

40 DAYS of PRAYER

Week Five

DAY 29

One of our biggest challenges – The Problem of Unanswered Prayer

*How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? **Habakkuk 1:2***

In the book of Habakkuk, we find two complaints that the prophet directs at God. We might call the first one “the problem of unanswered prayer.” Like Habakkuk, we know this problem all too well.

Why doesn't God seem to answer some of our prayers? There is no quick or complete answer to this question, but there is one thing that may help us understand this mystery: sometimes God's refusals may well be the best answers to our deepest yearnings.

Philip Yancey illustrates this point in his book titled *Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference?* He writes about how Augustine's mother, Monica, prayed fervently for her son's conversion. Once, she stayed up all night praying that God would prevent him from going to the wicked city of Rome. He went anyway, and it was on that trip that Augustine became a Christian. Later, Augustine liked to say that God denied his mother's prayer once so she could be given what she had prayed for always.

On the cross, Jesus also experienced the pain of unanswered prayer (**Matthew 27:46**). When he asked his Father why he had forsaken him, no answer was given. That silence is the ultimate answer to all our prayers. God's refusal of his Son on that day made it possible for us to be saved. Jesus, who took on the punishment for all our sins, is the best answer to all our deepest prayers.

PRAYER REQUEST

Give double honor to spiritual leaders who handle their duties well. This is especially true if they work hard at teaching God's word. (1 Timothy 5:17)

Pastoring God's church is not an easy task and pastors are held to a higher accountability.

Not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly. (James 3:1)

There are pressures and problems that pastors face that no one knows about. This is a great article that gives some insight into what it means to be a pastor.

<http://www.churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/280583-wish-knew-becoming-pastor-brandon-hilgemann.html>

Our prayer request today is simple: PRAY FOR YOUR PASTORS!

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PRAISE AND THANKS

Thanksgiving can change your life. Moment by moment we can discover new reasons to be thankful.

Why Give Thanks?

The most obvious reason is God's goodness. He deserves our thanks.

"Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Psalm 107:31)

Another reason, almost as obvious as the first is that **God wants us to give thanks:**

"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

The fact that God deserves our thanks combined with the fact that it is His will for us to give thanks add up to a third reason for giving thanks—**we owe it to God.**

Does this challenge my premise that thanksgiving can change your life, since it sounds like giving thanks is just one more obligation? No way! While we tend to think that discharging a debt leaves us with less, not more, that is never the case when we give to God. When we give praise to God we always are blessed in return.

"It is impossible to feel grateful and depressed in the same moment."

Take whatever is getting you down, discouraged or depressed and use it as an opportunity to thank God.

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DAY 30

One of our biggest challenges – The Problem of Unanswered Prayer

If you've been praying and nothing seems to be happening, think on these **FOUR** statements regarding unanswered prayer.

1. *If the request is wrong, God will say “NO”*
2. *If the timing is wrong, God might choose to say “GO SLOW”*
3. *If something is amiss in your life, maybe God will choose, instead of granting your request, to say, “YOU NEED TO GROW”*
4. *But if the request is right and the timing is right and you are right, chances are God will say, “LET'S GO!” and grant the request.*

In the next few days, we will develop these statements so you can apply them more effectively to your own situations as you pray.

PRAYER REQUEST

One of the lines in the old song, “HOME ON THE RANGE” says this: “Where seldom is heard a discouraging word”. That should be a description of the church. Instead of talking about all the negative things – all the things that are wrong or weak (discouraging words) we should seek to encourage.

Hebrews 10:25 – *“We must continue to encourage each other even more as we see the day of the Lord coming.”*

“The job of a cheerleader is to support the team and call the fans to action. Fans at a ball game can really make a difference as they cheer on their team to fight for victory. In church, each of us has a part – in the game and in the stands cheering for those who are working hard.”

“THE POSITIVE ATTITUDE OF ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE AS THAT INDIVIDUAL VOCALIZES HIS OR HER SUPPORT OF THE TEAM!”

Does this statement describe you? When it comes to our church, do you have a positive attitude? Are you vocalizing support and being a cheerleader? Attitudes are contagious – if you are positive, that will spread but if you are negative, that will spread to. Make sure you are being positive, even if you see something that needs to be changed or needs to be strengthened.

