracted and undisturbed. A refuge away from the all-consuming culture closing in around him.

I'm convinced we all need this kind of sacred space set aside for special time alone with God. My designated, prepared place

for prayer in my home is the corner of my living room. On one side of the wingback chair where I sit is a fireplace. On cold winter mornings I light the fire, and it adds a cozy ambience that I find appealing. On the other side is a table with a drawer in which I keep several different translations of the Bible, three small devotional books, a Bible-study notebook, a personal journal, my reading glasses, pencil, pen, legal pad, iPad, and tissues. I want everything in place so that once I sit down to pray, I don't have to keep jumping up to find my pen or my glasses or get a tissue for my constantly dripping nose. Gathering those materials required preparation that included selecting a Bible that does not travel with me, but is used only for the purpose of prayer so that it is rarely removed from the chair side table. In that way I know it's always available when I pray.

But I also know I need the regular, disciplined prayer of others. When I began my international ministry almost thirty years ago, God impressed on my heart to establish a Personal Prayer Team. They meet on Thursday mornings in the home of one of the members. I send them a weekly prayer letter on Wednesday that lists answers to prayer from the previous week's requests, then gives more requests for the coming week. Four of the ten ladies now serving have been on my Prayer Team for the entire time. I was blessed beyond words when my daughter, Rachel-Ruth Wright, not only felt called to be on my Personal Prayer Team, but two years ago was selected to be the Chair.

While these women pray for me personally, several years ago I became acutely aware that our ministry office and staff also needed a dedicated prayer team. So I set aside a place for prayer in my ministry office. I did this when one morning in my early morning devotional study of Exodus, I was struck by the fact that

Moses had set aside a tent outside the camp of Israel and designated it for prayer. I knew God was impressing upon me to set aside a room in the office where nothing else would take place except prayer. So I did.

I selected a room in the center of the building and placed enough chairs in it for every staff person who serves at AnGeL Ministries. I had the walls painted a navy blue to give it a quiet, secluded atmosphere. At one end of the room is a small bench in front of a large cross, one made of mirrors so that those kneeling before the cross can see themselves reflected in it. At the other end of the room is an easy chair with a table beside it on which is a lamp, a box of tissues, a Bible, and a card box containing prayer requests people send to our ministry. Outside I hung a small framed sign: The Meeting Place.⁴

While the room is available for staff members to slip into during the day when they want to spend a few moments in quiet reflection, meditation, and prayer, I felt that more organized prayer was necessary. So I asked God to bring to my mind the names of women that He had chosen to be a part of the AnGeL Ministries Office Prayer Team. He did. When I called them, each one agreed to serve. Another immediate, precious personal blessing was that my daughter, Morrow Reitmeier, was one of the names God placed on my heart. She agreed to serve on the Office Prayer Team and has been a member ever since.

From that time until today, on Thursday mornings every week, these six very dedicated women gather in the Meeting Place to pray for the office staff and our ministry needs. To do so, the staff has to submit individual requests to the Prayer Chair by Tuesday afternoon so that she can email the list out to her team. That way the Prayer Team is already prepared to pray when they

arrive on Thursday mornings. Once a month the Prayer Team invites a staff member to meet with them to get a fresh, firsthand grasp of his or her needs whether personal or professional.

The positive difference prayer has made in our office and ministry staff is beyond measure. My staff overflows with love for God's Word, God's Son, God's Gospel, God's people—for each other and for me. The harmony, unity, efficiency, and stability have been more than wonderful. It's been supernatural. It's clear evidence that God hears and answers prayer.

While God meets us wherever and whenever we call out to him, a Daniel-like commitment requires deliberation and preparation in order to maximize the impact of our prayers. For me, the commitment began with my decision to place prayer at the heart of my ministry, and then I have had to maintain that commitment by ensuring it is fully carried out by the Prayer Teams.

Think about this for a moment. While you may not need a team of people praying for you, do you have perhaps one or two friends who could be your prayer partners? People you could pray with once a week or when difficulties arise and you feel you need the support of someone else's prayers? And do you have a designated Meeting Place? Would you consider establishing one? Make the commitment to place prayer at the heart of your home or your office.

