

When Prayer Becomes Power

Keeping Jesus in the Mix in 2026



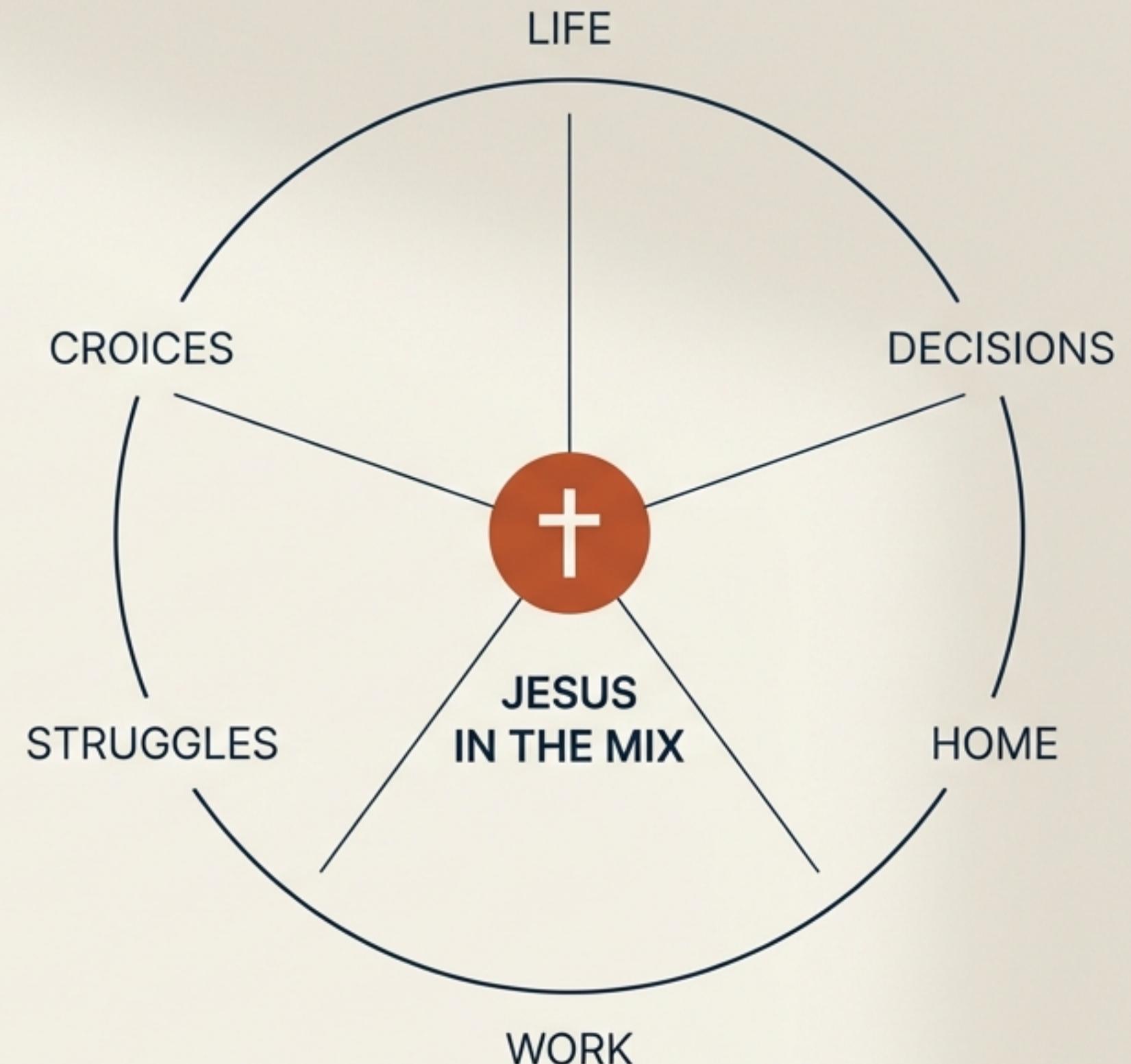
BASED ON THE SERMON BY ELDER MANLEY SKEINE | DOWNSVIEW SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH | JANUARY 17, 2026

Not a Backup Plan, But the Center

The theme for 2026 is “Jesus in the Mix.” This is not a slogan; it is a survival strategy. The world is upside down. We face crucibles in our homes, decisions, and workplaces. We cannot keep Jesus “on the side” or use Him as a backup plan.

