



issue 3

# our world





**hp<sup>4</sup>** (*How 2 Pray 4*) is a range of titles from **ALOVE UK** and The 24-7/SA Prayer Network. These titles are designed to get you thinking about prayer; and more than that, they're designed to get you praying. They have all been written by people who have experience and a passion to see prayer become a priority. It is our hope that these resources will equip young people to become passionate and prayerful disciples.



**ALOVE<sup>+</sup>** **ALOVE UK** is The Salvation Army for a new generation – an expression of The Salvation Army for young people and young adults. **ALOVE** is calling a generation to dynamic faith, radical lifestyle, adventurous mission and a fight for justice, focusing on the four essentials of worship, discipleship, mission and social action. You can connect with **ALOVE** at [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/alove](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/alove)



The 24-7/SA Prayer Network exists to promote prayer in The Salvation Army in the UK. We offer training, create resources and help churches grow in prayer, as well as supporting several specialist prayer centres. We believe that prayer works, and that it is vital in enabling transformation in individuals, churches and communities.



**International DEVELOPMENT UK** The Salvation Army International Development (UK) has a mission to resource, empower and support developing communities to defeat poverty and injustice and enable them to build a better life and future. It engages people to comprehend injustice and take action to restore our world as a place where justice, dignity and equality are a reality for all people. You can find out more about International Development and how you can get involved at [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/id](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/id)

This prayer guide has been written by Carl Jobson who has been passionate about issues of poverty and injustice for a number of years, engaging in awareness raising, fundraising and campaigning all over the UK. He is the Information and Resources Officer for The Salvation Army International Development (UK).



## hp<sup>4</sup> our world

We live in a beautiful world with some big problems. Billions of people live in poverty, struggling with hunger, thirst, a lack of education or healthcare, trafficked away from their homes, living with HIV/Aids or affected by our changing climate. Millions more are affected by natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and droughts. If you try and picture all these people and all the need they represent, then it is easy to feel powerless – how can we possibly make even a dent in these global problems? Sometimes the only thing that we can do to respond to all of the injustices in our world is to get on our knees. You see, although the problems are big, our God is bigger. Even better than that, he is a God who cares about those living in poverty, and he wants us to care about those people too.

I first started to take notice of God's heart for the poor whilst on **ALOVE's** Timothy programme (now Essential). Over the course of the year I learnt more than I ever had before about God, about the Bible and about what it means to be a disciple and a worshipper. Everything that I

learnt drew me closer and closer to the very fact that God's heart is for the poor. While I was on this personal journey it was also the year of Make Poverty History. This was an amazing year that will go down in history for the unparalleled and unprecedented amount of people standing up and saying that extreme poverty is wrong, that it's avoidable and calling on world leaders to listen. And listen they did. At the G8 meeting in Gleneagles in the summer of 2005, the poor were at the top of the agenda, and although the world leaders didn't go as far as they perhaps could have done, the promises they made did show that they had listened to all the noise and taken action as a result.

One of the key moments of the Make Poverty History campaign for me was on a cold February day, standing in Trafalgar Square with 20,000 other people listening to Nelson Mandela's rallying cry – a speech that inspired campaigners both young and old. His now infamous words were: 'Sometimes it calls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation.' Since then I have tried as best I can

to live up to that challenge and do my part of being that great generation. After all, we are the first generation that has everything we need to put an end to extreme poverty – the only thing lacking sometimes is the will to make it happen.

We are all global citizens and we all need to be part of making our world a better place by looking out for our global neighbours – we can be that great generation that Nelson Mandela

challenged us to be, and the world still needs us to be if we are ever to truly Make Poverty History. I believe that God's best work is done through his disciples, people who are filled with his passion and have a heart after his own heart. God wants to see our world transformed in the way our lives have been transformed and we have a huge part to play in that. There are three easy ways to tune into God's heart and advocate to our creator for his people:

## 1) Pray with your eyes open

I know this goes against what most of us brought up in Sunday schools were taught, but the best way to know what to pray for in our world is to keep our eyes open. You don't have to be watching the TV news for long to hear about some of the world's challenges. The problem is that lots of us don't want to look – we'd often rather turn over, or even turn off, before we have the chance to see what is happening all around us. But to effectively pray for our world, we need to get to know our world. News programmes, documentaries, newspapers and the internet are all valuable tools in helping us to pray with our eyes open. We have the potential to be the most informed and clued-up generation there has ever been. Let's make the most of the fact that we have so much information at our fingertips. It doesn't mean you have to spend your whole life trawling through page after page of news, but just give up a few minutes of your TV or internet time to open your eyes and see what is happening in our world (see [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld) for ideas of where to look). Finally, as you find out more about our world, don't wait to pray, don't let what you see, hear and read just wash over you, but let it infect you and offer your prayers to God right then and there.

## 2) Pray with your ears to the ground.

The second thing you can do to tune into God's heart for the poor is to take the time to learn more about the problems people are facing around the world, and to pray for them. The fact that one child dies every three seconds was one of the most powerful elements of the Make Poverty History campaign. Watching the 'Click' advert that showed this really struck me and helped to drive home the seriousness of extreme poverty and why it is so important to get involved (if you don't know what I'm talking about go to [www.makepovertyhistory.org](http://www.makepovertyhistory.org) and watch the video as it still inspires and challenges me when I watch it).

Don't leave it there though. Although statistics are great for showing the extent of a problem and can be really powerful, they can only take you so far and it is easy to forget that behind every statistic is a story, behind every number is a face. I have been privileged to have met some of the people who are benefiting from our projects as part of my work, as well as hearing many more stories of people that have experienced horrendous injustice but also received amazing support, love and care.

As one commentator said, 'Movements like "Make poverty history" are OK, but we really need to make poverty personal.' Of the 33 million people living with HIV/Aids there are people like Mrs Rani in India, or Salome in Kenya. Of the two million people trafficked against their will every year have been Li in China and Dumisani in Malawi. Visit [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld) for case stories on each of our areas of work and take time to get to know these people and think of them, and the millions like them who are trying to live their life right now in the best way they can.

### 3) Pray with your voices raised

How often do you shout out prayers to God? Probably not very often – after all, we are led to believe prayer times are supposed to be quiet, reflective moments between us and God. Even in church our prayer times can often be our quiet times when we listen to slow songs and sit there nervously during open prayer wondering how long the silence will last before someone plucks up the courage to pray out loud. We rarely seem to give prayer the same energy we give our worship, yet it's all the same thing, it's all communicating with our saviour, all part of our relationship with him.

Our voices can be an incredible tool with which to pray for our world. One of the essential parts of **ALOVE**, and of being a follower of Jesus, is that we are called to be a 'voice for the voiceless'. Once we have opened our eyes to the problem and kept our ears to the ground to hear the personal stories of people living in poverty, we need to shout out and share what we know both to God and to others. In December 2009 Salvation Army supporters joined with over 50,000 other people who took to the streets of London to take part in The Wave, a march calling on the world to demand action on climate change. This was the latest in a long line of similar marches such as Make Poverty History, The World Can't Wait and Put People First, that are all about getting on the streets and raising a voice on behalf of the voiceless in our world. By getting out on the streets, signing postcards and petitions, writing to your local MP or members of the Government, you can make sure not only that your voice is heard, but also that you are speaking up for the billions of people whose voices aren't being heard. Visit [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld) for ideas on some campaigns you can get involved in.

### WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE OF YOU?

The Bible is jam-packed full of verses about justice – from the beginning to the end God's heart for the poor is always apparent. Isaiah 58 is one of these key passages, and should be a constant challenge for us as a church:

*I'll tell you what it really means to worship the Lord. Remove the chains of prisoners who are chained unjustly. Free those who are abused! Share your food with everyone who is hungry; share your home with the poor and homeless. Give clothes to those in need; don't turn away your relatives. Isaiah 58:6-7 (Contemporary English Version)*

Since the launch of **ALOVE**, worship has been talked about as more than just singing, but about a lifestyle – about us giving our lives and world back to God. Well here we see clearly that to do this means that we need to care about the poor, that we need to lift up the poor in prayer and that we need to put those prayers into action. The verses are still incredibly challenging to me – if this is what real worship is like, then how much am I a real worshipper? But do not be disheartened, as we see in Micah 6:8 there are three simple things to remember: 'It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously— take God seriously' (The Message). If you are striving to do those three things in your life, remembering of course to hold God and our world at the centre of your prayers, then you will be heading in the right direction.