I understand that not everyone has the space to set aside just for prayer. When my sister's children were young and she was living in a small house, she kept her Bible study materials in a cardboard box underneath her sofa in the family room. When she had a few moments, she pulled out her box and had everything she needed for prayer. Obviously, her commitment to pray required preparing a box of readily available materials. She found

a way to make it work within the context of her circumstances, something we all can do.

I know business professionals who go to their office an hour earlier in the morning to have time for prayer. Their “materials” are on electronic devices so that they have all they need to meet with the Lord before their day begins. But even electronic devices need preparation to be readily available for use in prayer. You need to have previously downloaded apps for the Bible, for devotionals, and for other materials to enrich your prayer time.⁵

Would you not only consider designating a place in your home or office for prayer, but would you make the commitment to do so? Now. Then follow through and do it.

A PREPARED TIME FOR PRAYER



Prayer helps us anchor our faith in God. It's like setting our spiritual compass so that regardless of the twists and turns during the day, the needle of our focused faith always turns to God. Daniel's life was anchored in prayer. He established the habit of meeting God in his designated place for prayer three times a day, and he maintained that commitment even when under pressure and in the face of life-threatening attack.⁶

Do you not only have a set-aside place for prayer, but a set-aside time to meet with God in prayer? When do you pray?

For years, I battled getting up early in the morning for prayer. I knew, and still know, that any time during the day is acceptable to God. But I couldn't seem to shake the conviction that early morning hours were the ideal time. The woman who taught me how to study and teach the Bible, Miss A. Wetherell Johnson, commented that when our prayer time is at night, it's like tuning

our violin when the symphony is over. Because, of course, the violin needs to be tuned before the symphony so that its sound is pure. Why would we tune our instrument *after* it's been played? With the same reasoning, we need to begin our day with prayer to ensure we live in sync with God. Why would we spend time only in evening prayer after we have already stumbled through the day? While it's wonderful to end our day in prayer, she urged me to pray in the morning when the day before me was a clean slate—a blank page that had yet to be lived out.

I was also aware that again and again, a morning time of prayer is referred to in the Bible. Just in the Psalms alone there are repeated references:

“ . . . In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.”

“ . . . I will sing of your strength; in the morning I will sing of your love . . . ”

“ . . . I cry to you for help, O LORD; in the morning my prayer comes before you.”

“ . . . I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.”

“ . . . Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.”⁷

While these examples encouraged me, the one that drew me to make a commitment to an early morning time with the Lord was not the example of David or the psalmists, but of Jesus Himself. Mark reveals that after a pressure-packed day of intense

ministry, “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”⁸ I felt God was directing me to establish a prayer time in the morning.

But I’m not a morning person, I told myself. I’m such a sleepyhead. So although I felt drawn to get up and pray in the mornings, and although I felt convicted of disobedience when I slept to the last minute without getting up for prayer, I still didn’t do it. I even had the audacity to tell the Lord that if He really wanted me to get up early, He could wake me up Himself! But I made no real decision to get up and no preparations for what I would do if He did wake me up.

There were actually times when I slept to the last minute and complained to God that He hadn’t awakened me for my prayer time. Or I would wake up, but then would deliberately roll over mumbling, “God, yesterday was frantically busy, and I got to bed so late last night. I’m just too tired to get up early. I know You understand.”

Yes, He did understand, but what He also understood was that I had never really made the commitment to get up for prayer and, therefore, had not followed through with the preparation for it. I had good intentions but not obedient actions.

And then God spoke to me very firmly and clearly. As I was studying and meditating on His letters to the seven churches in Revelation in order to teach them to others, He brought them home to me. Let me paraphrase His words that lovingly scalded and scolded:

Anne, I hold you in one hand and the Holy Spirit in the other hand, like balance scales. I’ve weighed your life against His and you don’t measure up. I know what you have been doing.

You are in ministry, traveling around the world, telling other people about Me and getting them to listen to My voice, but you are not listening to Me yourself. You have a reputation of being alive—people regard you as an exemplary Christian—but from My perspective you are falling short—spiritually dying on the inside. The prayers of your prayer team are not a substitute for your own prayers. Wake up! . . . I have not found your deeds complete in My sight because you are prayerless. Remember, therefore, what I have told you and repent.⁹

Talk about a wake-up call! I went down to the gadget store at the local mall, bought a clock that sounded like a major seven-fire alarm when it went off, and set it for thirty minutes before I usually got up to start my day. The first morning it went off, it scared me silly. My heart was thumping out of my chest, my poor husband was startled out of his wits and yelled, “What in the world is that?” and I knew there was no chance I was going to roll over and go back to sleep.

