

Back to the Altar

100 DAYS OF PRAYER

FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

June 27-July 3, 2025

Hurled into the Harvest

by Derek Morris



Mary Ann Roberts grew up in a Christian home, but as a young person she never made a personal commitment to Jesus as her Savior and Lord. After college she married, her husband joined the military, and they moved to Europe. It was there that Mary Ann abandoned all connections with church and became a self-described party animal.

During 1983 she hit rock bottom. In the midst of a week-end-long drinking binge she became so drunk and sick that she was unable to attend a family reunion. That's when Mary Ann decided to ask God back into her life. The vivid picture that came to her mind at that low point in her life was of a loving Father running down the road to meet His prodigal child. Mary Ann knew she was that child.

Realizing that she needed to make some radical changes in her lifestyle, she wrote to a Christian pastor and told him of her commitment to become a follower of Jesus. That pastor's wife understood how difficult the transition would be and supported Mary Ann by calling her on the telephone every single morning for an entire year to pray with her.

Even though Mary Ann started attending a Christian church and God became a vital part of her life, she sensed that something was still missing—that God had something special in store for her that she had not yet found. She had always wished that she had continued her education, so she decided to go back to school. Perhaps it would fill the void in her heart. She applied to and was accepted into a graduate program in science and eventually completed a Ph.D. in neuroscience. But somehow life still seemed incomplete.

In the summer of 2001 Mary Ann attended a camp meeting in North Carolina. She was interested mainly in socializing with friends, so she sat near the back of the auditorium. During one of the meetings though, she overheard a Christian evangelist invite those who were interested in a ministry project in Kenya to meet with him after the service.

"Usually, I like to mull things over before I act," Mary Ann recalls, "but it was as if someone were standing in front of me and pointing directly at me." At the close of the meeting, she walked up to the front of the auditorium under deep conviction that God was calling her to participate in the ministry project in Kenya. After talking with Mary Ann, the evangelist invited Mary Ann to conduct a series of meetings in the primitive community of Rongo, Kenya. Mary Ann was not a public speaker. She had no homiletical training and absolutely no experience in frontline mission work. It had never crossed her mind that God would ask her to become a preacher. But she was open to the working of the Holy Spirit that day, and, in her own words, she began to pray a very

radical prayer: “Lord, I give You permission to throw me out into your harvest.”

Fast forward a few months and Mary Ann traveled to Kenya to do just what God had called her to do. Although she was terrified, every night when she stood up to preach, she sensed God speaking through her to the crowd assembled in the town square, and at the end of her meetings there in Rongo, Kenya, more than 500 people confessed their love for Jesus in baptism. As you can imagine, Mary Ann was filled with joy—radical joy! And that joy has not disappeared. Mary Ann has continued to preach and share and follow God’s leading. She found her calling when she gave God permission to use her in His harvest.

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Live God's Mission

Welcome to another session of **Back to the Altar | 100 Days of Prayer!**

Throughout this series, we've been learning how God used Elijah to turn the hearts of straying Israel back to Him. However, when we last left the story, Elijah had just started mentoring Elisha. Let's tune in again to learn what Elijah did when facing the Jordan river.

- **Play Video 1:** Crossing the Jordan - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID1>

What is the "Jordan River" that you are facing right now? What is something that God is asking you to do but it seems impossible, and you haven't yet moved forward for fear of what will happen?

Bow your head for a few moments and pray about what your "Jordan River" might be. When God brings it to your mind, write it down on a slip of paper. It might be choosing to keep the Sabbath instead of pleasing an employer or standing up for something else that you believe God has told you in His Word. Perhaps it is stepping forward on a faith venture that you feel God is calling you to make. Only you and God know exactly what this "Jordan River" is.

Are you willing to cross that "Jordan River" by the power of the Lord? If so, put your paper down on the floor, and then step over it, as a symbol to the Lord that you are willing to cross your "Jordan River" by faith in His power. This isn't just a little exercise. When you step over that paper, you are in essence telling God, "I choose to move forward by faith and cross the Jordan River that lies in front of me!"

If you just stepped over your "Jordan River," know that the choice you have just made is significant, and heaven is rejoicing! Ellen White writes, "The Lord can do more in one hour than we can do in a whole lifetime, and when he sees that His people are fully consecrated, let me tell you, a great work will be done in a short time, and the message of truth is to be carried into the dark places of the earth, where it has never been proclaimed" (*5th Manuscript Releases*, p. 347).

Continue to cross each "Jordan River" that you face by faith, and God will be with you!

Before we get into this week's Bible study, let's follow along as Pastor Don does a review of all the Back to the Altar principles that we've learned so far.

Supplemental
Material to Take
This Series Deeper

Crossing the Jordan

<https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID1>

BT TA Principles Review

<https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID2>

Finding Your Mission

<https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID3>

Going Deeper with Heart Questions

<https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID4>

Practical Lessons from Jesus' Mission

<https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID5>

Testimony

<https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID6>

- **Play Video 2:** Review of Back to the Altar principles - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID2>

Have you ever longed to be chosen for something significant? You don't need to long anymore because you have already been chosen by the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! John 15:16 tells us, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."

