

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).

Everyone helped his neighbor, and said to his brother, "Be of good courage!" (Isaiah 41:6).

? is ? this normal?

a *s the world reeled in shock and horror after the terrorist attacks in the United States, many sought refuge and stability in God. One poll reported that in the days following, 90% of Americans prayed at one time or another. A well-known columnist comments on this result of the disaster.*

Four thousand gathered for midday prayer in a downtown cathedral.

A New York City church filled and emptied six times last Tuesday.

The owner of a Manhattan tennis shoe store threw open his doors and gave running shoes to those fleeing the towers.

People stood in lines to give blood, in hospitals to treat the sick, in sanctuaries to pray for the wounded.

America was different this week. We wept for people we did not know. We sent money to families we've never seen. Talk-show hosts read Scriptures, journalists printed prayers. Our focus shifted from fashion hemlines and box scores to orphans and widows and the future of the world.

We were different this week. Republicans stood next to Democrats. Catholics prayed with Jews. Skin color was covered by the ash of burning towers. This is a different country than it was a week ago.

We're not as self-centered as we were. We're not as self-reliant as we were. Hands are out. Knees are bent. This is not normal. And I have to ask the question, "Do we want to go back to normal?"

Are we being given a glimpse of a new way of life? Are we, as a nation, being reminded that the enemy is not each other and the power is not in ourselves and the future is not in our bank accounts?

Could this unselfish prayerfulness be the way God intended for us to live all along? Maybe this, in His eyes, is the way we are called to live.

And perhaps the best response to this tragedy is to refuse to go back to normal.

Perhaps the best response is to follow the example of Jerry Glick and Tom Burnet. They were passengers of flight 93. Minutes before the plane crashed in the fields of Pennsylvania they reached their wives by cell phone. "We're all going to die," they told them, "but there are three of us who are going to do something about it."

We can do something about it as well. We can resolve to care more. We can resolve to pray more. And we can resolve that, God being our helper, we'll never go back to normal again.

—Max Lucado