

PRAY FOR WOMEN

Seven prayers from Malcolm Duncan

Malcolm Duncan focuses on seven areas to help you and your church pray for women who live and serve in Africa. "Pray for..." is designed to enrich your prayer life and help you engage more deeply with various topics.



1. WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Following the death of President Magufuli, President Samia has become the first female President of Tanzania. She is one of many women who are in a position of power. From political roles to social and moral leadership, women often have the opportunity to influence families, communities, and nations for good and to direct people to Jesus.

Lord,

We thank you for the gifts that you bestow upon your people.

We thank you for the examples of women in leadership that you have given us in Scripture. Thank you for Miriam's wisdom and courage. Thank you for Deborah's determination. Thank you for the commitment and faithfulness of Ruth. Thank you for the tenacity of Esther. Thank you for the wisdom of Huldah. Thank you for the passion and faithfulness of Mary and Martha. Thank you for the obedience and humility of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Thank you for the insights of Priscilla. Thank you for the example of Phoebe.

We pray today for women who lead – whether that be in their homes, their communities, their churches, or their

society. Give them strength, wisdom, humility, and confidence. Help those women who are Christians to reflect your grace and priorities into the contexts of their leadership.

We pray that you would protect women from caricature or exclusion. In a world where they so often have to work twice as hard to reach their goals, we pray for tenacity and for grace. We pray for young girls everywhere who aspire to be leaders. May they see other women lead and be inspired by what you can do in their lives.

Give your people grace to celebrate the gifts that you give. May the Church be a community where women can flourish and thrive, and may our example inspire women to see that you can use them as you see fit.

Amen.



2. WOMEN MISSIONARIES

70% of missionaries are women. Married or single, they are taking the gospel to difficult, unreached places. As pioneers, or in support ministries, women are playing vital roles in spreading the gospel of Christ. Sometimes only women have access to other women; sometimes they have unique perspectives that open hearts and minds to truth.

God of grace and comfort,

We thank you for the many women through the centuries who have given their all for the advancement of your Kingdom purposes. We praise you for raising women up and sending them to so many contexts around the world. We recognise that you have used women to extend your Kingdom, to serve your purposes, and to advance the cause of Christ and we are grateful for them.

Today, we pray for those women who are serving you in cross-cultural contexts. We pray for strength for those who are weary; for peace for those who are troubled; for wisdom for those who need to make decisions; for friendships for those who feel lonely or isolated; for encouragement for those who are discouraged; for hope for those who feel despair; for faith for those

who are doubting; and for grace and mercy for those whose hearts have become hard. We pray that they will see the fruit of their labour and that you will remind them that you are with them and will never leave them.

We ask you for women who are sensing your call to missionary service in cross-cultural contexts. We ask you to stir their hearts that they would be agitated into action. We pray for a new generation of women who will say 'Yes' to you. Continue to make your purposes and plans clear to them and give each one the grace and the faith to take the next step in the journey of your call upon their lives.

May their local churches support them, love them and serve them. May their congregations stand with them and kneel for them.

Amen.



3. WOMEN IN POVERTY

The impact of poverty upon women's lives is huge. In sub-Saharan Africa women and girls collectively spend about 40 billion hours a year collecting water. The further girls have to travel to collect that water the less likely they are to also attend school. Poverty traps women. It stops them from being able to think beyond survival.

God who sees,

We thank you that you see the hurting, the hungry, the broken, and the poor. We give you thanks that you have a bias toward those who are poor and that you have called your people to be your hands and feet. We thank you that in following Jesus, we are led to the poor.

We confess our sin before you. Forgive us when we hold on to what we have and let others struggle. Forgive us when we allow the reality of poverty to be hidden from our sight and absent from our own financial choices. We ask you to move in our hearts that we, like you, might open our hands to those in need and share our resources with others.

We ask you to bring an end to the inequalities in our world that force women into poverty simply because they are

women. We pray for those countries where women face profound danger every day and have to suffer uncertainty, forced labour, or sexual harassment. We pray for women who are being excluded from education or from opportunities. Give each one grace, courage, and hope.

We ask you to give women who live in poverty hope. Use your people as your hands and feet. Help us to see women, to notice them. Give us the grace to do more than just glance at them in our minds and in our thoughts. Help us to really see them for who they are. May women and girls who have given up hope because of their circumstances be given grace and strength to dream again. May the poverty trap be sprung, and may they be released from the snare of this oppression.

Amen.



4. WOMEN AND IDENTITY

Wife. Mother. Daughter. Labels that take on a new level of meaning for many women in Africa when income is provided by fathers or husbands, and social stigma awaits if children aren't forthcoming. Often identity is caught up in the community's views rather than the Creator's.

Creator God,

You crafted us. You knew us when we were unformed substance. You saw us in our mothers' wombs. None of us would be here if a woman had not carried us, shared her life with us, nestled us within her body and brought us into the world.

We pray today for women whose identities have been defrauded, denuded or diminished. We pray that each one would know that they are made in your image. Forgive us when we portray you as the Creator and source of masculinity only and not also of femininity. Forgive us when we caricature women, and in so doing, we caricature you.