## TEN WAYS TO PRAY FOR OUR WORLD

Hopefully you have already been inspired to start praying for our world and also have some ideas about how you can start to do this. But to help you here are the top ten tips to remember when praying and some ideas of how to get started:



### 1) Recognise the need to pray

Before you start, realise that you can't change the world on your own, so bring your hope and desperation before God and ask him to do something in and through you.



### 2) Pray with your eyes open

Make sure you know about the world you are trying to pray for, take an interest in global events and be on the look-out for things to pray about.



### 3) Pray at all times

When there are opportunities to pray, take them. Don't wait for your prayer time; when you see issues of injustice bring them straight before God, and ask him to help you know how you can help.



### 4) Pray and display

When you see something particularly in need of prayer, cut it out of the newspaper or print it out and make a prayer collage. Put the collage somewhere where you will see it regularly and pray for that situation every time you see it.



### 5) Pray with your ears to the ground

Get to know the people you are praying for. You might not be able to meet them face to face, but through videos and case stories you can start to get to know them way better than you would from a mere statistic.



### 6) Pray for change with change

Take a jar of loose change and empty it into your hands. Let the coins fall through your fingers, and as they do, think about the billions of people lacking enough money to provide for themselves and their family. Once you've prayed, think about what difference you can make with that money – even that small amount can change someone's life for ever. International Development has a range of projects that you can donate to that will be able to make that difference a reality. Remember, the very fact that it is just sitting in a jar on your shelf means that you can't need it as much as they do! (If you don't have a jar like this I'm sure your parents or guardians do – although make sure to ask permission before you give it away!)



### 7) Pray with your voices raised

We don't need quiet, timid prayers, but prayers that shake the walls, challenge injustice and make a difference. Pray loud, not just through your words but also through your actions by adding your voice to campaigns and challenging people in positions of power.



### 8) Pray with many voices

Don't just pray by yourself, but get together with your friends to pray – the more of you there are, the louder the noise! You might want to arrange a regular time to come together and bring the big issues of the world to God.



### 9) Pray with the hope that change will come

We can change the world and we can see an end to extreme poverty. We need to pray with the conviction that our prayers can and will be answered.



### 10) Start to answer your prayers yourself

Every time you pray for our world, think about how you can help to answer that prayer – it will help you think how committed you are to what you are praying for and will also open your heart for God to use you when answering your prayers.

## START ANSWERING YOUR OWN PRAYERS

To truly proclaim freedom from poverty, oppression and injustice we need to be playing our part in answering our prayers. We've already touched on this before, but at International Development we like to break it down into three easy ways:

### i) Raise awareness

The more that everyone knows about the injustices in our world, the harder it is to turn a blind eye. Get out there and spread the word so that more people know about the issues faced by our global neighbours.

### ii) Raise funds

The Salvation Army is doing some great work around the world to help lift people out of poverty, but to do this costs money. By giving financially or putting on fundraising events you can help to invest in this great work.

### iii) Raise your voice

Some problems are too big for us to solve on our own, but if enough people all come together wanting the same thing, then we can bring about change. By campaigning through petitions, emailing your MP, spreading the word on Facebook or Twitter or physically getting out on the streets with your placards waving and your voices loud, we can, as Ghandi once said, 'be the change we want to see in the world'.

Through these ways you can help to bring about the change to answer the very prayers you are bringing to God – to find out how you can start to do one or more of these visit [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld)

## NOW IT'S OVER TO YOU

There are loads of extra links and ideas at [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/h2p4ourworld) that can help you to pray for our world.

For more information about The Salvation Army International Development's work, as well as links to our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages please visit [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/id](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/id)



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