



OpenDoors

THE POWER OF PRAYER



A FIVE-DAY DEVOTIONAL
WITH BROTHER ANDREW

A CHANGING PRAYER

“God invites us to influence our community, our nation, and the world—to literally direct history while we’re on our knees.”

—BROTHER ANDREW

No one who knew Open Doors founder Brother Andrew would be surprised to hear him say the words quoted above. Though he is popularly known for smuggling Bibles behind the Iron Curtain, his friends and associates knew him first and foremost as a man of deep prayer.

In fact, you could argue that Brother Andrew couldn’t have lived the courageous life he did if it wasn’t for his fierce prayer life.

Although Brother Andrew wrote and preached on prayer many, many times, one might suggest that most of what he accomplished in his lifetime was prompted by the one now infamous prayer described in the story below.

AN EARLY PRAYER

Early in his ministry, Brother Andrew approached the Romanian border with a car that was packed with illegal Bibles. He hoped the border guards would be generously waving people through with little scrutiny. But, unfortunately, he found just the opposite. The officials at the border were thoroughly searching every vehicle—even removing the cars’

contents and spreading them along the ground for closer examination.

Knowing that believers inside Romania desperately needed access to God’s word, Brother Andrew prayed furiously as he waited for his turn to cross. After a few minutes of reflection, a bizarre idea came to him. Instead of trying to hide the Bibles, he took them out and laid them in plain sight where they would be easily seen. By doing this, Brother Andrew reasoned, he would be depending on God rather than his own craftiness.

It was at this moment that Brother Andrew prayed his perhaps most well-known prayer: “Lord, in my luggage I have Scripture I want to take to your children. When you were on earth, You made blind eyes see. Now, I pray, make seeing eyes blind. Do not let the guards see those things You do not want them to see.”

But his prospects did not look good. Every car in front of Brother Andrew was stopped and searched in detail. Naturally, when Andrew reached the front of the line, then, he expected the same treatment. As he reached the border line, Brother Andrew cooperatively stopped



the car and even began to exit the vehicle as the drivers before him had done.

But the guard was suddenly acting very strangely.

Instead of searching Andrew's vehicle, the official glanced at Andrew's passport and abruptly waved him on.

Surprised, Andrew began inching forward. His mind raced.

Was he perhaps being asked to pull over?

Surely, he wasn't being dismissed this easily?

But as Brother Andrew slowly pulled away, with stacks of Bibles sitting on the seat next to him, *not a single person motioned for him to stop*. Instead, the guard who waved him through instantly moved on to inspecting the car behind him.

And this prayer was just the beginning. By devoting himself to prayer, Brother Andrew stumbled upon opportunity after opportunity to take Bibles into many more restricted countries who had little access to God Word. "Let's get on our knees and pray," Andrew once said, "And may God use our prayers to change the course of history in these nations, for the sake of

His people and for His glory!" He went on to visit 125 countries and found Open Doors—an organization who still actively supports persecuted Christians in more than 60 countries today.

Still today, one of Open Doors' 7 Core Values reflects our founder's commitment as our team commits to live and serve as "people of prayer."

In celebration of Brother Andrew's legacy of prayer, we've compiled this 5-day devotion inspired by Andrew's teachings on prayer. While the content to come could all be read in one sitting, we suggest that you take in each day's reading at a slower, more deliberate pace. *Perhaps read one session per day.* Or if you'd really like to challenge yourself, spend an

*Then you will call upon
me and come and pray to
me, and I will listen to you.*

JEREMIAH 29:12

"We have to become people of action and not of reaction. Reactionary response is always one step behind."

BROTHER ANDREW



Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

entire week reflecting on the prayers of Brother Andrew, and allow God to show you what truths these words hold for your life today.