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WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF YOUR CHURCH FOR WHICH YOU CAN OFFER YOUR VERBAL SUPPORT?

MAKE THIS YOUR SPECIFIC PRAYER TODAY: Pray today that God will show YOU ways YOU can support YOUR church vocally with encouraging words as YOU move toward congregational revitalization.

PRAISE AND THANKS

Praising God is the BEST!

Do you know that praising God is the best thing to do first before anything else? Have you ever been in a situation that you feel all alone? Or have you encountered a difficult situation in your life and you don't know what to do, like losing your job or suffering the loss of someone very close to your heart? Consider the good times such as when you receive a raise from your boss or earn high marks at school? What do you usually do during these moments? Praising God makes every circumstance of our lives complete, essential, and eminently worthwhile.

Webster defines the word praise as *to say good things about* and it is synonymous to words such as admire, commend, extol, honor, and worship. A definition of Christian praise is *the joyful thanking and adoring of God, the celebration of His goodness and grace*. This simply implies that the act of praising is rightfully due to God alone.

Praising God – Why?

Why is praising God important? The reasons are countless. **First**, God deserves to be praised and He is worthy to receive our praise:

- *“For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods” (Psalm 96:4).*
- *“Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom” (Psalm 145:3).*
- *“I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies” (2 Samuel 22:4).*
- *“You are worthy, our LORD and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being” (Revelation 4:11).*

Second, praising God is useful and favorable for us. By praising God, we are reminded of the greatness of God! His power and presence in our lives is reinforced in our understanding. “Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant” (**Psalm 135:3**).

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Third, God inhabits the atmosphere of praise. **Psalm 22:3** says, “But thou art holy, O thou that inhabits the praises of Israel” (KJV). If we want to see a clear manifestation of God’s blessings and grace, all we need to do is to praise Him with all our heart, our mind, and our soul.

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DAY 31

One of our biggest challenges – The Problem of Unanswered Prayer

If you've been praying and nothing seems to be happening, there are four reasons why and today we are discussing the first reason.

1. If the request is wrong, God will say, "No."

There are such things as wrong or inappropriate prayer requests. You are aware of that, aren't you? Three famous disciples during the time of Jesus – Peter, James and John accompanied Jesus to the top of a high mountain, and there, suddenly, God's full glory descended upon Jesus. The three disciples stood back in awe. They beheld the splendor of God just a few feet away. And they were so taken with Jesus' transfiguration that they say, "Jesus, allow us to build shelters up here, and we'll just live up here the rest of our lives, and we'll bask in your glory."

What was Jesus' response, in a word, to their request?

"No. "No. I'm not going to grant that one, fellows. We've got work to do down in the plains, down where people live. We're not just going to stay up here and bask in my glory."

No. Wrong request.

One time James and John went to Jesus, and asked if they could make reservations for the best two seats in heaven. They said, "We'd like one directly on Jesus' left and one directly on Jesus' right. Could you arrange that for us, Jesus? Remember Jesus' answer to that request? "No. I'm not going to grant that one, fellows. It's a wrong request."

Another time, Jesus and the disciples were denied a travel permit through a certain part of Samaria. That denial aggravated the disciples so much that they requested Jesus to destroy the entire region with fire from heaven. Remember Jesus' reply to their request? Jesus said, "No, I didn't come to torch people; I came to transform people. No, I'm not going to grant that request."

Do you see the point I'm making? The disciples were fully capable of making inappropriate requests of Jesus. And when the requests were wrong, Jesus said no.

Are you capable of making wrong requests to God? I am. I do. I probably will in the future. Are you capable of making requests of God that are patently materialistic,

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shortsighted, and perhaps immature? I am. And our God loves us too much to say yes to wrong requests. If the request is wrong, God will answer the prayer, but his answer will be “No. And you wouldn’t want God to do anything less.

