



## TELL US YOUR STORY

### Receiving Your Story in Awe & Gratitude

**Summary:** A Man embraces the history with awe and gratitude in the presence of God.

**Bible Verses:** Romans 8:26; Psalm 139:16-24; Jonah 3:10; Exodus 4:10-14; II Corinthians 4:17

**Video Clip:** YouTube – “Movie Prayer Montage”

**Music:** “Cry Out to Jesus” by Third Day

**Resources:** *TO BE TOLD – Know Your Story, Shape Your Future* by Dan Allender and *THE STORIES WE TELL – How TV and Movies Long For and Echo the Truth* by Mike Cosper

March 24, 2016

“If I asked you to tell me your story, what would you say? God is the author of your life story. God is engaged in an ongoing creative work in your life. You are a story—a well-written, intentional story that is authored by the greatest Writer of all time, and even before time and after time. You are a living story that is meant to reveal and create glory. What makes your life a glorious bestseller is that the plot reveals not a mere moral or lesson but the very person and being of God.” - Dan Allender, PhD, in *TO BE TOLD – Know Your Story – Share your Future*

### Praying Your Story > Intimate Dialogue with God!

1. \_\_\_\_\_ = God wants relationship! So how do you pray > Naked Prayer? Prayer is a rich relational engagement that is fraught with paradox, mystery, absurdity, and story-bound drama. Quote by Dan Allender.
2. TWO TYPES OF PRAYER = Your story leads you into two types of prayer:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ that strays to presumption. Gratitude rarely remains as an undeserved gift from God. We assume we had something to do with the blessing, that we earned it somehow.
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ that strips away self-righteousness. Desperation is the troubled longing for personal and corporate transformation. In this state, we utter our deepest and finest prayers. In times of desperate prayer, God invites you to love the story He has written in your life, even the deepest chapters that produce shame.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ = You must enter prayer as a struggle. Prayer that heals is prayer that pleads for exposure and engagement throwing your desperation at God's feet and wrestling naked with Him for the blessing of a New Name.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ = Healing prayer is a wrestling match! To achieve such healing, you must willingly ponder your memories and fully study the meaning of those past events.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ = Telling your story to another person is as much prayer as when you close your eyes and fold your hands. (Matthew 18:20; I Thessalonians 5:17).

### Praying Your Story > Engage with God.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ = He wants you to engage in a dance of conflict, compromise, and honor. It is negotiation with God. The negotiations begin when you start taking God at His word (Jonah 3:10). God does not repent, but he changes His mind as you pray (Exodus 4:10-14).
2. \_\_\_\_\_ = He writes your life story from the foundation of the earth, but He does not let you see His novel until long after you have written your life and met Him face to face. Two core statements about His authorship:
  1. God is the Author of every minute of your life. He is your authority because He has written your life for His purpose. You are a clay tablet, the blank slate in His hand (Psalm 139:16).
  2. God is not the Author of sin. Evil grows from the freedom you possess to love or not love. Love would be meaningless if you didn't also have the option to *not* love.
  3. \_\_\_\_\_. If love is coerced, it is at best obedience that fears reprisal and at worst insincere manipulation to gain what the object of love can give you. Genuine love arises in the complex interplay of desire and gratitude. I want and God gives. He gives so far beyond what I need that I am caught in the swirl of mouth-open awe and gratitude. WOW!

### Praying Your Story – Wowed By God!

1. \_\_\_\_\_ = comes with a sense of the inconceivable reversal of relationship that God invites you to enter. He wants you to write your story in concert with Him but also in opposition to Him. God will take you to the parts of your story that He seems to abandoned you or others. He then sends you into action, to care, to fight, that your awe at His plan takes your breath away.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ = you get to coauthor your story with God and others because God loves to create in community. As coauthors with one another, you need to be engaged in an echo of gratitude. The greater the gratitude for the presence of God's glory, the greater one will risk when writing a new chapter—whether that chapter has to do with how you will worship or how you will spend the next year of your life. Gratitude snatches you out of the rut of the common and shows you a horizon ahead that demands you create a new path (II Cor. 4:17).
3. \_\_\_\_\_ = unearths story from the past and brings you naked into a wrestling match with God regarding your future. As God met Jacob to transform him and to mark him with a limp and a new name, so God plans to do so with you through prayer. It is through prayer—naked, argumentative, thankful, awestruck prayer—that God intends to weave the magic of love through your broken and bloody story.

**Tell Us Your Story: Guideline #6** > Men's Coaching recognizes that each man is at a unique place in his journey ... there is no demand on a man to be “pushed” faster than he wants to “walk” ... walk at your pace ... we are with you!

1. Every man is at a different place in his spiritual journey. We want you to be comfortable with where you are with no shame. However, we do want you to understand that life is a journey and we desire you take the next step toward growth, healing and becoming whole.
2. With love for you and your growth in mind, we will “push” you as we see possibility and opportunity for your healing and change. We will offer to “push” you as a loving father would his son or daughter. We will ask, “Can I “push” you?” We will offer this “push” with respect and sensitivity to where you are in journey and how much you are willing to risk.
3. We will not “push” you against your will. You are in charge of YOU! You can walk at the pace you comfortable and we will walk WITH YOU!

### ACTION: Journal This!

1. What is the role of prayed in your walk with God?
2. Name a time when you “wrestled” with God?
3. When was the last time you were “wowed” by God?

