

Cattle on a Thousand Hills

Soon after Dallas Theological Seminary opened in 1924, it faced a major financial crisis. Creditors banded together and announced that they intended to foreclose. On the morning of the threatened foreclosure, the leadership of the seminary met in the president's office to pray that God would meet their need.

One of the men present was Harry Ironside, who prayed in his characteristic style, "Lord, the cattle on a thousand hills are Thine. Please sell some of them and send us the money."

While they were praying, a tall Texan walked into the outer office and said to the secretary, "I just sold two carloads of cattle. I've been trying to make a business deal but it fell through, and I feel compelled to give the money to the seminary. I don't know if you need it, but here's the check."

Knowing the financial pressure, the secretary took the check and timidly tapped on the door of the office where the prayer meeting was being held. When Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, who founded the seminary, saw the check, he was amazed. The gift was *exactly* the amount of the debt! Recognizing the name on the check as that of a prominent Fort Worth cattleman, he announced with joy, "Harry, God sold the cattle!"

Coincidence? I don't think so. It was a direct answer to prayer. God does hear and answer our petitions. And that is why this Sunday, June 4, is a very important day for all of Christendom. It is the Global Day of Prayer.

From the rising of the sun in the east and across each time zone of the world, millions of people will respond to this call from God to "humble ourselves and pray" (2 Chronicles 7:14). As one body, we can worship, celebrate our faith, turn from our sins and offer ourselves as a blessing to our generation.

How did Global Day of Prayer get its start? At the dawn of this century, a small band of believers gathered in Cape Town, South Africa, pouring out their hearts to God for their nation. A stadium full of 45,000 people gathered in 2001 to seek God in repentance. God gave them a vision for a prayer movement that would soon sweep the continent of Africa. One year later, that single gathering had expanded to eight stadiums with 350,000 people. The following year, the movement jumped to a staggering 2.5 million gathered in 130 stadiums. In 2004, the participation had multiplied ten-fold, swelling to 22 million people gathered at more than 2,000 sites in every one of the 56 countries of Africa. That same year, Africa invited the world to join them in the first Global Day of Prayer, which drew together an estimated 200 million people on May 15, 2005.

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What should we pray for Sunday? We are limited only by our vision and our needs, sought in accordance with God's will. Some suggestions would include for the transforming power of Christ's kingdom, for sustained movements of united prayer, for God to pour out His Spirit upon all, for many to turn away from sin to new life in Christ, for relationships to be transformed, for God's purpose for families and children, for nations to hear the voice of God, for Christ's glory in the faithful courage of His people, for Christ to bring substantial healing and for promised blessing among all peoples.

And, of course, we would also add a directed prayer for the safety and wellbeing of the residents of Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, as well as other long-term care companies, and wisdom and guidance for our associates as they interact with them.

There is something very powerful about corporate prayer. Be among the millions who pray on Sunday.

--Beecher Hunter