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. While not many of us smuggle Bibles into dangerous territories, each of us faces our own forms of fear and hardship in the course of life. What circumstances in your life today provoke concern like those that consumed Andrew as he waited to cross the Romanian border?
2. As you struggle with worry or challenges, what words can you pray in faith to invite God to do unexpected good in your life?
3. What role do you think action played in Andrew's experience? Do you believe God rewards our obedience when we choose to act in faith? As you pray today, are there any actions you believe God may be prompting you to take?
4. Is it difficult to repeat Andrew's words "Lord, if you show me the way, I will follow you." If so, what doubts or obstacles prevent you from being able to offer this prayer to God sincerely? Consider surrendering those obstacles to God and inviting him to show you the first step he'd like you to take today. Commit to trust that he will help you find the faith for each new step as you take it.

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS

"If we understood the potential power of our prayers, we would be on our knees a hundred times a day asking Him for things that would turn the world upside-down."

—BROTHER ANDREW

What's the point of praying? Doesn't God already know what he will do in the future?

These questions have probably occurred to most Christians at some point in their lives. And that includes Brother Andrew.

But over the course of his life and ministry, Andrew developed unwavering conviction that prayer did make a difference. While Andrew believed God knew the future, he taught that "Only [God's] character and nature are unchanging; His decisions are not!"

Because Andrew wholly believed God not only heard prayers but sometimes acted as a result of them, it caused him to pray with infamous boldness. "Having an intimate relationship with God," he said, "makes it possible for us to pray boldly as Abraham and Moses and Jesus did."

And Andrew not only preached this advice, he lived it by praying prayers so bold they routinely surprised those around him.

In 1983, for example, Brother Andrew assessed the grim situation for Christians living in the Soviet Union. The circumstances were bleak. Christians were being locked up in

Soviet gulags in increasing numbers. And the government was simultaneously cracking down on "unregistered churches."

But as Andrew studied the complexities in the Soviet Union, he saw a clear and obvious path forward. The only answer, he concluded, was to pray.

And so Andrew began to call Christians around the world to "Seven Years of Prayer." This prayer movement was inspired by the Biblical story of Jericho which fell after God's people circled the city for seven days.

All over the world, people began to pray. In Andrew's home country of the Netherlands, they even set up a 24-hour prayer chain to ensure that people were praying around the clock—every day, every hour, every minute—for Christians.

As the praying commenced, things at first got worse. As Andrew's friend, Peter, tells it, "It became even more difficult for Christians in the Soviet Union and the number of Christian prisoners rose to an all-time high."

But slowly things began to change. By 1988, the Soviet economy was in crisis. And to gain



*You may ask me for
anything in my name,
and I will do it.*

JOHN 14:4

*“Our prayers can go
where we cannot...
there are no borders,
no prison walls,
no doors that are
closed to us when
we pray.”*

BROTHER ANDREW

support, President Gorbachev promised that Christians would no longer be penalized...but be treated as patriots. Churches began to open. Shipping regulations relaxed allowing Bibles to be shipped into the country. By 1989, six years after the prayers began, the Berlin Wall was also being dismantled—a clear sign that Communist rule was changing.

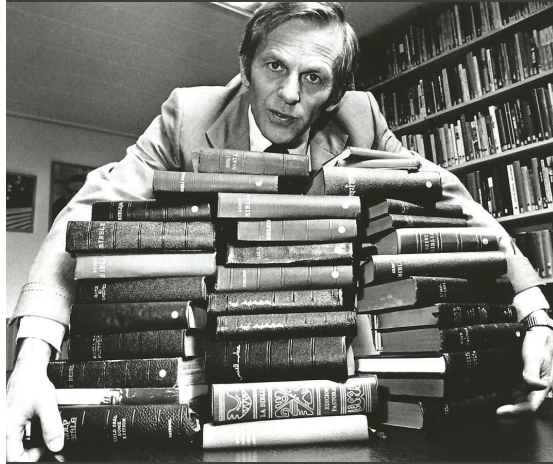
Did the seven years of prayer work? As you consider this question, note there were 340 imprisoned Christian believers in 1985. By March of 1990? There were only 17. And by the end of the seven year prayer campaign, Open Doors had given one million Russian New Testaments to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What issues in your life or in the world trouble you most?
2. Have you ever considered committing to pray—not just occasionally, not just for minutes—but in a consistent, long term way? What similar miracles might God work if His people lifted up their concerns for years?
3. Are there people in your life that you, like Andrew, could invite to join you in a campaign of prayer?
4. Can you remember any time in your life where God appeared to answer a prayer? Is it tempting to write off the answered prayer as “coincidence?” Why or why not?