God has a special purpose and mission for your life! Your life matters! No matter where you've been or what you've done, no matter your age, your gender, your education or lack thereof, where you live, your qualifications or lack of qualifications, if you are willing, God will use you.

To His servants Christ commits "His goods" — something to be put to use for Him. He gives "to every man his work." Each has his place in the eternal plan of heaven. Each is to work in cooperation with Christ for the salvation of souls. Not more surely is the place prepared for us in heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 326).

In this session, we will learn the seventh and final principle of what it means to come back to the altar. That principle is "Live your God-given mission!"

Would you like to know God's mission for your life?

Bible Study

Just as you might have had dreams when you were a child of what you wanted to do or what you wanted to become when you grew up, God also has special dreams for you and your life. In this lesson we will explore our unique and special God-given calling.

I. What does God know about you?

Read/Reflect on Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18. Make a list of what God knows about you, based on these verses.

Read/Reflect on Ephesians 1:4 and Ephesians 2:10. When did God choose you?

God has a mission for each one of us! Let's explore who God created us to be and learn how we may serve Him in our own unique way.

II. Discover Your God-Given Mission!

Following is a list of exploring questions to help you learn where God might be calling you to serve. These are passages that you will want to look up and pray over as an individual. Humbly pray before you begin exploring. Surrender your life to Jesus Christ. Ask God to send His Holy Spirit to guide you as you seek to understand His calling and mission for your life.

1. What are my spiritual gifts? Based on the following passages, make a list of all that you think you have. After you've made a list, circle your top 3–5 spiritual gifts.

- 1 Corinthians 12:4–11
- Romans 12:6–8, 13
- Ephesians 4:11, 12
- 1 Peter 4:9–11
- Exodus 31:1–5

Before you go through the next series of questions, watch this video where Pastor Don gives a deeper overview of the questions you are going to be asking yourself.

- **Play Video 3:** Finding Your Mission - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID3>

Now, with what Pastor Don has just shared in mind, go through the following questions. Write down your answers on a notepad.

2. When did I feel the most:

- Free — to be who God made me to be?
- Flow — to serve people I love to help and tackle issues I care about in a way that utilizes my natural gifts?
- Joy?
- Used of God?
- Positive feedback from people who responded to my service by moving toward God?

Before you move on, write down two/three times in your life when all these five things were present for you as you served others.

As you prepare to answer the next series of questions, listen once more as Pastor Don takes these questions a little deeper.

- **Play Video 4:** Going Deeper with Heart Searching Questions - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID4>

As you go through the following questions, give yourself 60 seconds for each question, then give another 60 seconds to circle the top three answers of the types of people you like to help.

3. Who do I love to help?

- List all the types/categories of people you have a heart to help.
(*Example: Children/Youth, Single moms, Abuse victims, Unreached, Etc.*)
- Circle the top 3.

4. What issues do I care about?

- List issues that are being neglected in your world that trouble your heart or make you angry. (*Example: Education for impoverished children, lack of support for pregnant teens, abuse of specific people groups.... Etc.*)
- List issues you have a passion to address or do something about.

5. What do others see in me?

After you've written down the answers to questions 1-4, send those questions along with your answers to five people who have the following criteria:

- They know you well.
- They care about you.
- They walk with God.
- They have discernment.
- They will be willing to spend three days praying and reflecting on your answers and will respond to this question: "In what specific ways do you think I could best serve God with my gifts, with a focus on the people and on the issues I care about?"

After you've heard back from these five people, pray over the feedback you receive. Lay their responses out before God as you seek His wisdom in prayer. Consider the things God has been laying on your heart and the spiritual gifts you've studied. Claim James 1:5–8 as you pray for wisdom.

III. Live the Lord of the Harvest Prayer

Read/Reflect on Matthew 9:35–38. What can you learn about Jesus' mission from these passages?

In verse 38 we see that Jesus tells His disciples to beg the Lord of the harvest to *ekballō* — that is, to hurl out workers into His harvest.

In Matthew 10:16 we find that Jesus doesn't just call us to pray that He will send out others into the harvest. He tells us to go ourselves, even when we face difficult circumstances. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we can be fearless and faithful in our heavenly mission!

As you reflect on Jesus' mission, watch the following video as Pastor Don takes these passages deeper.

- **Play Video 5:** Practical lessons we can learn from Jesus' Mission - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTAWI3VID5>

Now it's time for a fun little activity to put feet on our faith! You can do this by yourself or with a group.

Hurling into the Harvest – Closing Activity

As we've just learned, Jesus wants to hurl us out into His harvest. He wants to throw you and me into the mission He has dreamed for us.