So, if you have been praying diligently about a matter, and if you have sensed resistance from heaven, do you know what I would challenge you to do? Review your request. Your request may be the problem. Maybe the request is, on your part, an unwillingness to face a real issue. Maybe the request is destructive in ways you don’t understand. Maybe the request is shortsighted. Maybe the request is too small, and God might have something better in mind, and He’s saying no to this one because He has a better plan. But again because of God’s omniscience and because of His great care for you, if the request is wrong, God will say no, at which point you should review the request or modify it or lay it to rest, let it go. If the request is wrong, God will say, “No.

PRAYER REQUEST

“There are two essential truths that should be vocalized and magnified as a church desires to move into revitalization – every person has a part and that one person really can make a difference . . . God gives a spiritual ability to every member of His church and empowers us to serve the body in some important way. One person can make a huge difference as he or she serves God wholeheartedly in the church where he or she belongs . . . Instead of waiting for others to join in, decide today to be **ONE PERSON** who will make a difference.”

MAKE THIS YOUR SPECIFIC PRAYER TODAY: Pray today that God will use YOU to be that ONE CATALYTIC PERSON that can change our church.

PRAISE AND THANKS

Praising God – Who and When?

Who is to praise God?

*“Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD,” states **Psalm 150:6**.*

*“I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips (**Psalm 34:1**).”*

*“Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands” (**Psalm 63:3-4**).*

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“Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD who minister by night in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD” (Psalm 134:1-2).

We cannot embark on the true joy and benefits of praising God unless we have received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. As children of God, He dwells in our bodies through the Holy Spirit. This means that wherever we go, God is to be praised. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** states that *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body.”*

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DAY 32

One of our biggest challenges – The Problem of Unanswered Prayer

If you've been praying and nothing seems to be happening, there are four reasons why and today we are discussing the second reason.

2. If the timing is wrong, God will say, "SLOW"

Parents, have you noticed in your childrearing challenges that second only to the word "No," the words "Not yet" rank as the most awful words in the English language to little children? You're leaving on a 500-mile trip in the car. You are 15 miles from home and you slow for a toll booth. And the kids say, "Are we there yet?" And you say, "Not yet." And they groan and complain, "Oh, no. Come on, Dad, hurry it up!" You think, *it's going to be a long trip.*

Oh, how children hate those words! "Not yet". And guess what, there's a child in all of us, isn't there? The child in all of us still wants God to meet every need, to grant every request, to move every mountain – NOW! Maybe, yesterday. And when our loving Heavenly Father deems it best to say, "Not yet", what is our mature, adult response? "But God, I want it right now, right now! You don't understand how badly I need this right now! Not three years from now, not three months from now, not three weeks from now, not three days from now. Read my lips as I pray to you, God. I want it NOW, NOW, NOW!"

How essential it is for you to understand that often God isn't saying no, He is merely saying, "Not quite yet. Trust me. I know what I'm doing. I have my reasons." God says in **Isaiah 55**, "*My ways are higher than your ways.*" You think that you are as wise as the Creator? It's not even close to being true. You are the creature, I'm the creature, He's the Creator. "*My ways are higher than your ways; my thoughts are higher than your thoughts.*" "In my time", God says; which is one reason why God encouraged people to pray and not lose heart, because sometimes our requests are okay. What you are asking for is good and proper and right. But for reasons known only to God, He simply chooses occasionally to say, "I'll grant it, but in my time."

Please be careful in insisting that you know better than God, just when a prayer request should be granted. God has his reasons for His "Not yet". Among them are such concerns as the possibility of you developing some character, some endurance, some trust, some patience, or some submission, while God is orchestrating the timing of the answer to prayer. As human beings, we tend to be much more concerned about comfort and convenience than we are about building character

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through patiently waiting on and trusting in God's timing. I think God is a whole lot more concerned about character than He is about instant gratification and personal convenience. And sometimes the prayers that are sweetest to have answered are the ones that you have trusted to God for a long, long time.

If the request is wrong, God will say "No." You'd better change the request or let it go. If the timing is wrong, our loving God will say, "Just slow down. Not yet. In my time."

PRAYER REQUEST

1 Corinthians 14:12 says, *"Since you want spiritual gifts very much, seek most of all to have the gifts that help the church grow stronger."*

As we said yesterday, ONE person can make a difference. But today's devotional takes it even further – one person **EMPOWERED AND GIFTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT** can make even more of a difference! Paul's point in this passage is simple – desiring spiritual gifts is never an end unto itself. The whole point of being gifted by God is to use our talents, abilities and gifts to help the church become stronger.