We pray for women to find freedom in the identity that you give them. Thank you that womanhood is not an expression of weakness. We pray that women would

know the freedom of being able to be who you have made them to be. In a world so often dominated by patriarchal views and attitudes, help women to celebrate their character, potential and purpose in you. Give communities across Africa the ability to celebrate women who are also wives, mothers, daughters and sisters; but we also pray that we will not limit the roles of women. We pray for those women who are not mothers and who are not sisters or wives. For those who have chosen this path, continue to give them joy and courage in their lives. For those who have wanted to be mothers or wives, we pray for peace, for strength, and for faith.

We ask you to give freedom to each woman, and space that they might be what you have called them to be – whatever that means.

Amen.



5. WOMEN IN DANGER

The United Nations has called it Africa's 'shadow pandemic'. In Kenya, local media reported almost 4,000 schoolgirls becoming pregnant when schools were closed during the lockdown. In most cases they had allegedly been raped by relatives or police officers. In our broken world we need God to work in the lives of both men and women.

Protecting God,

We thank you that you have promised that you notice when we stumble and when we fall. We thank you that your son has shown us that you know the hairs on our heads and that you see every situation that we face.

We pray today for every woman who faces danger. For those who are at risk of sexual violence, we ask that you would protect them and that you would use your people to defend the rights and the freedoms of women. We pray for women who live in fear of bonded labour, slavery, or human trafficking. Thank you for the agencies and organisations that fight these injustices. Guide the work of their hands and give them wisdom and insight as they seek to bring an end to these pernicious practices.

In the midst of the heightened tensions and uncertainties of this season, we pray

that women will be protected from attack, and that they will be shielded from fear and uncertainty. We pray that you will give wisdom and insight to those who are serving communities where women are at risk. Help those who serve to see with your eyes, to pay attention to the situations around them, and to be able to identify potential risks. Give them wisdom in how they should intervene.

Bring an end to fear, uncertainty, and intimidation of women, Lord. Help local churches to be communities of safety, security, and freedom. May women see in your Church a community that will embrace them, celebrate them, and make room for them. May women see in your Church a safe haven, may they know that there is a place at your table where they can be free from fear and oppression.

Amen.



6. WOMEN AND RELATIONSHIPS

We are not made for being alone. There are many 'one another' commands in the Bible and we are made in the image of a relational God. Even though Western societies are increasingly individualistic, in many places in Africa community is still hugely important. Choosing Jesus over community held beliefs is a particularly huge wrench for women who risk losing local support networks.

Companion God,

You have made us for relationships and we are grateful. We find our delight and our purpose, our true identity and worth, in you.

We pray for women who have discovered this identity and relationship but who have been excluded or rejected because of this choice. We ask you to give them a profound sense of your friendship and nearness. We pray that they will know that you are a friend that sticks closer than a brother. We pray that they will be nourished and sustained by your presence, your promises, and your power.

We ask you to bring an end to exclusion and isolation for women who have chosen you. Help your people to grasp the depths

and the realities of true biblical fellowship. Help local Christian communities to become havens of hope, communities of care, and families of faith. May women find security, acceptance, and welcome among your people. May local churches across Africa model community, kindness, and compassion to local women and girls.

We pray that you will break the materialistic and individualistic facets of Christianity in Western society cultures. Help us to learn from the deep sense of community that is displayed in many places in Africa. Give us the humility to confess our pride, selfishness, and weakness and help us to develop better forms of community, care, and belonging.

Amen.



7. WOMEN AND ISLAM

For many Muslim women, going against the religion of their father or husband is unthinkable. For many others, they don't even know that there are alternative ideas. Of the remaining 1,000 people groups unreached by the gospel in Africa, the majority are in Muslim countries. Often, if men aren't hearing the gospel, neither are women.

Father,

We thank you for the power of the good news of Jesus Christ. We praise you that there is no one whom you do not see and that you are good and your love endures forever. We praise you that the call to follow Christ is not rooted in a list of rules and regulations but is rooted in grace. We thank you that the Bible is a great story of hope, mercy, and restoration and that you invite us into this story. We thank you that you find us, rescue us, and restore us.

We pray for women trapped behind systems and structures that lock them away from the hope and power of the gospel. Speak to them in dreams and visions. Reveal the mercy and the compassion of Christ to them in supernatural ways. Thank you for the many who are brought to faith in Christ miraculously. Sustain them and hold them

close to your heart. We pray also for new ways of reaching women in countries and cultures where they are hidden from the gospel. We pray for an end to practices that deny women the human right of religious freedom. We pray you would break the power of Islamist extremism wherever it is found and that you would give hope and freedom to women who are caught in the exclusion of such worldviews.

We pray for men and women who are Muslim background believers. We ask you to give them wisdom, insight, and creativity as they seek to grow in their faith and reach others in their families and communities for Christ. May the good news of Christ be lived, shared, seen, and experienced by women everywhere.

Amen.

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Pray with us online

You can also continue praying with us through our regular online prayer meetings. To find out when the next meeting is and to sign up, visit: eu.aimint.org/prayfor



Malcolm Duncan leads Dundonald Elim Church. He is an author, chairs Elim's Ethics and Public Theology Task Force and is Theologian-in-Residence for Spring Harvest and Essential Christian. Malcolm is husband to Debbie and father to four adult children.

Africa Inland Mission serves and partners with churches to fulfil the Great Commission and advance the gospel among Africans who have the least opportunity to hear about Jesus.

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