“If your vision doesn’t scare you, then your vision or your God is too small.”

BROTHER ANDREW



Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and ye shall find.

MATTHEW 7:7

PRAYER CHANGES US

“I have come to see clearly that life is more than self. It is more than doing what I want, striving for what will benefit me, dreaming of all I can be. Life is all about my relationship with God. There is no higher calling, no loftier dream and no greater goal to live, breathe, and be poured out for Jesus Christ.”

—BROTHER ANDREW

As a boy, Brother Andrew was known for being a bit of a prankster. After Germans invaded his hometown, for example, Andrew passed the time by playing tricks on the occupying soldiers. In addition, young Andrew was dead set on becoming a top secret spy. This may explain why he eagerly served as a messenger for the Dutch Resistance. And why—by the time he reached adulthood, he willingly went to fight in the Dutch East Indies.

But Andrew's adventure and his eagerness was soon cut short. While serving in the military outside of Jakarta, Andrew's unit was ambushed and he was shot in the leg. The injury was so severe the doctor considered amputation. Although they saved his leg, Andrew struggled to walk—often limping or relying on crutches. But after a time in a rehabilitation hospital, Andrew was eventually sent home to readjust to normal life.

Unfortunately, Andrew had a difficult time re-entering his childhood community. He had

always been an adventure seeker, and now, with a crippled leg, he believed the daring life he sought was over. He wanted no part of an ordinary, normal life.

Disappointed and angry about how life had turned out, Andrew sometimes turned to alcohol. This only made him more unhappy. But one night, while reflecting, Andrew realized he'd been giving God a lot of excuses for not serving Him more. “My ‘yes’ to God had always been a ‘yes, but.’ Yes, but I’m not educated. Yes, but I’m lame.”

That night Brother Andrew determined to change that. With this new awareness, Andrew resolved to say yes, but in a brand-new way, without qualification.

“What is it, Lord? What am I holding back? What am I using as an excuse for not serving You in whatever You want me to do?” Andrew prayed. “I’ll go, Lord...Whenever, wherever, however You want me, I’ll go. And I’ll begin this very minute. Lord, as I stand up from this place,



and as I take my first step forward, will You consider that this is a step towards complete obedience to You? I'll call it the Step of Yes."

Not long after he prayed these words, Andrew and his friend Kees decided to go hear a popular Dutch evangelist in the area. Andrew was shocked, during the sermon, to hear the preacher say, "...Someone in this audience is going to give himself as a missionary."

Before Andrew knew it, without even purposefully planning to do so, he and his friend got up and began walking down the aisle to meet the preacher. The evangelist prayed for the two friends and, after the service, asked Andrew to share his testimony in an open-air meeting outside the mayor's house. Andrew was mortified and wanted to refuse to share. But instead, he nodded along in obligation, vowing that he would keep his speech as quiet as possible so no one came to hear him. "I'm not going to tell a single person." Andrew pledged.