1 Corinthians 14:12 in the Message paraphrase puts it this way – *"Since you're so eager to participate in what God is doing, why don't you concentrate on doing what helps everyone in the church?"*

WE ARE GIFTED FOR A PURPOSE – TO BUILD UP THE CHURCH!!

So, what keeps us from doing this? The devotion mentions to roadblocks:

1. We don't KNOW our gifts
2. We don't USE our gifts

"The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So, pray to the Lord who oversees the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." (Luke 10:2)

PRAY TODAY: Boldly ask God to give us more workers to serve in our church. Boldly ask God to give us more opportunities to reach and help more people. Boldly ask God to help you discover your gifts and boldly make a commitment to use them to build up our church.

PRAISE AND THANKS

Praise and Worship – A Natural Desire

Praise and worship seems to be universal. Have you ever heard of an explorer finding a new tribe or culture that doesn't worship? Worship is a natural instinct

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and a basic need for every person. A simple definition of worship is to regard with great devotion or to honor as a divine being. Take a second to think about what you are most devoted to in this life and ask yourself, *“Is it worthy of my devotion; do I worship a divine being?”*

We don't all worship the same God, but everyone worships something or someone. Since we all worship, we should question the reason for this desire. The most logical conclusion is that we were created by a higher being for the very purpose of worship.

The ongoing quest of man is to find answers to the fundamental questions of human origin, human nature, and human destiny. There is one book that has the answers to all these questions, including our questions about worship. The Bible is the wonderful and mysterious book that God has chosen to communicate with us.

God is the focus of our devotion in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. In **Exodus 20:2-3**, God says, *“I am the LORD your God...You shall have no other gods before me.”* In **Matthew 4:10**, Jesus says, *“Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.”* So, worship is not merely a natural instinct, it's a command from God.

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DAY 33

One of our biggest challenges – The Problem of Unanswered Prayer

If you've been praying and nothing seems to be happening, there are four reasons why and today we are discussing the third reason.

3. If *you* are wrong, God will say, "Grow".

This is a rather sobering statement, isn't it?

If you are wrong. What does that mean? I mean, isn't it a lot easier to point the finger at God for not answering prayer than it is to look in the mirror and to say, "Maybe I'm the problem. It's just easier to point the finger of accusation at God than it is to look in the mirror and take a spiritual inventory and say, "Maybe it's me."

Psalm 66:18 says *if I regard sin in my heart, in other words, if I'm leading a life of disobedience to God, the Lord will not hear my prayers.* **Matthew 5:23-24** warns that if there is relational discord, if there are private wars going on between people, if there are broken friendships, Jesus says it cuts us off from close fellowship with God. He continues in that passage by saying, *"Drop everything and attempt to reconcile those relationships. Then go back to the altar and worship and pray.* If those passages aren't sobering enough, listen to this passage from **1 Peter 3:** *"Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way. Grant them honor so that your prayers won't be hindered.* Now that may explain a lot of things right there. Of course, vice versa is true too. *"Wives, live with your husbands in an understanding way. Honor them so that your prayers won't be hindered.*

God says, *"Why should I honor your requests when you don't honor mine?"* If the truth were known, often the only obstacle standing in the way of you receiving your desperately needed miracle is you. It's you. It's me. The requests aren't always wrong. Most of them are probably right. The timing isn't necessarily the biggest problem. I think God is rather easygoing about some timing matters. He has a heart inclined to meet our requests. But when we're wrong, God says, "Come on, grow, grow. Put that sin away. It's the only thing standing in the way. Change your attitude on this or that. Stop that practice. End that pattern. Reconcile that relationship. Soften up in your spirit. Repent; receive forgiveness. Come on, grow, grow. It's the only thing standing in the way!" And God says, "When you grow, I'll open up the floodgates of power and blessing and pour Myself out to you, but you've got to grow."

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In the book of James, the brother of Jesus says the fervent prayer of a righteous person has great power. But if you want to pull the plug out of the power of prayer, then just dishonor God in some area of your life on a continual basis. The psalmist says if you do that, if you regard iniquity in your heart, if you are leading a sloppy life, your prayers will not be heard.

