



The Christian life is a journey.

*TrailNotes* speaks to forward movement, paying attention to the “landscape” we are passing through in this trail-laced wooded hillside and valley, not to mention the world beyond. *TrailNotes* is an unfolding, ongoing journal of the people who share the trail with us and the things we’re learning and doing.

## ElderTalk Belonging to Christ—Chosen for Prayer

JERRY MATHIAS

*“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers.” Acts 2:42 (ESV)*

### The Lord’s Prayer and the Believer’s Walk

based on “**To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism**” ed. by J. I. PACKER and JOEL SCANDRETT

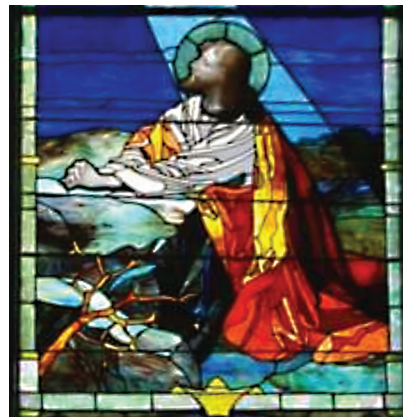
The gospel is God the Father’s invitation to know Him, to love and serve Him as members of His family, and to be transformed into His likeness. God continually calls His people to grow deeper in our relationship with Him. Thus, for believers, knowing and loving God is life’s central activity, and a primary way we do this is through prayer. Prayer is the way God has given us to listen and respond to Him.

The most important prayer in the believer’s faith is the Lord’s Prayer, so named because it is the prayer the Lord Jesus, the Son of the Father, taught His disciples to pray. (Matthew 6:9-13, and Luke 11:2-4). Prayer is vital for our lives as present-day disciples. It teaches us to know God as our Father, to submit our wills to His will, and to live in this world as citizens of our Father’s kingdom, even as we await with hope the fullness of the kingdom’s coming. For this reason, it has been included as a prayer in both public and private Christian worship from the very beginning of the Church’s life.

However, the Lord’s Prayer is also a pattern by which we shape all our prayers. It teaches us different kinds of prayer, and a mature life of prayer will include them all: *praise* of the Father’s glory, *intercession* for the needs of others, *petition* for our needs and protection, and *confession* of our sin. The Lord’s Prayer does not include all types of prayer, but it teaches us how to pray, and is therefore essential for our walk with the Lord.

While the form may vary from person to person, the purpose is to help us grow in prayer.

As our capacity to pray increases, so our daily habits of prayer broaden to encompass the whole scope of our lives. And little by little, we begin to understand what the Apostle Paul means by “pray without ceasing” (I Thessalonians 5:16-18) for that is the goal of our life of prayer in Christ.



*Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane – central portion of a stained glass window formerly in Grace United Methodist Church, Bucyrus—now preserved in the Bucyrus United Methodist Church. (photo by Nancy Holloway)*

### A Prayer for Spiritual Direction and Protection

Heavenly Father, You made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You. Direct our heartfelt desires and defend us against our enemy, that we may pray according to Your will through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

### Concerning Prayer

1. **WHAT IS PRAYER?** Prayer is turning my heart toward God, to listen and to speak with Him. (Psalm 84; Psalm 123; Matthew 7:7-11; John 17: 1-9)

*(Continued on page 3)*

## I Wanted to Die for Allah, Now I Live for Jesus

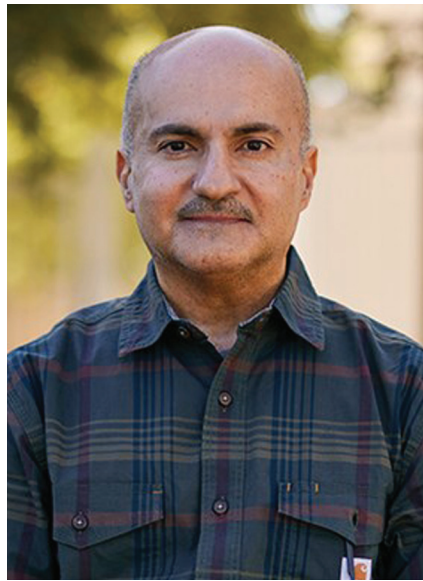
*How an aspiring holy warrior ended up sharing holiday meals with born-again Christians*  
AL FADI