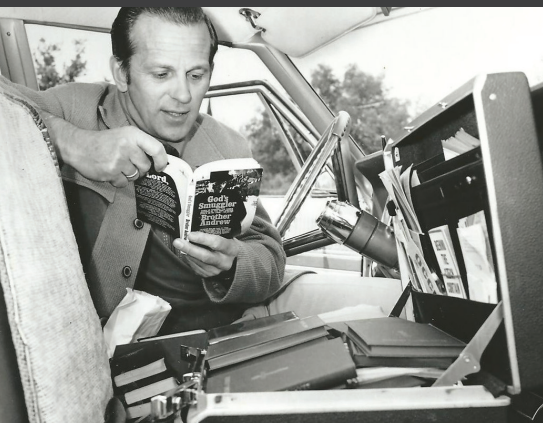
Andrew was right. Though not in the way he expected. After he gave the speech that night, God moved in his heart in a way that took him by surprise. Soon, God had completely reversed Andrew's heart and Andrew was determined to go into full-time ministry work. He didn't just end up telling a single person about his testimony. Rather, Brother Andrew went on to share his testimony with millions via his travels to 125 countries and his biography which has sold more than 10 million copies.

*If any of you lacks wisdom,
you should ask God, who
gives generously to all
without finding fault, and
it will be given to you.*

JAMES 1:5

"The real calling is not to a certain place or career, but to everyday obedience. And that call is extended to every Christian, not a select few."

BROTHER ANDREW



*"For my thoughts are not
your thoughts,
neither are your ways
my ways,"
declares the Lord.
"As the heavens are higher
than the earth,
so are my ways higher
than your ways
and my thoughts than
your thoughts."*

ISAIAH 55:8-9

Brother Andrew believed he was destined to be a military commando and top-secret spy. Even after he was wounded and began praying to God, he was resistant to sharing his story. But God used prayer to change Andrew and to set him on a course that would literally change the world.

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What hopes or goals did you have for your life that no longer seem possible to achieve? Do you relate to Andrew's feelings of disappointment?
2. Have you prayed a prayer as deliberately as Andrew's, vowing to do whatever God might offer you? If not, what do you think holds you back?
3. Can you already sense a new, unexpected direction that God might have for your life? Is he building your passion or opportunities in another area?
4. Can you think of a time when the act of praying changed you or the way you approached your life?

PRAYER CHANGES THE CHURCH

“That’s the excitement in obedience, finding out later what God had in mind.”

—BROTHER ANDREW

In 1955, Brother Andrew took a suitcase full of Bible tracts to a Socialist youth congress in Poland, which was part of the Soviet bloc. What he observed on this trip would direct his life work for more than six decades to come.

Behind the Iron Curtain, for example, Brother Andrew found Christians lacked Bibles. And, feeling isolated from the rest of the world, they often expressed how they desperately craved the prayers of others.

One evening during his stay in Poland, Brother Andrew visited a Baptist church where he was invited to speak. When he finished, the pastor approached him. “Thank you for being here,” he said, “Even if you had not said a word, just seeing you would have meant so much. We feel at times as if we are all alone in our struggle.”

At the close of the youth congress, as his trip came to an end, Andrew began to fervently ask God how he should respond to all he had seen. One night, in particular, Andrew was devoting

himself to prayer when he opened up his Bible and noticed a passage. The Scripture he saw immediately jumped out to him. In fact, it impacted Brother Andrew so deeply, the passage stayed with him all his life and came to serve as his personal mission:

“Wake Up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die.” (Revelation 3:2)

That night, Andrew took this verse to mean he should try to support Christians who lived out their faith in some of the world’s most hostile regions. And as Brother Andrew continued to pray and work alongside persecuted believers, he came to have a unique view on the persecuted church.

For one, Andrew believed he must identify with the church. “I want to feel their pain and feel their joy,” He told former ODUSA president Terry Madison. “The thing we have forgotten is that there is terrible pain—the poverty and the discrimination and all the fathers in prison and the people blown up in churches. It happens in



*And I say also unto thee,
That thou art Peter, and
upon this rock I will build my
church; and the gates of hell
shall not prevail against it.*

MATTHEW 16:18

*"Of course it's dangerous.
But it's a lot more
dangerous for all of us if
we don't do it. Even in a
conquering army there are
casualties. Safety is not the
issue when we look at the
Great Commission."*

BROTHER ANDREW

all these countries—China, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos, India, and Pakistan—and practically all the other countries from Indonesia to Morocco. I identify with them so the Lord can search me to pray for specific needs that come to my desk every day. Sometimes I cry, sometimes I don't know how to pray. But I'm always saying, 'Lord, I'm willing to go there.'"