God is saying that there is power in prayer. When the request is right, when the timing is right, and when you are right, “Let’s go!” He says, *“Just let me release my power in your life; let Me be great in you and through you; free Me to address and meet your needs. Free Me to do that. But you’ve got to grow.”*

PRAYER REQUEST

“LOVE AND UNITY IN THE CHURCH ARE CRITICAL TO REVITALIZATION”.

In **John 13:34-35** Jesus says, *“And so I am giving a new commandment to you now—love each other just as much as I love you. Your strong love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”*

Think about these words: **“A WATCHING WORLD WONDERS IF IT CAN BE LOVED BY A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SEEM TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER”.**

The love we have for one another, the unity and oneness we experience in our church, the genuine care and concern we have for each other either **VALIDATES** or **INVALIDATES** the Gospel.

What does YOUR love – your desire to promote unity – your genuine concern for others at the Joshua Church say to those who don’t know Jesus yet? Does your life and your love attract them to God or cause a stumbling block?

Will you be the ONE person to be a catalyst of love?

Romans 12:18 says, *“If it is possible, AS FAR AS IT DEPENDS ON YOU, live at peace with everyone.”*

Again, will you be the ONE person to be a catalyst of love?

TODAY’S PRAYER: Ask God to help you love your brothers and sisters in Christ as He has loved you.

PRAISE AND THANKS

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Praise and Worship – Why Should We do it?

God alone is worthy of our devotion, praise and worship. He is God, our Creator, and we are commanded to praise and worship Him. **Psalm 96:9** says, *“Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.”* **Psalm 29:2** says, *“Give unto the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”*

A.W. Tozer said, **“Without worship, we go about miserable.”** God doesn’t want us to be miserable — He has a perfect plan for our lives. He has done so many things to show us that He loves us and doesn’t want us to be miserable. He wants us to have hope for a future with Him —He wants us to have eternal life in heaven with Him.

A life of praise and worship fills our deepest needs, and amazingly, it also brings great joy to God. **Zephaniah 3:17** states, *“The LORD your God is with you, He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, He will quiet you with his love, He will rejoice over you with singing.”*

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DAY 34

One of our biggest challenges – The Problem of Unanswered Prayer

If the request is wrong, God will say “No. Thank Him for saying that.

If the timing is wrong, He’ll say “Slow.”

If you are wrong, He will say “Grow.”

But when the timing is right, God will say, “Let’s go!”

I doubt any of us know how badly God wants to change that impossible circumstance in your life. I doubt that many of us understand just how badly He wants to touch that untouchable individual in your life. I’ll bet all of us underestimate how badly God wants to move immovable mountains that stand in our path. When your prayers fit into the plans that God has for you and for this world, you’ll be amazed at how often God will say, “Let’s go,” because you matter to Him and it’s in His heart to meet your needs and grant your requests. It’s more a matter of you letting Him do it.

PRAYER REQUEST

Listen to what God’s Word says:

Some of the believers who went to Antioch from Cyprus and Cyrene also gave their message about the Lord Jesus to some Greeks. And the Lord honored this effort so that large numbers of these Gentiles became believers. When the church at Jerusalem heard what had happened, they sent Barnabas to Antioch to help the new converts. When he arrived and saw the wonderful things God was doing, he was filled with excitement and joy, and encouraged the believers to stay close to the Lord, whatever the cost. (Acts 11:20-23)

I love when it says that Barnabas “*saw the wonderful things God was doing, he was filled with excitement and joy*”. Let me ask you, is this how you feel about our church? When you think about the Joshua Church do the words “*wonderful things*” come to mind? When you come to church on Sabbath are you “*filled with excitement and joy*”?

Today’s devotional is a “checklist” for healthy churches:

1. **EXPECT COMMITMENT**
2. **SHARES JESUS**
3. **WELCOMES CHANGE**
4. **SERVES TOGETHER**
5. **DISCIPLES BELIEVERS**
6. **PRACTICES GENEROSITY**

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7. TRUSTS LEADERS

When you think of our Church, do these 7 components describe it? Ask yourself:

Does the Joshua Church expect commitment?

