

Asking Without Hesitating

By Lori Schumaker

Three years ago we brought our daughter home from an orphanage half-way around the world. We knew we loved her even before we met her. We knew God handpicked her to be part of our family. But what we didn't know is that a multitude of undiagnosed medical issues and the effects of life in an institution had caused a level of hurt within her that would leave our family desperate and in chaos.

Prayer had brought our sweet girl to us and we knew prayer would continue to get us through her healing. Our close friends and family who had been by our sides throughout the entire process would be praying as well. Our Church was such a support. Many of our close friends were there and the community, worship, and message would always come through during the toughest of times to help us draw closer to Jesus and find His strength. But there was one critically powerful component of what Central offered that, strangely, we had never utilized.

Until one morning God used some special people to orchestrate what I had so easily set aside.

It had been an extremely difficult few months with our little girl. We had been blindsided by more and more medical diagnoses that were classified as rare....new...with no specific standard of care. We felt the enemy attacking from every angle as we lost the only two doctors who specialized in one of our daughter's critical diseases, within weeks of each other -- one to death and the other to injury. In the meantime, our daughter's needs and behaviors were taking their toll on our family. She needed help. We needed relief. We felt as though we exhausted every last resource and every last ounce of brain and emotional power within us.

I was carrying that burden with me as I walked into the Ahwatukee campus that morning. I tend to be quite a happy person and rarely find myself unable to smile. But that morning, the burden was prevalent and when a Central pastor met me with the simple, "Good morning! How are you?" I just couldn't find it in myself to give the standard reply. I told him I wasn't doing the best and that we were struggling with our daughter. We talked for a bit as I prepared to serve in Elementary. He asked me if I had ever met with the Prayer Team or Elders, to which I sheepishly replied with a "no".

You see, as much as prayer is a part of our lives, I never felt I should go ask for prayer for...Myself...my family.

If anyone else needed prayer, you can bet I was there praying with them in a second. I had no fears of prayer or shyness around it. I fully embraced the power of prayer. The necessity of prayer.

But to go seek it for “me”?

It actually felt selfish in a strange way. As though I would be taking something away from someone else who needed it more or who may not have a personal prayer life or friends or family praying for them. Somehow my thoughts were as if prayer was some kind of limited resource!

However, that day everything changed.

That pastor arranged for coverage in my Elementary classroom and escorted my daughter and myself right on out to our Intercessory Prayer Group where several Elders had also gathered to pray for us. And right there, in that moment, the Holy Spirit moved. He brought peace. He brought clarity. My daughter was anointed with oil and prayed over in such a beautiful and powerful way.

The following week we began seeing a new doctor and we began seeing improvement in our daughter's health and behaviors.

We know we still have a long way to go, but you can be sure that seeking out prayer right there in the safe home of our Church will be a part of the road ahead of us! Prayer is NOT a limited resource and I'll never again treat it as such!