Secondly, Andrew came to hold specific ideas about what to pray...and also what *not* to pray. "I don't pray that God will lift the persecution...When we read the Bible, all the Bible's characters met with at least opposition," Andrew once told the Christian Post, "How do we pray? Not for God to remove persecution, but use that to purify the Church. And it is my strong belief that the countries where there is persecution are stronger in faith than churches in countries where there is no persecution—whether it is your country or my country (Netherlands)."

To Brother Andrew, the persecuted church was not just a community to pray *for*, but brothers and sisters to pray *with* and learn *from*. The more Andrew prayed and responded

to God's promptings, the more God brought together believers from all corners of the globe to serve and work as *one, unified church*.

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What do you know about the persecuted Church that Andrew encountered in Poland. How might learning about the persecuted church (visit odusa.org) impact your ability to pray for Christians who face hardship in hostile regions?
2. Andrew was deeply impacted by Revelations 3:2 which reads "Wake Up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die." What role do you think you might have in strengthening and supporting the persecuted church?
3. Do you identify with Christian brothers and sisters as Andrew did? Why or why not?
4. What insights do you gather from Andrew's statement that "How do we pray? Not for God to remove persecution, but use that to purify the Church"?

"You can't use strong-arm tactics against the church without strengthening it. It's always been that way. Under persecution a man looks at his faith to see if it's worth fighting for, and this is a scrutiny Christianity can always withstand."

BROTHER ANDREW



For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

MATTHEW 18:20

PRAYER CHANGES OUR IDEAS

“This must become our strength. Not what we are against, but whom we are for.”

—BROTHER ANDREW

During a visit to Lebanon, Brother Andrew was granted a visit with Sheikh Fadlallah, a well-known spiritual influencer with Hezbollah—a Shi’a Islamist militant group.

As the two men spoke, Brother Andrew asked the Sheikh to release hostages being held by their militants. Sadly, Fadlallah insisted he didn’t have the authorization to do so.

Thinking quickly, Brother Andrew called out the name of a specific hostage—a devoted Christian man who’d been held three years and was said to be in poor health. “I have come fully prepared to stay here and take the place of this man,” Andrew told Fadlallah. “The man has suffered enough. Let him go back to his wife and children. I have put my house in order. I will take his place. Chain me to the radiator. Put me in the dark cellar. But let him go.”

The Sheikh was quiet and expressionless. Finally, he replied, “How can you say that?”

“This is the Spirit of Jesus,” Andrew explained. “He died on the cross to let us go free. He died so we could live. Now I’m ready to give myself up so my friend can go free. That is what Christianity is all about.”

“I have never heard about this kind of Christianity,” Fadlallah answered. And for more than an hour, Andrew shared the gospel with this Shi’a leader. During the conversation, the Sheikh told Andrew this was the first time in his life he’d heard about the concept of grace.

Although Andrew was not able to help with the hostage situation, he left sensing God might have used him for something other than his own stated purposed. Andrew had gone into the meeting thinking the intent of his visit was to advocate for the hostages. But he left believing maybe God’s purpose was for the soul of the ayatollah himself.

Through this and other experiences, Andrew began to take seriously the call to pray for other radicals, militants and even terrorists too.

“Jesus told us to go into all the world,” Brother Andrew observed. “He didn’t say, ‘Go when you get an invitation.’ So we invite ourselves.” With this conviction in hand, Andrew made it a practice to visit the headquarters of militant camps. Committed to this mission, he even made an unannounced visit to a terrorism training facility for the Taliban and al-Qaeda.



What happened when he dropped by such places, we wonder? Well, usually, Brother Andrew reports, they invited him in to preach. “I just turn up on the doorstep and say that I want to speak to the boss,” he once told *IDEA Magazine*. “I say that I have a message from God and I’ve never had a ‘no!’”

