

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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Week Two

## **DAY 8**

As we continue our prayer journey today, we continue to ask this question: **“WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?”** And today we want to give the sixth reason why we should pray every day.

### **REASON 6: PRAYER HELPS US DETERMINE GOD’S WILL**

We worship God when we give him our lives every time we pray. Jesus says when we pray, we should commit ourselves to God’s will. After I give God my love, I give Him my life.

In the most famous prayer of all time, the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus prays, *“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”* Did you know God has a specific will for your life? The Bible says in **Romans 12** that His will is good and perfect and it fits you. Part of connecting with God is saying, “God, what is your will for me today? I want to do your will.”

In heaven, God’s will is done perfectly. The problem on earth is God’s will is not always done. That’s why we’re to pray, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” We’re saying, “God, I want to submit to You. I want to do what You want me to do.” True success in life is knowing the will of God and getting right in the center of it.

You can pray “Your will be done” in three different ways. You can say it in resentment: “Your will be done, but I don’t like it.” You can say it in resignation: “Your will be done, because I can’t help it.” Or you can say it in anticipation: “Your will be done, because I know it is the best and that’s what I want for my life today!”

Several years ago there was a popular TV show entitled, “Father Knows Best.” Your earthly father may not always know what’s best, but your Heavenly Father does. That’s what it means to say, “Your will be done.”

### **PRAYER REQUEST**

Powerful prayer is persistent prayer. Earth moving prayer is ongoing prayer. Let’s be honest, how much time do we really spend asking God to move in a powerful way at Joshua? If prayer is the source of God’s blessing on our church, we should be praying earnestly EVERY DAY for God to move in our church.

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

---

*Week Two*

## **A GREAT COMMITMENT TO THE GREAT COMMANDMENT AND THE GREAT COMMISSION WILL BUILD A GREAT CHURCH.**

God wants Joshua to be a GREAT church! Pray that all of us would have: “A GREAT COMMITMENT TO THE GREAT COMMANDMENT AND THE GREAT COMMISSION”

**PRAISE AND THANKS** – As we start a new work week, take a moment to praise God and thank Him for the blessing of your job. Even though you might not love it, you are blessed to have a job and an income (because there are many don't). As you thank God for your job, thank Him also for your boss and your co-workers. Look for ways you can show God's love and share His message this week. Look for opportunities to be a blessing that God may give you on your job this week.

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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Week Two

## **DAY 9**

This is Day 9 of our 40 Days of Prayer experience. How are you doing with your prayer commitment? Even if you have lost some momentum, please make a fresh commitment today and keep going.

As we continue our prayer journey today, we continue to ask this question: **“WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?”** And today we want to give the seventh reason why we should pray every day.

### **REASON 7: PRAYER GIVE US THE CHANCE TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE**

It is no secret that we must give thanks to the Lord for all the things that He provides and all the things He does on our behalf. His goodness and lovingkindness to us should be recognized daily. In **1 Chronicles 16:34**, we are commanded to *“give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.”* The psalmist tells us in **Psalms 9:1**, *“I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders.”* We pray daily to acknowledge His faithfulness and His abundant provision in our daily lives.

### **PRAYER REQUEST**

Small groups are needed for Fellowship and Discipleship. They also will help us develop relationships that are more loving. Pray that God will help us develop groups in our church that will help us become better at fulfilling His purposes for our lives.

### **PRAISE AND THANKS**

Prayer is all about expressing gratitude. As you pray today, instead of spending the bulk of your time asking God for things you need, take an extended time to thank Him for what you already have. The old hymn says, **“COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS, NAME THEM ONE BY ONE AND IT WILL SURPRISE YOU WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE!**

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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Week Two

## **DAY 10**

This is Day 10 of our 40 Days of Prayer experience. It takes 21 days to develop a habit, so you are halfway there in making prayer a habit in your life. KEEP IT UP!

As we continue our prayer journey today, we continue to ask this question: **“WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?”** And today we want to give the eighth reason why we should pray every day.

**REASON 8: Prayer is an act of worship and obedience.** Perhaps no other verse better summarizes why we should pray on a daily basis than **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**: *“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”* It’s God’s will for His children to rejoice in Him, to pray to Him and give thanks to Him. To pray without ceasing simply means that we should make prayer a regular habit and never stop doing so. Prayer also is an act of worship because by praying to Him we are showing Him how much we adore Him. Daily prayer is also an act of obedience that brings joy to the Lord to see His children following His commands.

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

Please take time today to pray for those who are sick and suffering in our church today. We have several member and attenders in our church family that are facing some severe physical, emotional, relational and financial challenges in their lives. Even though you may not know their names or their situations, God knows and God sees and when we pray for them, we are calling on God to bring help, comfort, encouragement and support in every situation. The Bible says in James 5:13, *“If anyone among you is suffering – PRAY!”* Lift those to the Lord and trust God to work on their behalf.

