

Praying for Egypt

Dan Nelson - pastor

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It is the most populous country in the Arabic speaking world. Hosting the most influential training center for Muslim clerics posted throughout the Middle East, it is not uncommon to hear of its residents traveling to nearby locales such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon to find stable work. Sharing a critical border with Israel, and being therefore the pivotal land bridge that conjoins North Africa to Eurasia, its role in the region for keeping peace or making war should never be understated. As the key component connecting the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, it functions as the hinge on which economic and political security swings. And with the intrigue felt the world over for its historicity and phenomenal artifacts, it boasts significant exposure to the West through tourism and media. And for weeks, the headlines have been plastered with images of unrest and revolt as the face of Egypt undergoes unprecedented transformation via the communication channels of the technological revolution. Meanwhile the world stands by, some mesmerized, others already demonstrating signs of boredom with it all, most realizing that the outcomes of these events have the potential to affect, for good or for bad, every corner of the globe. For me, I take it personal.

Egypt may be top of mind right now for everybody, but for most of this last decade it has been a central point of focus for me. Particularly, since I first began to make real friends there just over five years ago when God opened doors for me to participate in the African Leadership Conference in Cairo and El Minya. The focus is on training, equipping, and encouraging Christian leaders living in Egypt, some of which are refugees from various countries in turmoil. I have since discovered not only great faith among these heroes, but models of what it means to serve God in conditions that can even threaten one's very life.

It fascinates me that Facebook can be used so powerfully to communicate a cause and promulgate an uprising. While most people seem to use it to tell the world what they had for breakfast, some are driving people to action. This is how the news spread to organize the shake-up in Cairo. Of my 350 friends or so on Facebook, at least fifty of them are Egyptian, and it is being used to similarly to connect us, from the ground in the land of the Nile, across the planet to this small town in Southern California. I am greatly encouraged to have other options for news than just the major networks. I get to hear the word on the street, literally. And what are they saying? My friends in Egypt are beseeching us to fast and pray for them.

Yes its true, while some are calling for rioting and violence, others are appealing people to pray. Maybe we can do more than just watch it on the screen, we can petition the God of the universe and really have an impact on the outcome. In the event that you understand what I am talking about and are willing to get involved, I

want to give you three specific names.

Samir is a leader in his church. He serves as a pastor to many in his local area and, as an elder in the larger Egyptian church, has influence across the nation affecting thousands. His family are devoted Christians, and together with many others, serve Jesus as great personal cost. A few years back, Samir stood before a congregation of hundreds of people to present a commemorative token of our partnership in the Kingdom of God, which I keep in my office to remind me daily of this important alliance.

Akram is an artist. He expresses his faith through paint, stained glass, and various artistic mediums. You can come by my office and see a sample of his work. In every generation, there are individuals like Akram that use their gifts to communicate God's truths and messages of peace in unique ways. Please pray for him and his fellow artists that are standing for righteousness in a time of upheaval and uncertainty.

Sameh is an educated young adult that has dedicated his life to helping humanity and is involved in various endeavors to ensure that those in surrounding villages have food and the staples for life. Like the other young people that have been marching on the streets in demonstration, Sameh wants to see change and a future for his generation. The difference is that he is putting different priorities at the top and he is exhorting anyone who will listen to take action through involvement in prayer. He sent me an e-mail last week asking me to share his heart with you.

These are three of my personal friends who are in the midst of it; each one is unique in roles and responsibilities in this action. And they each have a voice and influence, and the potential to make real impact with those that are in their circles. Further, they are asking for your support through fasting and prayer. Won't you come alongside them at this time? Make a difference! Answer the call! Change the world!

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Dan Nelson is a frequent contributor to the Ojai Valley News and currently serves the Ojai Valley Ministerial Association and community as editor of the Religion Column. Permission is freely granted to reprint the article in its entirety. Dan Nelson is



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Sunday Worship:

9:00 & 10:45am
Calvary Chapel Ojai Valley
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Mid-Week Study:

7:00pm Thursday
Calvary Chapel Ojai Valley
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