Does the Joshua Church share Jesus?

Does the Joshua Church welcome change?

Does the Joshua Church serve together?

Does the Joshua Church disciple believers?

Does the Joshua Church practice hospitality?

Does the Joshua Church trust its leaders?

TODAY'S PRAYER: Cry out to God and ask Him to make the Joshua Church a healthy church. Take time to ask God that each of these seven components would be real in our church. Ask God how YOU can help to make our church healthier.

PRAISE AND THANKS

Few things feel better than receiving heartfelt praise and appreciation from someone else. God loves it too. He smiles when we express our adoration, gratitude and praise to Him. What is praise? Praise is thanking God for who and what He is. It means to value Him, to esteem Him. It means bragging on Him: *“God, You are good! There’s no one as good as you!”* Why should I praise God? Because it gets my focus off myself and onto God — so I can talk to Him and not at Him. And, an amazing thing happens when we offer praise and thanksgiving to God. When we give God enjoyment, our own hearts are filled with joy! That’s why praise is essential.

My people, the ones whom I chose and created for My own, will sing My praise.

(Isaiah 43:2)

The people I made especially for myself, were a people custom-made to praise me.

(Isaiah 43:21)

YOU WERE MADE TO PRAISE!

God is great and deserves endless praise; His greatness knows no limit, recognizes no boundary. No one can measure or comprehend His magnificence (Psalm 145:3)

TODAY'S PRAISE ASSIGNMENT: The book of James declares ***“EVERY GOOD AND PERFECT GIFT COMES FROM THE FATHER ABOVE”***. That means that everything – EVERYTHING that is good in your life ultimately comes from God. Today, write down 10 “good things” in your life and take time to praise and thank God for each of them.

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DAY 35

Today's devotional reading comes from **Acts 6:1-7**. In this passage, we see how the early church came together to solve a problem, squelch dissent, enlarge the ministry team and enable their pastors to focus on their calling. As the church came together in one mind, they could work together to resolve an issue that could have divided them and destroyed what God was doing through them. One of the greatest ways the enemy destroys a church is through "rumblings of discontent" and "complaining". Under God's leadership, they took a negative situation and turned it into a positive opportunity. The pastors delegated and empowered the members to do ministry.

But with the believers multiplying rapidly, there were rumblings of discontent. Those who spoke only Greek complained that their widows were being discriminated against, that they were not being given as much food in the daily distribution as the widows who spoke Hebrew. So, the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. "We should spend our time preaching, not administering a feeding program," they said. "Now look around among yourselves, dear brothers, and select seven men, wise and full of the Holy Spirit, who are well thought of by everyone; and we will put them in charge of this business. Then we can spend our time in prayer, preaching, and teaching." This sounded reasonable to the whole assembly, and they elected the following: Stephen (a man unusually full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolaus of Antioch (a Gentile convert to the Jewish faith, who had become a Christian). These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them and laid their hands on them in blessing. God's message was preached in ever-widening circles, and the number of disciples increased vastly in Jerusalem; and many of the Jewish priests were converted too. (Acts 6:1-7 – LB)

And notice the result – **MORE AND MORE PEOPLE CAME TO KNOW JESUS**. When the church is united in purpose, when the church empowers its members for ministry and when the church is prayed up and fired up – **THERE IS NO LIMIT TO WHAT GOD CAN DO**. And the same is true for us at Joshua!

PRAYER REQUEST

Pray that the Joshua Church will have unity. Pray that every member will feel empowered. Ask God to help us to turn negative situations into positive opportunities.

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PRAISE AND THANKS

*Even though the fig trees are all destroyed, and there is neither blossom left nor fruit; though the olive crops all fail, and the fields lie barren; even if the flocks die in the fields and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will be happy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength; he will give me the speed of a deer and bring me safely over the mountains. (**Habakkuk 3:17-19 – LB**)*

When I praise God, it gives me a new perspective. The result: I have strength and stability no matter what happens in life.

PRAISE GOD FOR THE JOY WE HAVE IN HIM NO MATTER WHAT IS GOING ON IN OUR LIVES. THAT IS WHAT TRUE JOY IS ALL ABOUT.