## **PRAISE AND THANKS**

What is your favorite Bible verse? Did you know that God gives us His Word to teach us, to challenge us, to encourage us, to comfort us and to guide us? Take a few minutes today and thank God for His Word and the free access we have to it here in America. There are many Christians in the world that do not have the freedom we have in regard to owning and reading the Bible openly and freely. Don’t take this privilege for granted. Thank God for the great gift of His Word.

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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Week Two

## **DAY 11**

The great Christian leader Martin Luther once said, “To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.” PRAYER IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR SPIRITUAL WELL BEING!

As we continue our prayer journey today, we want to answer this question: **“WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?”** And today we want to give the ninth reason why we should pray every day.

**REASON 9: Prayer provides the platform for confessing our sin and getting help to overcome it.** Let’s face it, we all sin daily whether we know it or not. So as followers of Jesus Christ, what must we do? Scripture makes it very clear: *“Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD’— and you forgave the guilt of my sin” (Psalm 32:5).* “If you confess you sins to God, He is faithful and just and will forgive you for your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness” (**1 John 1:9**).

Tell God what He already knows and do it daily. Daily prayer time is a great place to unburden one’s self from the debilitating effects of sin. So often Christians walk around with unconfessed sin that hinders our personal relationship with Jesus Christ, when we should humbly submit ourselves and ask for forgiveness in prayer. Another important element of daily prayer is asking God for the strength to turn away from our sins. Only God can help us turn from our sins, and, for this to be so, He needs to hear our plea to repent.

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

Make Christ’s commitment your commitment. Christ sought to know God’s will and then to do it. He said, **“NOT MY WILL BUT YOUR WILL BE DONE”**. Today’s prayer request is simple: Ask God to reveal His will to You and then make a commitment to do whatever He tells you to do. Too often we want to know God’s will so we can decide if we want to do it. Jesus unconditionally committed to doing God’s will no matter what. Oftentimes, we aren’t clear about God’s will because we aren’t doing what we already know to do. Today, pray a pray of surrender and commitment to God’s will for you.

## **PRAISE AND THANKS**

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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## *Week Two*

Feeling and expressing appreciation is good for us. Like any wise father, God wants us to learn to be thankful for all the gifts He has given us (**James 1:17**). It is in our best interest to be reminded that everything we have is a gift from Him. Without gratefulness, we become arrogant and self-centered. We begin to believe that we have achieved everything on our own. Thankfulness keeps our hearts in right relationship to the Giver of all good gifts. Giving thanks also reminds us of how much we do have. We tend to focus on what we *don't* have. By giving thanks continually we are reminded of how much we *do* have. When we focus on blessings rather than wants, we are happier. When we start thanking God for the things we usually take for granted, our perspective changes. We realize that we could not even exist without the merciful blessings of God. Thank God today for the tangible blessings you enjoy – house, clothes, food, cars, air conditioning, etc. Everything is a GIFT from Him so say thanks!

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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Week Two

## **DAY 12**

Dr. Adrian Rogers, a famous pastor that has since passed away, once said this: *“The prayer offered to God in the morning is the key that unlocks the door of every day. Any athlete knows that it is the start that ensures a good finish.”*

THE BEST WAY – TO START YOUR DAY – IS TO PRAY!

As we continue our prayer journey today, we want to answer this question: **“WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?”** And today we want to give the tenth reason why we should pray every day.

**REASON 10: We pray because we want to know God more fully.** There is nothing greater our hearts can seek, and nothing more fulfilling than getting to know God. And as we spend time in prayer, we get to know Him more. As it says in the book of Psalms, *“One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple” (Psalm 27:4).* If our desire is to get to know Him better, then like in any relationship, we must spend time with Him, talk to Him, listen to Him and get to know Him. Pray is the way to make that happen every day.

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

**Romans 8:5** *“For those who live according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, about the things of the Spirit.”* Pray and surrender your life to God’s complete control. Pray for our church that every leader, every volunteer, every member and every ministry would be completely controlled and completely surrender to “the things of the Spirit”. Can you imagine what God could do through a life and a church completely controlled by the Holy Spirit? Let’s pray that we will BE that kind of church.

## **PRAISE AND THANKS**

Remember the Gospel story of Jesus healing the 10 lepers (**Luke 17:11-19**)? It’s a wonderful story of Jesus’ generous and healing spirit. Nonetheless, it’s also troubling because only one of the lepers came back to thank Jesus. How could only *one* return? How could the other nine dance off in joy, completely forgetting how—and by whom—they were healed? As Christians, we’re called *beyond* simple thanks for the good things God has sent our way. We’re also to give thanks for what He has done for us...and for who He is. Which of the lepers are you? The one or the nine? Spend some time praising God today for who He is.

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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Week Two

## **DAY 13**

This is Day 13 of our 40 Days of Prayer experience. How are you doing? What has this prayer journey meant to you so far?

As we continue our prayer journey today, we want to answer this question: **“WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?”** And today we want to give the eleventh reason why we should pray every day.

