

40 DAYS of PRAYER

Week ONE

DAY 1

Will you take the 40 Days of Prayer challenge?

40 Day season of prayer for our lives, for our church, for our community and for our nation.

We want you to be a part of this prayer journey. We want everyone to be a part of this important spiritual commitment for 40 Days (August 5 – September 16).

PRAYER REQUEST

Pray that our church will always have a heart for reaching people that don't know Jesus yet. Ask God to help us to impact our community as never before.

PRAISE AND THANKS –Take a moment today and thank God for one specific aspect of our church that blesses your life.

DAY 2

As a fellowship of believers, we have the incredible privilege of partnering together to renew our commitment, revitalize our church and reach our world. Over the next 40 days, we'll have the opportunity to fellowship together in a journey of prayer in order to bring a fresh passion for Jesus. In fact, He encourages us to come before the Father with bold prayers, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9) Imagine what God can do when we unite in one Spirit praying every day for 40 days for God's love to be poured out in us and through us, for His glory.

PRAYER REQUEST

As you pray today, ask God to do GREAT things among us. Ask God to move in a way that can only be explained as a "God thing". Ask: What is the biggest thing I would like to see God do in and through the Joshua Church to our community and our world. And as you pray today, ASK GOD TO DO IT. Let's all pray for some "OGCDT" miracles. (OGCDT = ONLY GOD CAN DO THAT!) Write down the specific things God lays on your heart and lift them to Him.

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DAY 3

God's Word Calls Us to Pray

One key **reason** to pray is because God has commanded us to pray. If we are to be obedient to His will, then prayer must be part of our life in Him. Where does the Bible call us to prayer? Several passages are relevant:

- *“Pray for those who persecute you” –**Matthew 5:44** (NIV)*
- *“And when you pray ...” –**Matthew 6:5***
- *“This, then, is how you should pray ...” –**Matthew 6:9***
- *“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” –**Romans 12:12***
- *“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” –**Ephesians 6:18***
- *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” –**Philippians 4:6***
- *“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” –**Colossians 4:2***
- *“Pray continually” –**1 Thessalonians 5:17***
- *“I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone ...” –**1 Timothy 2:1***

Prayer is an act of obedience. God calls us to pray and we must respond.

PRAYER REQUEST

As you pray today, ask God to search your heart and show you any areas in your life that need to be changed, any attitudes that need to be adjusted, any commitments that need to be renewed or any sin that needs to be forsaken. For Joshua to be the church God wants it to be, WE must be the people God wants us to be. Everything God wants to do at our church begins with US!

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DAY 4

Yesterday we answered the question, “WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY”. And today we want to give the second reason why you should pray every day.

REASON 2: Jesus Prayed Regularly

Why did Jesus pray? One reason he prayed was as an example so that we could learn from him. The Gospels are full of references to the prayers of Christ, including these examples:

- *“After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray.” –**Matthew 14:23***
- *“Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, ‘Sit here while I go over there and pray.’” –**Matthew 26:36***
- *“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.” –**Mark 1:35***
- *“But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.” –**Luke 5:16***
- *“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.” –**Luke 6:12***
- *“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.” –**Luke 18:1***

PRAYER REQUEST

As you pray today, ask God to cleanse your heart and make you clean and pure so you can honor Him and be used by Him to do great things in the world. Ask God to fill our church with people who have a pure heart and a passion to honor God in their lives. We will only be as effective as we are pure. As we said yesterday, everything God wants to do at our church begins with US!

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DAY 5

Prayer is such a great privilege, so don't give up.

As we begin this journey, we are asking this question: **“WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?”** And today we want to give the third reason why you should pray every day.

REASON 3: Prayer is How We Communicate with God

Prayer allows us to worship and praise the Lord. It also allows us to offer confession of our sins, which should lead to our genuine repentance. Moreover, prayer grants us the opportunity to present our requests to God. All of these aspects of prayer involve communication with our Creator. He is personal, cares for us, and wants to commune with us through prayer.

- *“... if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” -2 **Chronicles 7:14***
- *Isaiah wrote, “He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” (Isaiah 40:29-31).*
- **Hebrews 4:15-16** reads, *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

Prayer is not just about asking for God's blessings – though we are welcome to do so – but it is about communication with the living God. Without communication, relationships fall apart. So, too, our relationship with God suffers when we do not communicate with Him.

PRAYER REQUEST

“HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOUR LAST SPIRITUAL EXAMINATION?”

It is important to allow God to continually search our hearts to make sure we are where we need to be with him. In **2 Corinthians 13:5** Paul wrote, *“Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you; if not, you have failed the test of genuine*

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faith.” David seeks God in the most intimate place and asks Him to examine him there. David asks God to see if there is any hurtful way in him — in the deepest part of his being. David was being vulnerable.

