

Oma Ellis  
talks about  
**Prayer  
& Faith**

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, swirling lines in shades of gray, located in the bottom right quadrant of the page.

Oma Ellis and  
Georgia Smelser

# Oma Ellis Talks About PRAYER AND FAITH

by Oma Ellis and Georgia Smelser

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Hazelwood, MO 63042-2299

Reprint History: 1990, 1993, 1996, 2001, 2008

Cover Design by Laura Jurek

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Printed in United States of America.

Printed by



WORD AFLAME PRESS

8855 Dunn Road, Hazelwood, MO 63042

[www.pentecostalpublishing.com](http://www.pentecostalpublishing.com)

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## Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ellis, Oma.

Oma Ellis talks about prayer and faith.

1. Prayer.	2. Faith.	3. Ellis, Oma.	I. Smelser, Georgia, 1927-
II. Title.	III. Title: Prayer and faith.		
BV210.2.E394 1987	248.3		87.13306
ISBN 0-932581-16-1			

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CHAPTER ONE

# Learning to Pray

| *“One of his disciples said unto him,  
Lord, teach us to pray”*

(Luke 11:1).

**D**octor Belma reached for his black leather bag and pressed his stethoscope into a side pocket. “Oma,” he said slowly on that long ago summer day in Dallas and waited until our eyes met. “I have done all I can for you. Your heart is so weakened by tuberculosis it can fail at any time.” There was a delicate blend of kindness and sadness in the doctor’s sensitive face. “I wish there were a cure for the disease. Perhaps someday there will be. I’ve tried all I know and you don’t respond to any of it.”

“Are you saying that I’m not going to make it?” I asked in a small voice.

His shoulders shrugged slightly as he replied, “No, you’re not going to make it. I want you to be aware of this so you can ‘set your house in order’ as the Good Book says.”

## *Prayer and Faith*

I had been growing thinner and weaker each day and I knew in my heart that there were not many days left. Hearing the doctor put it into words crystalized my deepest fears. I was not going to live. At twenty-four years of age I was going to die!

After the doctor left, I hugged my two young children to my breast. "Oh, God, I want to raise my babies. I don't want to die."

Somewhere deep within the core of me was another cry. "God, I need something from You—a deep spiritual experience—a real encounter with You that I can feel. I want to know that I have been born again. I want the assurance that I am ready to meet You."

In late August my husband, Forrest, said, "Let's get out of town over the Labor Day weekend. A visit with your Cousin Winnie would be good for you."

"I'd like to visit Winnie, but it's seventy miles to Sherman, Forrest. How can I make that long bumpy trip?" I questioned.

"I'll put a lot of pillows in the back seat to make a soft bed for you," he offered.

I made the trip without any unusual problems and was warmly welcomed by my cousin. Forrest and Winnie's husband, Roy, went their ways about town leaving Winnie and me free to talk about the Bible and free to go to the revival service that night at the Pentecostal church where Winnie attended. The church was in the midst of a good revival with W. L. Stallones. I could not have come to Sherman, Texas, at a better time!

Winnie and I talked nonstop about the baptism of the Holy Ghost, water baptism and healing that afternoon. She opened the Word to me, and like a starving baby bird,

I greedily devoured every morsel. By church time I was ready for anything and everything God had in store for me.

It all happened so fast. Within one hour's time that night of August 31, 1923, I repented of all my sins, was baptized in the name of Jesus (in a metal horse trough), received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and spoke in a language I had not learned, and was completely healed of tuberculosis and heart trouble.

My hitherto weakened voice praised God with the strength of a trumpet. I was a brand-new creature inside and out. I had never known that such happiness and joy were available to human beings.

When I returned to Dallas my mind was made up that I would never allow anything to steal this experience from me, no matter what opposition I might face. In time this commitment was to be challenged many times, for my husband, though pleased about my miraculous healing, strongly opposed the Holy Ghost experience and my changed lifestyle that accompanied it.

There was no church of my faith accessible to me where I lived in Dallas, and for two years I was unable to attend church. How I longed to attend spirit-filled church services and to draw strength and encouragement from them! And how I yearned to have a prayer partner! Cousin Winnie wrote long "epistles," sharing her insights of God's Word with me. These letters were spiritual feasts. She was a wonderful encourager.

During this two-year backside-of-the-desert time in my life, God taught me the value of developing a consistent prayer life and the need to get established in the Word.