The Key Question: How do we keep Him in the midst of this chaos?

The Answer: **P-R-A-Y-E-R.**



A Light That Never Goes Out



The Story of the Lantern Prayer:

Little Maya feared that God couldn't find her when the **storm** blew out the family lantern. Her mother taught her a profound truth: "**God doesn't need a lantern to find us.** He hears us when we pray."

The Shift: Maya felt a tiny **light turn on inside** her. The external light failed, but the **internal connection remained.**

Takeaway: Prayer is that **internal light.** We can pray anytime, anywhere—when happy, scared, or alone. It is a connection that no storm can extinguish.

The Invitation That Changes the Atmosphere

MISCONCEPTION

- A ritual before meals
- A panic button in crisis
- Talking ABOUT God



REALITY

Definition: Prayer is the **invitation** that brings Jesus into the mix.

Mechanism: It is how powerless people tap into divine power.

Distinction: It is talking **WITH** God. Bringing Him into our pain, frustration, and planning.

The Physics of Spiritual Presence

Matthew 18:18-20

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Analysis: God's presence isn't defined by a full building or a crowd. The space doesn't have to be packed for Jesus to be in the mix. He shows up specifically when His people agree and pray together in His name.



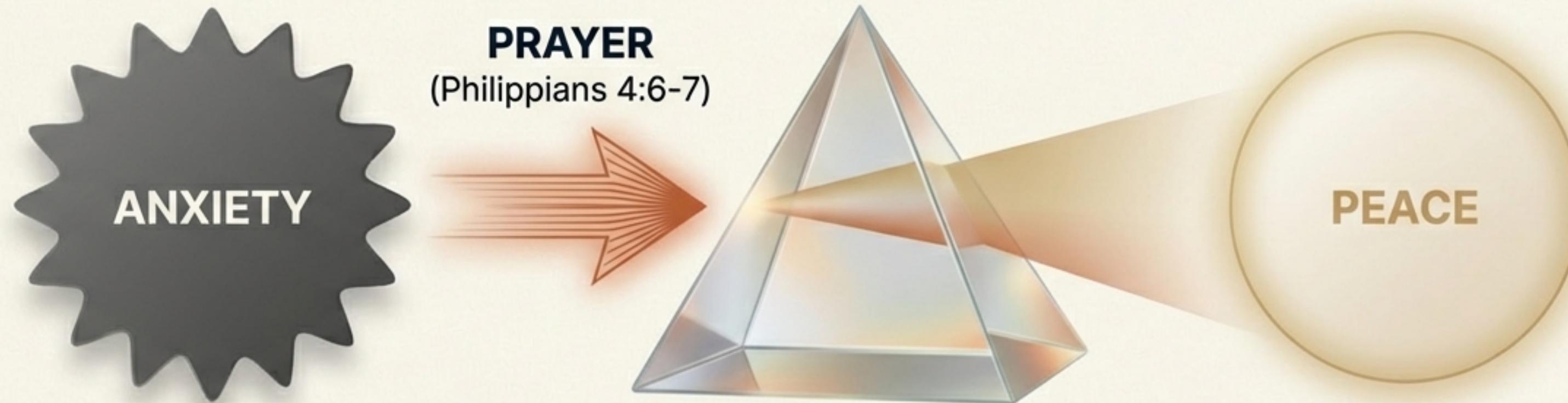
If the Son of God Needed to Pray...



Mark 1:35: “Now in the morning, having risen a long while **before** daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there **He prayed.**”

Reflection: If Jesus—the source of power—needed prayer to stay aligned with the Father, how much more do we need it to navigate 2026?