- **Instructions:** Take a piece of paper and write down an out-of-your-comfort zone mission that God might be nudging you to take. It could be witnessing to a difficult neighbor down the street, making friends with the bully at school, or something much more daring like quitting a job or going to a faraway place to make disciples.
- When you have finished writing down that mission, stand up and come together with those around you forming a big circle with each person facing outward.
- Take the sheet of paper that you just wrote on and wad it up into a tight ball. Then hurl or throw the paper ball as far away from the circle as you can. Make sure you see where it landed, as you will go to that spot in a moment.
- Are you willing to step out of your comfort zone to go to where your piece of paper fell and take five minutes to surrender to Jesus privately, asking Him to hurl you out into the mission He dreamed and planned for you before you were born?

Let's listen as Pastor Don shares a powerful testimony about one young woman who was willing to be hurled into the harvest, no matter the cost.

- **Play Video 6:** Testimony: Hurlled into the Harvest, Whatever the Cost - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID6>

Only God knows the ending to this young woman's story, but it is our prayer that this young woman's life and bold step of faith was not in vain. May her zeal encourage all of us to go wherever God calls and live the mission He has given us.

Remember, the days ahead will not be easy. Persecution is coming. For many, persecution is already here. But remember, no matter what you face, no matter what difficulties come, Jesus walks beside you, and He will be with you to the end.

Dear Father in heaven, thank You for calling us to follow Your Son as His disciples! We surrender to Jesus as our Lord and ask that He will hurl us out into the harvest anywhere He wants to send us. Give us courage to obey immediately when He calls us on His gospel missions. In Jesus' name, amen.

Jesus has a special mission just for you. And following His mission is your highest honor!

IV. Three Practical Challenges

- **1st Challenge:** Contact five mentors, friends, or people who care about you deeply and ask them to pray for three days about your mission and calling. At the end of three days, ask them to give you their feedback about where they think you can serve God best.
- **2nd Challenge:** After you've prayed through the questions in this session, and after you've received feedback from trusted mentors/friends, pray and ask God, "Where can I serve You best? What is the next step You want me to take, and what is Your urgency on when I should take this next step?"
- **3rd Challenge:** After you have clarity on what God is calling you to do in your next step of faith, call those five people who prayed for you, and share with them what God is calling you to do, and ask them to back you up with their prayers.

Don't forget, you are invited to join the General Conference weekly Back to the Altar revival on Zoom that takes place every Sunday at 6 A.M. Eastern Standard Time. All are welcome! Zoom link - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTA100> **Password:** 18442025

Bonus Material

If you'd like some more amazing and inspiring testimonies, listen in as Pastor Don shares about a whole boat load, or in this case, plane load of miracle stories from one long flight across the ocean. We pray these stories and reflections inspire all of you to be willing to speak up, step out of your comfort zone, and live your God-given mission wherever God leads.

- **Play Video 7:** Testimony: Welcome to My Neighborhood & More Airplane Stories - <https://tinyurl.com/BTTAW13VID7>
- For many more miracle stories, read the book by Don MacLafferty titled, God Still Lives. This book of 16 miracle stories will change your life! Download here: <https://qr.safeliz.com/eb/gs/en/gs.html>

Prayer Focus

For June 27 - July 3, 2025



Promises to Claim as You Pray

"And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." 1 John 5:14

"Could we see all the activity of human instrumentality as it appears before God, we would see that only the work accomplished by much prayer, which is sanctified by the merit of Christ will stand the test of the judgment." Christian Service, p. 263

"Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive." Desire of Ages, p. 672

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:22

Prayer Focus for Week 13

1. **Dear Heavenly Father,** Please be with our church leaders and administrators as they prepare to travel to GC session. Please pour out Your Holy Spirit on them and give them divine appointments as they travel. (Claim Psalm 119:105)
2. **Heavenly Father,** Help each of us to discover the mission and calling that You have for our life. If it's something different than what we are doing, open our hearts to be ready to go wherever You lead. (Claim Isa. 30:21)
3. **Dear Jesus,** We pray for a sweet spirit of love and unity to be upon all the GC delegates and attendees. Help this GC session to be an Upper Room experience for all who attend. Bless the Back to the Altar revival sessions in the prayer room. (Claim Acts 1:14)
4. **Heavenly Father,** As the song goes, "They will know that we are Christians by our love." Help everyone who is watching our church see a beautiful representation of the character of Christ by how we live and serve together. (Claim John 13:35)
5. **Dear Jesus,** We continue to pray for a special revival in the main worship sessions. Bless the times of prayer, and bless the Back to the Altar revival sessions. Please bring just the people who need encouragement to the prayer room. (Claim Isa. 44:3)
6. **Heavenly Father,** Guide the agenda, guide the conversations, pour out your Spirit on every family member, youth, and visiting attendee. (Claim Isa. 59:21)
7. **Dear Jesus,** Please let this be our last GC session. Please come soon! (Claim Rev. 22:12)