

Heavenly Hotline

The recent on field collapse of Buffalo Bills football player, Damar Hamlin on January 2nd led to the outpouring of a number of prayers both on the football field and off. At the game in which he collapsed, players from both teams along with coaches gathered on the field for prayer while medical staff attended to Hamlin.

By January 3rd all 32 NFL teams had changed their twitter profile to read: ‘Pray for Damar’. One prayer was even spoken on air by an ESPN announcer. While we don’t like the circumstances which sparked all this generation of religious expression, it is refreshing to see prayer to God acknowledged as our great refuge in time of trial.

When trials drive men and women to prayer, we see one of the hidden mercies that lies behind all such events. The trial and the prayer are a means of drawing us closer to God. Psalm 145:18 – ‘The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.’ Of course, God would have us call upon Him not just in our hour of crisis but also in our blessings, to give thanks and seek Him for continued mercies. Jesus indicated prayer ought to be a daily practice, ‘Give us this day our daily bread.’ [Matthew 6:11] Paul called us to be devoted to prayer. [Col. 4:2] Oswald Chambers once stated: ‘Prayer is the vital breath of the Christian; not the thing that makes him alive but the evidence that he is alive.’

If a child jumps in the pool for a swim and you have been assigned the job of lifeguard, you like to see the child splashing around, having his head above water at regular intervals - - - it means all is fine. However, if the pool goes calm and you can’t see the child, you jump in to make sure he is o.k. One of the ways we show our spiritual life has a healthy pulse is that we splash around in the pool of prayer. We don’t let the waters go calm and we don’t wait for an emergency to speak to our Heavenly Father. Instead, we pray frequently, fervently and our life breathes the heavenly oxygen of prayer. Corrie Ten Boom issues this challenge: ‘Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?’ One we use every day we get in the car; the other is just in case.