As you pray today, have the same attitude and approach to prayer that David did in **Psalm 139**. Ask God to truly search your heart. Is there any hurtful way in your heart? Would you be able to ask God to search your heart down to the deepest levels and reveal to you the secrets that not even you know is there? Would you trust God enough to ask Him to expose and root out of you that which is displeasing to Him? Do you have the courage to bow your knees, to lower your head, to lay prostrate before God, and to become as vulnerable as you can to Him as you ask him to look into your heart, to see if there’s anything bad in there, and to deal with it accordingly? Such a request grows out of humility as well as increases humility. It is the ultimate trust in God. It can be scary. But it is definitely good. Make this your personal prayer today.

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DAY 6

Corrie Ten Boom was a Dutch Christian who not only survived the Holocaust but also rescued many Jews during this horrific time in history. Her famous quote is a wonderful question to ask today: **“Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?”** This illustration begs to ask the question is prayer our first hope or our last ditched effort? Do we go directly to God in difficult times or do we make prayer our last resort?

Can you imagine what God thinks when he hears that statement? We are essentially saying, “God, we have tried everything. We have made all the attempts we know of to remedy our situation. We’ve checked with all the experts and we have come up with nothing. All we have left to do now is pray. Is your prayer life today your steering wheel (what drives your life) or your spare tire (something to fall back on if everything goes out)? No matter what you are going through today, God can come to your rescue. Maybe it’s not if you call on him, but it’s how you call on him that will make the difference today.

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

REASON 4: Prayer allows us to participate in God’s works & gives us power over evil

Does God need our help? No. He is all powerful and in control of everything in His creation. Why do we need to pray? Because prayer is the means God has ordained for some things to happen. Prayer, for instance, helps others know the love of Jesus. Prayer can clear human obstacles out of the way in order for God to work. It is not that God can’t work without our prayers, but that He has established prayer as part of His plan for accomplishing His will in this world.

Can physical strength help us overcome obstacles and challenges in the spiritual realm? No, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”

(Ephesians 6:12). But in prayer even the physically weak can become strong in the spiritual realm. As such, we can call upon God to grant us power over evil.

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- *“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” -1 Timothy 4:8*
- *“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” – Matthew 26:41*

PRAYER REQUEST

Today as you pray, ask God to create a culture of true humility at the Joshua Church. Ask God to direct us and guide us in such a way that JESUS ALONE is always the focus of everything we do and that HE ALONE will always receive the recognition and glory. Pray that the “spotlight of our ministry” will always be on JESUS. Pray that our church will be known for making God famous in everything we do.

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DAY 7

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

REASON 5: PRAYER BUILDS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

I am called to prayer because it is a key vehicle to building my love relationship with Jesus Christ. This is so important because Christianity is not primarily rules, it is a relationship.

Stop focusing on the of “rules” Christianity? Every day somebody’s got another rule for us to follow to be “good” Christians. Certainly, there are commands in God’s Word and promises. Certainly, Christ has standards, but we don’t become Christians because we “receive standards.” We become Christians because we receive Christ, who loves us, died for us, lives in us daily.

What I need, then, is to build my love-grace relationship with Him. I have to learn to allow Him to embrace me, to care for me, to point out my needs to me. I need to listen to Him, and I desperately need to talk to Him.

Where and how is all this done? In prayer. In **Ephesians 3:14-19**, Paul prays, *“that you may be able to comprehend... what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge...”* Paul is praying that you and I will experience that kind of love with Christ – a relationship that is intimate, deep, and close. It is so deep that Paul later says it “surpasses knowledge.” Where do we experience this? One place we can learn to do so is in prayer. Seldom do we get closer to Him than in prayer.

In fact, the longer I live, the more I think that the chief reason for the gift of prayer is that we learn to receive, experience, and return His love in genuine relationship. Prayer is one place when God can speak to us and minister to us. It is for this reason that we should make prayer such a big priority in our lives.

PRAYER REQUEST

Pray for yourself and your personal walk with God. Ask God to make you **“PRODUCTIVE”** so that you can fulfill His mission for your life. Take time today to pray specifically for our church today. If you read this early in the morning,

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please take time to pray for our services this morning. Pray for all of our volunteers that will be serving. Pray for the hearts of everyone attending to be open to the Lord. Pray especially for our church finances. Pray that everyone that is a member or regular attender will be faithful in their tithing and generous giving.

PRAISE AND THANKS – Worship involves praising God for who He is and thanking Him for what He does. On a piece of paper, write down 3 attributes of God you can praise Him for (Example: God I praise you that you are a God of LOVE). Next write down 3 specific things that He has done for you that you can thank Him for. Tell Him how grateful you are for His blessings in your life.