## Bible Verses

### Romans 8:26-28

<sup>26-28</sup> Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

### Psalms 139:13-24

<sup>13-16</sup> Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb. I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking! Body and soul, I am marvelously made! I worship in adoration—what a creation! You know me inside and out, you know every bone in my body; You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something. Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, the days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day.

<sup>17-22</sup> Your thoughts—how rare, how beautiful! God, I'll never comprehend them! I couldn't even begin to count them—any more than I could count the sand of the sea. Oh, let me rise in the morning and live always with you! And please, God, do away with wickedness for good! And you murderers—out of here!—all the men and women who belittle you, God, infatuated with cheap god-imitations. See how I hate those who hate you, GOD, see how I loathe all this godless arrogance; I hate it with pure, unadulterated hatred. Your enemies are my enemies!

<sup>23-24</sup> Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me; cross-examine and test me, get a clear picture of what I'm about; see for yourself whether I've done anything wrong—then guide me on the road to eternal life.

### Jonah 3:10

<sup>10</sup> God saw what they had done, that they had turned away from their evil lives. He *did* change his mind about them. What he said he would do to them he didn't do.

### Exodus 4:10-17

<sup>10</sup> Moses raised another objection to GOD: "Master, please, I don't talk well. I've never been good with words, neither before nor after you spoke to me. I stutter and stammer."

<sup>11-12</sup> GOD said, "And who do you think made the human mouth? And who makes some mute, some deaf, some sighted, some blind? Isn't it I, GOD? So, get going. I'll be right there with you—with your mouth! I'll be right there to teach you what to say."

<sup>13</sup> He said, "Oh, Master, please! Send somebody else!"

<sup>14-17</sup> GOD got angry with Moses: "Don't you have a brother, Aaron the Levite? He's good with words, I know he is. He speaks very well. In fact, at this very moment he's on his way to meet you. When he sees you he's going to be glad. You'll speak to him and tell him what to say. I'll be right there with you as you speak and with him as he speaks, teaching you step by step. He will speak to the people for you. He'll act as your mouth, but you'll decide what comes out of it. Now take this staff in your hand; you'll use it to do the signs."

### II Corinthians 4:16-18

<sup>16-18</sup> So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.

## CRY OUT TO JESUS

Written and performed by Third Day

To everyone who's lost someone they love  
Long before it was their time  
You feel like the days you had were not enough  
When you said goodbye

And to all of the people with burdens and pains  
Keeping you back from your life  
You believe that there's nothing and there is no one  
Who can make it right

### CHORUS:

There is hope for the helpless  
Rest for the weary  
Love for the broken heart  
There is grace and forgiveness  
Mercy and healing  
He'll meet you wherever you are  
Cry out to Jesus, Cry out to Jesus

For the marriage that's struggling just to hang on  
They lost all of their faith in love  
And they've done all they can to make it right again  
Still it's not enough, no

For the ones who can't break the addictions and chains  
You try to give up but you come back again  
Just remember that you're not alone in your shame  
And your suffering, no

### CHORUS

When you're lonely  
And it feels like the whole world is falling on you  
You just reach out, you just cry out to Jesus  
Cry to Jesus

For the widow who struggles with being alone  
Wiping the tears from her eyes  
For the children around the world without a home  
Say a prayer tonight

### CHORUS

Oh, cry out to Jesus, Cry out to Jesus  
Oh yeah

**Philip K. Hardin, M.A., M.Div.**

Director of Business & Professional Outreach, Intl.

Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist & Licensed Professional Counselor

Email: [phil@bpointl.org](mailto:phil@bpointl.org)

Webpage: [www.bpointl.org](http://www.bpointl.org)





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- Dan Allender, PhD in *TO BE TOLD – Know Your Story – Share your Future.*

What's your story?

## **RECEIVING YOUR STORY**

## **CONNECTED TO GOD IN AWE & GRATITUDE!**

**Romans 8:26; Psalm 139:23-24**

# Praying Your Story > Intimate Dialogue with God!

1. **RELATIONSHIP** = God wants relationship! So how do you pray > Naked Prayer? Prayer is a rich relational engagement that is fraught with paradox, mystery, absurdity, and storybound drama. Quote by Dan Allender.
2. **TWO TYPES OF PRAYER** = Your story leads you into two types of prayer:
  1. **GRATITUDE** that strays to presumption. Gratitude rarely remains as an undeserved gift from God. We assume we had something to do with the blessing, that we earned it somehow.
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3. **STRUGGLE** = You must enter prayer as a struggle. Prayer that heals is prayer that pleads for exposure and engagement throwing your desperation at God's feet and wrestling naked with Him for the blessing of a New Name.
4. **MEMORIES** = Healing prayer is a wrestling match! To achieve such healing, you must willingly ponder your memories and fully study the meaning of those past events.
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## Dan Allender in *To Be Told*

*“Prayer tills the soil of the soul and unearths the clods of stories that lie beneath the surface. Prayer exposes and opens our heart. It takes us into a dialogue with God that is often disconcerting. Prayer also becomes the context for receiving from God His presence. It is a conversation that brings us face to face with how He authors us and calls us to write our story. Prayer, in straight talk, is surrender to God’s authorship.”*

## Dan Allender in *To Be Told*

*“Without naked prayer, we can never get to the depths of our story and unearth the data of our heartache. So we must pray as we walk and as we write. We must submit ourselves to God when we ask another person to pray for us. And we must come to understand that telling our story to another person is as much prayer as when we close our eyes and fold our hands. Prayer is a posture of dialogue that expects God to speak in the mix of our conversation. Otherwise it is impossible to imagine what it means to pray always.”*

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