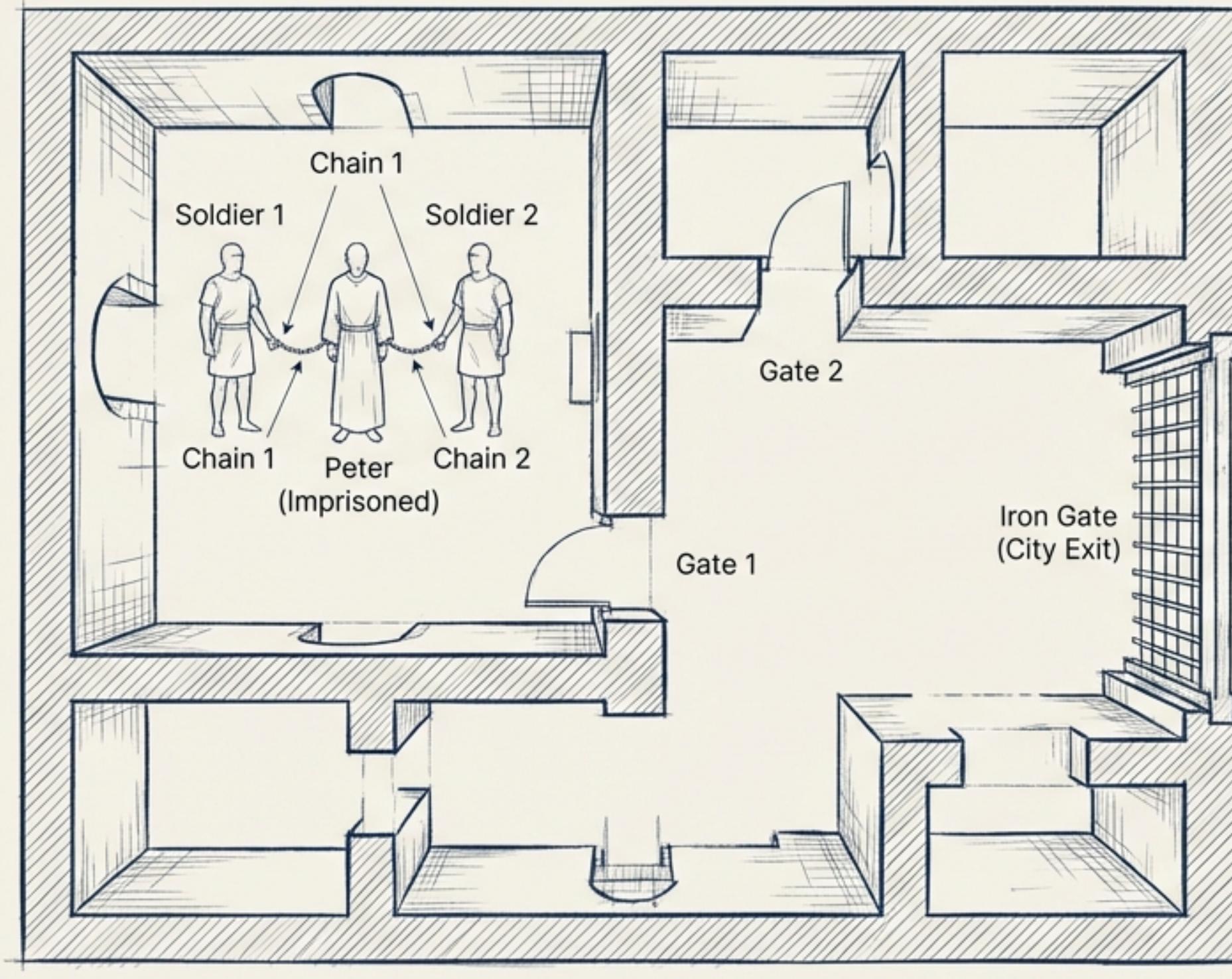
First the Heart, Then the Circumstance



The Mechanism: We often pray to immediately change the situation. However, prayer primarily changes US first. It alters our perspective, attitude, and response.

The Promise: The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and mind.

Case Study: The Crisis in Acts 12



The Situation: Peter is imprisoned. The government intends to kill him to stop the message.

The Church's Response: They did not organize a protest. They did not riot. They organized a prayer meeting.

“When the church begins to pray, no weapon formed against us shall prosper.”

The ‘Remote Control’ Miracle



The Event: While Peter slept and the church prayed, God executed a massive prison break.