I was born and raised in Saudi Arabia as part of a practicing Muslim family. Growing up, I considered myself a devout follower of Islam, one who applied its teachings to every aspect of his life. I believed that Islam was the only true religion and that those who didn't accept Allah as their God and Muhammad as his messenger were doomed to hell.

I had nothing but contempt for Christianity. I believed that Muslims were superior to all others, that all non-Muslims were infidels, and that Jesus was a prophet sent by Allah, not the divine Son of God. As far as I was concerned, He had never been crucified, never died on a cross, and never been resurrected. I believed He had ascended into heaven, but only to be saved from His persecutors before coming back at the end of times to restore Islam as the true religion of Allah. All in all, I grew up harboring intense hatred for Christians, Jews and all who refused Islam.

By age 12, I had memorized half of the Qur'an, and my goal was to memorize all of it—all 114 chapters, all 6,236 verses. At age 15, I was prepared to die on behalf of Allah, like so many young people who were journeying to Afghanistan to fight the Soviet Union alongside Osama bin Laden. (He was a hero to us at that time.)

Were it not for my mother, who pleaded with me to stay behind, I would have joined this "holy war." I believed that the rewards awaiting Muslims who died in the name of Allah were greater than any other a Muslim could receive. I was



**AL FADI**

*(photo by Matt Williams)*

certain that by sacrificing my life in this manner, I would make it to paradise with all my sins forgiven.

### INTERACTING WITH CHRISTIANS

The more I grew up, however, the more notes of doubt began to creep in. As I gained a greater familiarity with the language of the Qur'an, I started seeing messages of hate within it, messages I could not understand and did not like at all. *How, I wondered, could God hate His own creation simply because they do not accept Him?* On some level, I thought God should be above that kind of petty vindictiveness. But sharing such thoughts and doubts with others would have caused me lots of trouble and likely jeopardized my safety as the penalty for blaspheming Allah and leaving Islam was death.

After finishing college in Saudi Arabia, I went to the United States to pursue my graduate studies in engineering. But I had a dilemma. Islam teaches its followers not to befriend Christians, and in the Muslim world people truly believe that the United States is a Christian nation—in other words, that every one born in America is born a

Christian. (The category of *born-again Christian* was unfamiliar to me.)

In the summer of 1989, I arrived in the United States filled with fear and discomfort. In order to get the best education, I knew it was imperative to attend an American university. But I was apprehensive because that meant having to interact with Christians.

After living in a dormitory for about a month, I began feeling the need to become more familiar with American culture and to sharpen my English language skills. Around that time I heard of something called the International Friendship Program, which paired students like me with local volunteers who would provide help and hospitality. I signed up for the program, not knowing it was a Christian ministry.

Almost two weeks later, a young couple from the program contacted me and indicated that they were the family assigned to work with me. And for the next seven months, this family showed me love that far exceeded my expectations, love of the sort I had never experienced among my fellow Muslims.

In November, this family invited me to their home for Thanksgiving dinner. Only then did I realize this was a Christian family, because they asked if they could pray before the meal. I admit that my heart sank. I had never realized that Christians are actually filled with love, not hate, as my Muslim upbringing had led me to believe.

**This family had never shared the gospel with me but they had shown me what the gospel looks like.**

*(continued on page 4.)*

## Belonging to Christ *(continued from p. 1)*

### Concerning Prayer *(continued)*

#### 2. WHAT SHOULD I SEEK IN PRAYER?

I should seek not only God's provision for my needs, but fellowship with God, who made me for fellowship with Himself. (Exodus 33:7-11; Psalm 27:4; Psalm 8; Psalm 42:1-2; John 14:18-23; 1 John 1:3).