In the years that followed, Brother Andrew began calling for others to join “an army of compassion” to minister to the Muslim world. He began asking people to pray every day for individuals and nations in the Islamic world. Prayer was the only things that could alter the tension and volatility between the East and the West. “You can’t reach people’s hearts and minds with guns,” Andrew said. “Fight them and you will only make them stronger. Loving them will make them turn to Christ.”

You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

MATTHEW 5:43-48

“Instead of always looking for the enemy or taking a side, we should go to all sides with the love of Jesus.”

BROTHER ANDREW

"Christians need a new filling of the Holy Spirit to love those who disagree with them. And the greatest expression of love is to share with them the most precious thing a Christian has, which is the good news of the salvation of Jesus Christ."

BROTHER ANDREW



*If your enemy is hungry,
give him food to eat; And if
he is thirsty, give him water
to drink.*

PROVERBS 25:21-22

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What about Brother Andrew's character or words do you think impacted the Sheikh? How do you believe God could use your words and actions to penetrate the hearts of others?
2. God used experiences like the one in this story to deepen Brother Andrew's heart for the Muslim community? How does his love for the community compare to how Christians in your life approach Muslims?
3. Andrew seemed to believe that if Christians truly intended to follow the Great Commission, it required them to go to Muslims. Do you agree or disagree?
4. Did Andrew's loving approach somehow make him more powerful than the threats or forces he faced?

30 DAY

PRAYER JOURNAL

"When people allow Jesus to completely change them, they become part of the biggest revolution on the face of the earth."

—BROTHER ANDREW



In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us...

ROMANS 8:26

INSTRUCTIONS: During one stage of Brother Andrew's life, he wrote his prayer requests on the inside cover page of his Bible. He did this so that every time he looked at it, he would recognize if God had answered one or more of his prayers. In keeping this practice, he trained his mind not only to pray, but to watch for how God responded when he did.

The worksheet below provides a space for you to record the things you pray for over the next 30 days, as well as a space to note when any of your prayers are answered.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

COLOSSIANS 4:2

DAY 1

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 2

Request: _____

Answer? _____

"That's the excitement in obedience, finding out later what God had in mind."

– BROTHER ANDREW

DAY 3

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 4

Request: _____

Answer? _____

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.

JEREMIAH 33:3

DAY 5

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 6

Request: _____

Answer? _____

"God does not choose people because of their ability, but because of their availability."

– BROTHER ANDREW

DAY 7

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 8

Request: _____

Answer? _____

Bless those who cure you, pray for those who mistreat you.

LUKE 6:28

DAY 9

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 10

Request: _____

Answer? _____

"One man, with God, is a majority."

BROTHER ANDREW

DAY 11

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 12

Request: _____

Answer? _____

Let all that you do be done in love.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:14

DAY 13

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 14

Request: _____

Answer? _____

"In the years of living this life of faith, I have never known God's care to fail."

– BROTHER ANDREW

DAY 15

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 16

Request: _____

Answer? _____

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

DAY 17

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 18

Request: _____

Answer? _____

"God does not choose people because of their ability, but because of their availability."

– BROTHER ANDREW

DAY 19

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 20

Request: _____

Answer? _____

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

1 JOHN 5:14

DAY 21

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 22

Request: _____

Answer? _____

"And if I know who my God is, then it completely takes away my fear."

– BROTHER ANDREW

DAY 23

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 24

Request: _____

Answer? _____

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

ROMANS 12:12

DAY 25

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 26

Request: _____

Answer? _____

"That's the excitement in obedience. Finding out later what God had in mind."

– BROTHER ANDREW

DAY 27

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 28

Request: _____

Answer? _____

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

PSALM 145:18

DAY 29

Request: _____

Answer? _____

DAY 30

Request: _____

Answer? _____



*"Our prayers can go where we cannot...there are no borders,
no prison walls, no doors that are closed to us when we pray."*

—BROTHER ANDREW