



God of Wisdom and Glory

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." ...

Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" —John 11:1-4, 40

God never disappoints, but it doesn't always seem that way. What Christian has not prayed earnestly for something, only to hear in response just the echo of their own voice—but from God, nothing. Who has not sought the Lord in prayer and had the door seem to shut in their face? How easily we conclude that the God who says, *Knock, and it will be opened to you* (Luke 11:9) is fickle or plays favorites with His promises.

No one in the Bible felt the pangs of dismay like Jesus' friends Mary and Martha. They had seen His miracles and knew His ability to heal, so when their beloved brother Lazarus became sick, they let Jesus know, expecting Him to come heal him. Jesus loved these three siblings, and they knew it. Surely He would make a point to come and heal Lazarus!

But He didn't.

In fact, Jesus let Lazarus die. He deliberately waited two days before going to visit, and by that time, Lazarus was dead and buried. This was how Jesus answered the prayers of these beloved disciples, and He did it on purpose. How could He!

Jesus had something else in mind—the growth of their faith and the glory of God.

When Jesus finally showed up, both sisters chided Him. *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died* (John 11:21, 32). As believers often do, they had set God's agenda for Him based on their own wants and needs. But Jesus knew their deeper need—their eternal need to trust Him in all things and to see His power over death as well as disease.

We know the rest of the story. Jesus used Lazarus' death to reveal that He is the resurrection and the life. New Life. This world is not our home, and God answers our prayers here on earth for the sake of a new heaven and a new earth. He acts in this world for the sake of the next.

When we cling to this earth and set our hopes on what happens here and now, we shrink our infinite God down to a size we can manage. Expecting to God to answer our prayers exactly as we wish puts us in control, not Him. It sets our faith and hope in this world, which is passing away, and leaves no room for the eternal world to come—the place Christ is preparing for His people.

When you pray, let God be God. His plan for His creation is unfolding before our eyes, and He uses our prayers in His creative process. But it's always His plans that He is working out. He achieves His purposes by working our plans and desires and intentions into His. Prayer is more about receiving what God has for us than getting what we want from Him.

God is always faithful to His promises, but He is and always will be God. The world is better when He runs it His way, and life is best when He calls the shots.

So when you pray, expect to receive, but learn to desire what He has to give. It's far greater and more impressive than our stunted expectations. God always gives the best gifts when we leave the choice with Him. So pray in faith believing. And prepare to be amazed.

To the praise of His glory.

Praying for Our Future

Those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. –1st Samuel 2:30b

Let's pray for the church our future pastor will be leading.

1. Pray that we will learn to fear the Lord in such a way that we never put our agenda before God's but surrender to His will and follow His clear leading.
2. Pray that in everything, we will exalt our chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ.
3. Pray for sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, seeking His leading and relying on His enabling to be the Church and do the work He calls to.
4. Pray that we will be a people who read, believe, and follow the Word of God faithfully, because we know it is true and the one reliable authority.
5. Ask God to humble us to receive His truth through those He calls to lead us, and listen for His voice, as He speaks through them.
6. Ask God to help us speak truth to one another in love and receive truth—even painful truth—from each other as from God.
7. And ask God to make prayer an essential part of the ministry of Northpoint.

Prayer for Northpoint

Ask God to protect, strengthen, and guide our leaders at Northpoint.

1. **Our Pastors and Directors:** Scott Williams, Tony Chute, Terilyn Brown, Geoff Grant, Taylor Mendoza, and Marti Wiegman.
2. **Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Mike Russell, and Vinoj Zechariah.
3. **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Andria Brucks, Jacob Williams, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn
 - Ask God to draw them close to Him and keep them true to His Word. Pray for their spiritual depth and a devotion to prayer. Ask God to prepare them and lead them in their ministries.

Prayer Record

Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

–Romans 8:26