### **REASON 11: Prayer is not a peripheral activity of the church, but essential to everything we do!**

*The Lord is near to everyone who prays to him, to every faithful person who prays to him. (Psalm 145:18)*

*“Prayer is not just getting ready for Christian service. Prayer is Christian service.” (Adrian Rogers)*

*“It is obvious that Paul did not regard prayer as supplemental, but as fundamental—not something to be added to his work but the very matrix out of which his work was born. He was a man of action because he was a man of prayer. It was probably his prayer even more than his preaching that produced the kind of leaders we meet in his letters.” (Oswald Sanders, from Dynamic Spiritual Leadership)*

*“I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach.” (Charles Spurgeon)*

Prayer is essential part of the Christian faith, “Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (**Philippians 4:6**). Prayer itself does not bring faith but I do believe it strengthens the faith we have. Especially true when the answers come. I think we could look at prayer as exercising faith, we make our petitions and then wait for the promises to be seen, once they are manifested the faith muscle is strengthened.

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

The issue in life is not “will we be hurt” but “how will we respond when we are hurt by others?” If we are going to have the kind of church that is truly going to



# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

---

## Week Two

make an impact on the world around us, we must be people of forgiveness. Nothing will destroy a church faster than a spirit of bitterness among the people. The passage from **Ephesians 4** makes it clear: FFPF – FORGIVEN PEOPLE FORGIVE PEOPLE. Because Jesus has forgiven you for EVERYTHING wrong you have ever done, you have a spiritual obligation to forgive every person that has hurt you, angered you, frustrated you or offended you of EVERYTHING they have done wrong. This is essential for us to be the church God wants us to be. Today as you pray, ask God to show you any spirit of bitterness and unforgiveness in your heart and make a commitment to release the anger and bitterness and grant forgiveness to anyone that you are holding a grudge against.

### **PRAISE AND THANKS**

Dr. Charles Stanley offers a great quote: *“Our Father never gets tired of blessing us—or hearing our praise.”*

In the same article where this quote appears, Dr. Stanley writes these words: “Many of us have exclaimed “Thank You, Lord!” following a close call on the highway or after being hired for the job we wanted. But Scripture teaches more about giving our thanks to God.

One important way we should thank God is by **giving generously and cheerfully (Matt. 10:8, 2 Corinthians 9:7)** If we’re truly grateful, we’ll want to share what we have. On the other hand, if we’re self-centered, we’ll want to keep as much as possible for ourselves. Of course, we cannot mail anything to God, so the only way we can give to Him is by being generous to each other and to the work of His kingdom.

We tend to be great askers and great receivers; we enthusiastically repeat verses that encourage us to make requests of God (**Matt. 7:7-11, Matt. 21:22**); we memorize passages assuring us He’ll supply all of our needs and “freely give us all things” (**Phil. 4:19, Rom. 8:32**). Shouldn’t we also learn to be excited when thanking our loving, sovereign Lord who redeems us, forgives us, provides eternal life, and every single day pours blessings upon us? Let’s not be guilty of what may be the greatest sin of all: indifference, selfishness and ingratitude toward almighty God. Our Father never gets tired of blessing us—or hearing our praise. Let your thanks overflow!

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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## *Week Two*

If your giving is indicative of our gratitude, how grateful are you to God and how much do you show it in a tangible way. How is your giving to your church? If you are grateful to God for your church, you should show it by your faithful tithing.”

# 40 DAYS of PRAYER

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Week Two

## **DAY 14**

Oswald Sanders says in his book, “Spiritual Leadership” that “*the spiritual leader should outpace the rest of the church, above all, in prayer*”, but this calling to pray is NOT just for leaders, but for all of us. Prayer accomplishes more than we know and certainly more than we could ever accomplish on our own. The time we dedicate to prayer shows how important it really is in our lives? So, the big question is this: How much time are you spending in prayer?

As we continue our prayer journey today, we want to answer this question: “**WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?**” And today we want to give the twelfth reason why we should pray every day.

**REASON 12: We pray to acknowledge our dependence upon Him.** We are not independent beings. As Paul preached at the Areopagus, “*In him we live and move and have our being.*” We are and can be nothing apart from Him. Prayer recognizes that. Ursinus once commented that, “Prayer is as necessary for us as it is necessary for a beggar to ask alms.” A beggar is by definition one who asks for alms. We are people, human beings, created in His image; by very definition we are dependent and are to pray.

## **PRAYER REQUEST**

Pray that God would raise up leaders in our church. Pray that God will move in the hearts and lives of everyone at our church and lead them to surrender completely to His will and purpose. Pray that our church will be intentional about raising up leaders and have pathways of growth that will help each person reach their spiritual potential.

## **PRAISE AND THANKS**

Praying prayers of thanksgiving fuels us to love the Lord and love others and combats the bitterness and resentment that sneak into our hearts when we feel overwhelmed. Surrender any ounce of bitterness and frustration to God, it has no place in our lives. Ask Him to stir in you continued prayers of thanksgiving for all that He has done for you and for our church.