So I got up. At last I had achieved victory over those blankets in the morning! But when I calmed down, I was still sleepy as I went to pray. Yet I had made the commitment to get up for an early morning prayer time, and therefore I knew I had to make even more preparation.

This is what I came up with. After setting my alarm the night before, after bounding out of bed in the morning the moment the alarm went off, after doing my stretches on the floor to loud worship music, after walking-jogging outside for two-and-a-half miles, after getting a triple shot of espresso in my latte at the coffee house, *then* I would come back wide awake and fully engaged for my prayer time. And that worked!

It still works for me today, although I no longer need an alarm to get me up. Getting up for an early morning prayer time

has become one of the joys of my life. And thirty minutes is no longer even close to being sufficient, although there are days when my obligations don't allow me to carve out any more time. When my schedule remains open, my daily time with the Lord can stretch into hours. I love it! I can't wait to meet the Lord in my designated place at the designated time. But it took a firm decision, practical preparations, and dedicated follow-through to get me to this point. Heaven-moving, nation-changing prayer requires acting on your commitment.

There is one other aspect to my preparation that I quickly learned the hard way. It's quite obvious but not always as easy to practice. If I am to get up earlier in the morning, I *must*—this is not optional—I must go to bed earlier the night before. So I do.

The time of day mattered to me for the reasons I've shared with you. But there is nothing super-spiritual about an early morning time of prayer. While every aspect of our prayer doesn't necessarily need to be uttered in one place at one time, I believe the Daniel Prayer requires a set-aside place at a dedicated time to truly be effective. You can decide the place and time that's most helpful to you for focusing on prayer. The important thing is that you follow through with a consistent commitment.

A PREPARED ATMOSPHERE FOR PRAYER



Daniel did something else that I believe helped him keep his focus when he prayed. He was surrounded by a hostile environment with enemies who were jealously trying to find an accusation they could use against him. He lived in a culture where people worshiped many gods. And while Daniel had served with distinction, the previous king, Belshazzar, haughtily

referred to Daniel as one of the exiles enslaved by his father Nebuchadnezzar.¹⁰ It was a humiliating reminder that despite the respect he garnered from his captors, Daniel was still a slave.

Three times a day, when Daniel went to his designated place for prayer, he opened his windows toward Jerusalem. The poignant gesture revealed not only the longing in his heart for his city and his people, but also his exclusive focus on the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The God of his fathers. The God who had been with him throughout his lifetime, for over eighty years. The one, true, living God whom Daniel worshiped and served and obeyed.

While I don't open windows that look toward Jerusalem, I do look up. I look up in the direction of the New Jerusalem that the Bible calls Heaven. As I walk early in the morning and see the moon setting in the west and the sun rising in the east, I worship the Creator whose compassions never fail. His mercies are new every morning. His faithfulness never ceases.¹¹

Sometimes when I see the sunrise at the beach, or the sunset over the Great Smoky Mountain Range, or see the stars studded in the night sky, I have an ache in my heart. I get homesick with longing to go Home. I am reminded that this life is not all there is.

Any difficulties we may have here are not worthy of mention when compared to the glory, honor, and blessing that He will bestow upon us when we go Home.¹² Looking up helps me to keep my focus in prayer as I'm reminded I'm communing with the great God of the universe who is in control of all things and who makes time to meet with me in prayer because He loves me. I'm important to Him. And so are you.

You don't have to look out your window or look up. There are a variety of ways to prepare the atmosphere for your prayer time.

Once in a while, change your designated place to one that's outside where you can reflect on the beauty of His creation. Or use the words of hymns or praise songs to help you stay focused. You can play praise-and-worship music to create an atmosphere that helps you transition from your daily routine into God's presence. You can even use aspects of color and décor to set the mood in the space you've set aside. Just consider what will help you focus on God.