**3. WHY SHOULD I PRAY?** I should pray because God calls me to do so, because I was made for fellowship with Him, because I need the help of His Holy Spirit, and because He has promised to answer the prayers of His people. (Exodus 33:7-11; Psalm 50:14-15; Matthew 7:7-11; Luke 18:1-8; Romans 8:26; 1 Timothy 2:1).

**4. WHEN SHOULD I PRAY?** I should pray at regular times throughout each day and whenever I am aware of a need for God's grace. And I should learn to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17) as I grow in the knowledge of God's presence. (Neh. 2:4; Psalm 50:14-15; Daniel 6:10; Jonah 2; Matthew 15:21-28; 1 Thess. 5:16-18; Hebrews 4:16; 5:7).

Here is the traditional version of The Lord's Prayer:



Come let us join together and ask and seek and knock, according to Scripture (Matthew 7:7-8) on our Father's open door (Revelation 3:8) for instructions to help us watch and pray (Matthew 26:41) here at Grace Fellowship Church.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

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## FEBRUARY 2023

- 1** Connect Groups : **1, 8, 15, 22.**  
6:30-8:00 pm.
- 2** Madison Middle School Game Club;  
also **9, 16, 23.** 2:30-4:30 pm.
- 3** Madison South Elementary Game  
Club; also **10, 17, 24.** 3:30-5:00 pm.
- 5** Eric Byrom preaching: Ps. 134.  
"Decluttering by Faith" 3:00-4:30 pm;  
also **12, 19, 26.** Upper Room.
- 12** Eric Byrom preaching: I Tim. 1-11.  

- 18** Kingdom Men's prayer breakfast 9:00  
am. Location TBA. Breakfast provided.  
There will be a special speaker.
- 19** Eric Byrom preaching: I Tim. 1:12-20.
- 26** Jadaé Fox preaching: 1 Tim. 2:2-1-7.  

- ★ Prayer for summer camps: KDTS : July 9-15  
TEEN DTS: July 10-22

## CHURCH HISTORY



Did you know that back in the time of the severest persecution of Christians by the Roman government (64 - 313 AD) that there were more believers martyred in the amphitheater at Lyon in Gaul (now France) than in the Colliseum in Rome? It's a fact recorded by Eusebius of Caesarea, the first true Christian church historian who lived from 264 to 340 AD.

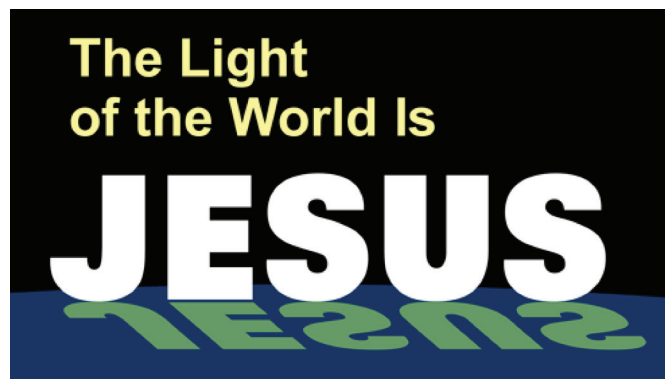


## I Wanted to Die for Allah *(concluded from p. 2)*

On that day, I walked out of their home with great doubts about my faith and its teachings. I vowed that I would do research on Christianity, hoping to learn more about how Jesus could make such a profound difference in someone's life, offering the kind of peace and joy I had never seen before.

### SEEING THE LIGHT

A few years later, after earning my master's degree, I joined a local engineering firm. There I met another born-again Christian. I was impressed by his faith—his joy, his peace, and the light that seemed to shine forth from him. And when he invited me to his home for Christmas dinner, I noticed that his wife and kids had the same qualities. They were just like the family I had met in college.



At this point I couldn't hold back my curiosity any longer. I asked him why he was so different from those around him. He told me he was a born-again Christian, and he shared his testimony. Once again, I was gripped with the desire to know more about Jesus.

