



# A RADICAL DAY IN MY PRAYER LIFE

By Rebecca Mulvaney

I woke up praying. Has your heart ever been so heavy that you awakened with a prayer on your lips? *"Lord, be with Bethany today."* I was troubled over my teenager's bruised self-worth and how it was manifesting itself in her toxic relationships. Clearly her vulnerability could trigger choices that would sabotage her future.

*"Keep her safe, Lord."* I prayed for her over a cup of tea at my kitchen table that morning. Later I pleaded with God as I jogged through the neighborhood, *"Protect her from making any huge mistakes."* As I went through my day, her name was persistently lifted heavenward from my heart. *"Lord, if you don't fix this damaged area of her personhood, she won't be able to avoid a life of misery and disastrous relationships!"*

That evening, as Bethany studied and talked on the phone in her bedroom, I sat on our deck and talked to the Creator of the full moon and star-studded sky overhead. *"God, I just don't want her to experience pain,"* I whispered my prayer into his presence-filled darkness.

That's when Truth interrupted. Truth challenged me to pray in alignment with what I know to be God's desires. After all God promised us we'd have whatever we ask—if we ask according to His will.

So what is the truth? The truth is that God is already with Bethany. *"And surely I am with you always . . ."* (Matthew 28:20b) It was faithless of me to pray for something He says is already true. The truth is that God has already promised to protect Bethany. *"He . . . protects the way of his faithful ones."* (Proverbs 2:8b) I don't have to ask him to protect her; instead I can thank Him that He's already doing it! But what about my prayer for her complete physical, relational and emotional safety—in other words, my prayer that she not experience pain.

A question formed in my mind and I immediately knew Who was doing the asking. *"What have I used to teach you life's most important lessons?"* I reluctantly answered. *"You've used pain, Lord."* As I reflected on my life, I saw how God had used painful experiences to conform me to the image of His Son. If I were to ask God to prevent my daughter from hurting in life, she would likely miss life's rich-

est lessons. My prayer for absolute and complete “safety” could actually conflict with God’s perfect will for His child, my daughter.

How then is a mother to pray? I wondered. I wrestled uncomfortably with how to pray in agreement with the will of the One who loves her more than I do. *“Lord, strengthen my child that she may resist the ploys of the enemy. Draw her closer to Yourself with every breath she takes. Grow her into a spiritual woman yielded and dependant on You . . . whatever it takes.”* The last three words came slowly, but from my heart. I knew that was the radical will of my Father. It had become the radical will of this mother. It was a radical day in my prayer-life.

*“I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name.”* John 16:23-24

### **Reflect & Respond:**

- 1) Think of someone for whom you have been concerned. What have you been asking God to do in their lives?
- 2) How could you better align your prayers for that person with what you know to be God’s will?
- 3) Make a list of things that you know God desires for us (based on scripture). After compiling this list, begin to use self-discipline when you pray for yourself or others—praying for those things that align with God’s will for us, rather than what you or others want.



*Rebecca (Bekah) Mulvaney is wife, mother, grandmother, writer, speaker, and jogger, among other things. In regard to her motherly prayers, her daughter, Bethany, has grown through some painful experiences to be a devoted follower of Christ with many healthy relationships, often finding herself encouraging those who are tempted to make poor choices due to their own low sense of worth. Bekah teaches women on the Fellowship campus and in various churches and retreat-settings around the country.*