Daniel prepared an atmosphere that was conducive to helping him stay focused in prayer by opening his windows toward Jerusalem. He transcended his captivity and escaped into God's presence, bending down on his knees while looking up with his heart.¹³

A PREPARED ATTITUDE FOR PRAYER



Daniel's body language helped him remember as he prayed that he, Daniel, a slave in exile, had an audience with the One who is the living God, All Glorious, Most Holy, the Ancient of Days, the Almighty. The One who had put His Name on Jerusalem forever. The One who had declared that His eyes and His heart would always be there.¹⁴ The One who would never forsake His people even when they were in exile.¹⁵ When Daniel bowed his knees to God, it was an outward gesture that revealed his inner attitude of humility, reverence, submission, and allegiance to the One so much greater than himself or any earthly king or world ruler.

When was the last time you prayed on your knees? Have you ever prayed on your knees? Try it. The difference your outward position makes in your inner attitude as you pray may surprise you.

Daniel not only prayed from a kneeling position, but he made a habit of giving thanks to God. He cultivated an "attitude of

gratitude”—of thanksgiving despite circumstances that were less than ideal. Think about it. His enemies were lurking outside his window plotting his death. He was over eighty years old and still enslaved eight hundred miles from home. He served a ruthless king who had destroyed his beloved city and butchered countless people, many of whom I’m sure Daniel had known and loved. His boyhood dreams had faded. At this stage of his life, he must have also come to the rude awakening that he would never go home. He would never see his beloved Jerusalem again. And *still* he was thankful. How could that be?

What about you?

When life throws you a curveball, are you thankful?

When your expectations, goals, and dreams have not been realized, and never will be, are you thankful?

When your life’s circumstances go from bad to worse, are you thankful?

When your critics are watching every move you make, anxious to catch you in something they can use to discredit you, are you thankful?

When you are enslaved by a body of pain, or an abusive spouse, or a demanding employer, or an uncaring parent, are you thankful?

How can anyone be thankful in those circumstances?

Daniel’s attitude illustrates one of the great secrets of trusting God. The key to thankfulness is not to view God through the lens of our circumstances, but to view our circumstances through the lens of God’s love and sovereign purpose. God had called Daniel not to a life of comfort and ease, but to a life of greatness.

And so Daniel could thank God for everything in his life. He knew, as he entered his winter years, that all things had worked together for his good to enable him to fulfill God's purpose.¹⁶

As a result, Daniel did indeed live a life of greatness. Perhaps from Heaven's perspective, there is in fact no greater prophet in the Old Testament than Daniel. We are still referring to his prophecies to make sense of what we see happening in our world today.

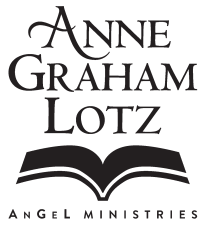
Despite his circumstances, Daniel's faithfulness to God also distinguished him among those around him. With God's favor, he rose quickly through the Babylonian system so that he stood out with exceptional distinction among the many other exiles captured from Judah. During his lifetime, he served as a counselor to the king, as a provincial governor in Babylon, then as prime minister under Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar (for one night), Darius, and Cyrus. And his knowledge of astronomy is still acknowledged today as having influenced the wise men who, approximately five hundred years later, traveled from the east to worship the newborn King of the Jews in Bethlehem.¹⁷

Simply put, Daniel was remarkable.

If he had given in to self-pity, anger, resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness, or a vengeful spirit with a "why me?" attitude toward God, I doubt we would ever have heard of him. Instead, three times a day, every day, Daniel found reasons to be thankful.

What is your attitude? Especially when you're in "captivity"—bound in some way that restricts what you want to do or where you want to go or who you want to be or what you want to have. When God has allowed you to be in some sort of exile—cut off from friends, family, that which is familiar; when He has denied you personal wealth, health, prosperity, happiness—are you thankful to Him?

I wonder . . . will you settle for just getting by as a follower of Jesus, or do you aspire to greatness? Don't settle for less than fulfilling completely the potential that God had in mind for you when He brought you into existence, then brought you to Himself in a personal relationship. Yield your life to God's purpose even when it may seem the very opposite of anything you may have thought you had wanted. While God's purpose may be radically different than the plan you had laid out for your life, make no mistake about it, His plan is much greater and broader . . . it's more lasting and impactful . . . than any plan you could come up with for yourself. I know . . . from personal experience. And so did Daniel.



Anne Graham Lotz calls people to establish a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, then helps them develop and maintain a vibrant faith through His Word.

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