From that moment forward, God allowed me to go through numerous trials and adverse circumstances in my life, all of which increased my interest in Christianity. And in May 2001, going against everything my Muslim faith had taught me, I made my first visit to a Christian church. Over the course of the next six months, as the church studied the Gospel of John, I learned who Christ truly is.

In November 2001, without a shadow of a doubt, I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior. But it wasn't easy at first. Within a matter of months, I lost my marriage due to unfaithfulness from my spouse, and I also lost my job. It felt like Satan was actively trying to destroy my faith. But these months taught me invaluable lessons about having a personal relationship with Jesus and learning to depend on Him through all circumstances. During this time, God revealed His awesome glory to me in ways I could not deny or doubt.

Since then, my life has changed forever. I am no longer the man I used to be. Today I lead a ministry called CIRA International, which I founded in 2010. Our ministry is to reach Muslims for Christ, to equip brothers with practical tools for sharing the gospel with Muslims, and to disciple new believers, especially those coming from Muslim backgrounds.

In addition, I teach classes and seminars on Islam at various churches, and in my home church I lead a newly established chapter of International Friendship Program, the very ministry that planted the first seeds of gospel hope in my heart 16 years ago.

I came to know my beloved Jesus through simple acts of love, and I pray that God will use my simple acts of love to bring glory to Himself by drawing others to a saving faith in Him.

*From Christianity Today, Jan.-Feb. 2023. Used by permission, Al Fadi teaches courses in Biblical theology, business, and comparative religion at Arizona Christian University.*

### Grace Fellowship Church

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|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Eric Byrom              | Presiding Elder/ Pastor |
| Jadaé Fox               | Elder                   |
| Matt Godsil             | Elder                   |
| Andy Heininger          | Elder                   |
| Jerry Mathias           | Elder                   |
| Cameron Karger          | Treasurer               |
| Kay Berry & Karen Gates | Women                   |
| Lori Barker             | Missions                |
| Andy Heininger          | Worship                 |
| Judy Nichols            | Prayer Chain            |
| Kay Berry & Jadaé Fox   | Office                  |
| Andy Anschutz           | Sound/Power Point       |
| John and Donna Kurtz    | TrailNotes              |



## In Heaven: Jack Hayford, pastor who wrote most-loved international worship song of the 1990s: 'Majesty'

DANIEL SILLIMAN 1-9-2023  
ISRAEL SALAS-RODRIGUEZ



Photo: Getty Images

**Jack Hayford, Foursquare Church leader who taught evangelicals “that God is enthroned in the praises of His people,” died in his sleep at his home in the early hours of Sunday, January 8, at the age of eighty-eight.**

Hayford was the longtime pastor of the Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California, which he served for over three decades, the composer of more than 500 praise and worship songs, and the fourth president of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. He regularly led weeklong seminars for pastors that expanded and shaped evangelicals’ view of people not only raising their hands while praying but also seeing worship as central to the work of the church.

“Worship has often been misunderstood as a musical prelude,” Hayford wrote, “rather than the people of God inviting the dominion of His Kingdom to be established on earth. (Psalm 22).

Wherever God’s people come together to worship, we experience His presence.”

“I think pastors sense in him what they are longing to be,” said Lloyd Ogilvie, a Presbyterian minister who said in 1989, “Hayford was a bridge-builder and a pastor to people who had been sceptical of Pentecostalism,” Ogilvie continued,

“Jack Hayford is rooted in historic Christianity, has the fire and dynamism of a charismatic, demonstrates social responsibility, and is someone who can mobilize individuals. You don’t usually find all of these in one person.”

Hayford married his college sweetheart, Anna Marie Smith, in July 1954. After being married for more than 60 years, Smith died in 2017 from pancreatic cancer. They had four children: Becky, Jack III, Mark, and Christa and 11 grandchildren.

Dying in San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles, Hayford dined with his second wife, Valarie, and talked with one of his grandchildren the evening before.