The Details:

1. **Light shined** in the darkness.
2. **Chains fell off**.
3. **Passed** first and second guard posts.
4. The **Iron Gate opened “of its own accord”** (like a remote control).

Takeaway: Obstacles yield to miracles when the church prays.

The Ripple Effect of a Praying Church



A praying church is a powerful church. Not because of budgets or buildings, but because Jesus is in the mix.

Dedication in Action

Raising the Next Generation



The Context: Celebrating Ariana (“**Light**”) and Jaylen (“**Holiness**”).

The Challenge: It takes a community to raise children who know **WHOSE** they are in a world that tries to dictate **WHO** they are.

The ‘Sponge’ Concept: Children emulate what they see. Prayer must be modeled in the home—when sitting, walking, lying down, and rising up (**Deuteronomy 6:4-7**).

The Stewardship of Blessings



The Paradox: Jesus was a “Big Giver” (feeding 5,000) but also a “Saver.”

The Evidence: After the miracle, He commanded the disciples to gather the fragments so “nothing is lost,” **saving 12 baskets.**

Application: Spiritual power includes **stewardship**. We must not waste **God's blessings**, but manage them to further His work.

Your Commitment for 2026

- **PERSONAL:** Make time daily (morning and night) for intimate prayer.
- **FAMILY:** Pray together to stay spiritually strong.
- **CHURCH:** Attend prayer meetings; intercede for leadership and youth.

Motto: Prayer is not our last option; it is our first response.

One Thing is Certain



We serve a God **who hears.**
He sees every tear, every
weakness, every mountain.

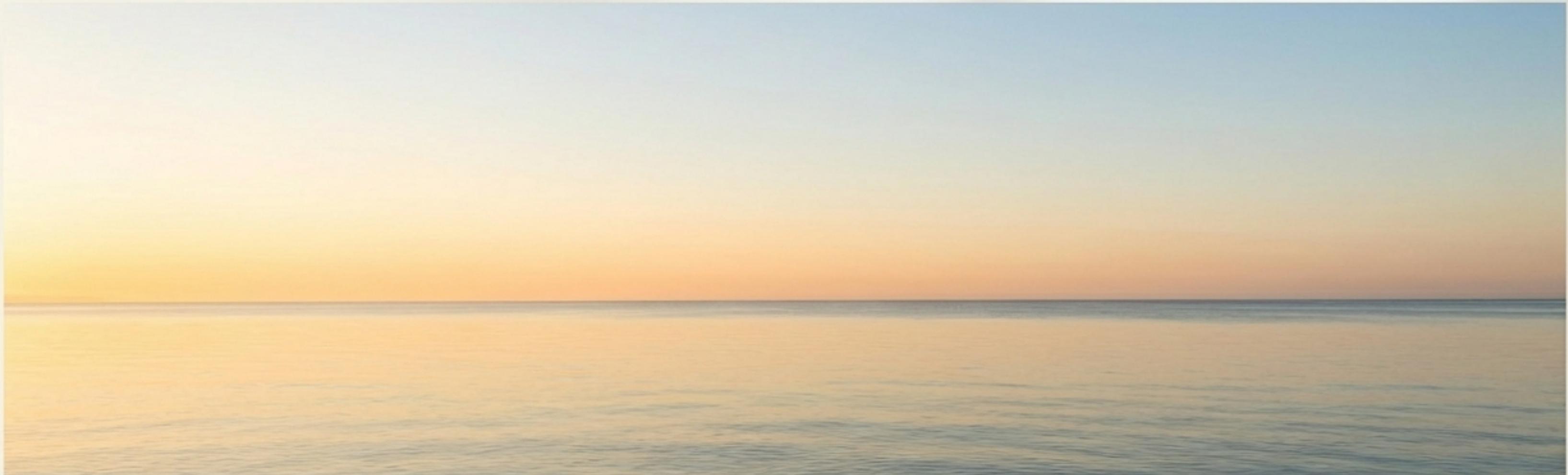
When you go down on
your knees... **He hears.**

God **Answers**
Prayer.



Go in Peace

May His peace be with you till we meet again.



To God be the glory—great things He has done.