Randy Remington, the current president of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel mourned the former leader’s death saying,

“Pastor Jack was a Kingdom Ambassador whose influence transcended denominational, generational, and global boundaries. Jack’s passion for Spirit-led worship, fervent intercessory prayer and biblical preaching that revealed Jesus were modeled in his own personal life. Pastor Jack lived a life devoted to Jesus, one from which he never wavered or strayed. He truly embodied the life he invited others into.”

(over)

Hayford was born in Los Angeles in 1934, the eldest child of Jack Hayford, Sr. and Dolores Farnsworth Hayford. His parents were not Christians when infant Jack developed a condition in the tendon of his neck that could have been fatal. A Farnsworth cousin, however, walked into a Foursquare church in Long Beach, California, knowing the denomination founded by Aimee Semple McPherson believed in miracles and that healing was one of the four “squares” of the gospel that the church taught. The cousin gave the church a note with Hayford’s name and diagnosis, and asked the people to pray.

They said they would!

“The next day, my parents began to notice that things had changed,” Hayford said, sharing his testimony 80 years later. “Within the next few days, the doctor said, ‘This baby is well. There is nothing wrong with him.’ And not only did the doctor declare me well, he refused to take the money from my parents for the few payments he was going to charge, because, he said, ‘I had nothing to do with the healing of this baby. This has to have been something God did.’”

Hayford’s parents praised God for the healing. A year later, they went to the same church and went forward to accept Jesus as the congregation sang, “Whoever Will May Come.”

Hayford personally accepted Jesus at the age of 10. He discerned a call to ministry in high school but doubted his call as his teachers pushed him to go to a state school to study science or journalism or both. At the last moment, with the encouragement of a Lutheran teacher, Hayford decided to go to Bible school instead of a state college. He returned to Southern California and enrolled at the Foursquare Church’s L.I.F.E. Bible College.

He met and married Anna Smith at college. Both became ministers in the Foursquare Church. In 1969, the Hayfords became pastors of a congregation in Van Nuys which only had a regular attendance of 25. The place felt suffocating. Then Jack was moved to cleanse the church with praise.

“As I walked through the sanctuary,” he later recalled, “I would be saying, ‘Praise Your Name, Jesus, Hallelujah, Lord!’ and I would clap my hands: ‘Praise Your Name, Jesus, Hallelujah’—I would literally sing the words, clapping my hands.

I was conscious of challenging something in the atmosphere of that place.”

Hayford did that for more than a year. The spirit of the place felt different, like there was air to breathe again. After that, it started to grow. He became convinced of the centrality of worship in the life of the church.

He also had a change of heart toward other churches which would prove critical to his ministry. He was sitting at a stoplight near the Church on the Way and saw a Baptist church on the corner. He felt God tell him to pray for the church and felt an overwhelming love for the Baptists.

Then a few days later, he saw a thriving Catholic congregation. He became jealous of the church. He felt God respond, “Why would I not be happy with a place where every morning the testimony of the blood of my Son is raised from the altar?” Hayford committed to building bridges from his church to other Christians and connecting with them whenever possible to praise God. By the end of the 1980’s his church grew to about 10,000 in weekly attendance. He wrote 50 books. He became involved in Promise Keepers and other parachurch organizations. and spoke at many worship conferences.

### **‘MAJESTY’**

From 1989-94 “Majesty” was sung more in American churches than any other song, according to Christian Copyright Licensing data. It remained in the top 10 into the early 2000s. It has been published in 34 hymnals. Hayford wrote the song while vacationing in England. He and Anna visited Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of Winston Churchill. That inspired Hayford to think about the “kingdom authority” of Christians. He thought about how Jesus came not only to forgive sins but also to help humanity reestablish its “royal relationship” with the King of Kings.

“‘Majesty’ is also a statement of the fact that worship, when begotten in spirit and in truth, can align us with His Throne in such a way that His kingdom authority flows to us—to overflow us, free us, and channel through us,” Hayford wrote.

*Taken and adapted from Chistianity Today online and <https://www.thesun.com/news/7089251/christian-pastor-jack-hayford-dead/>*