

Monday, March 11th

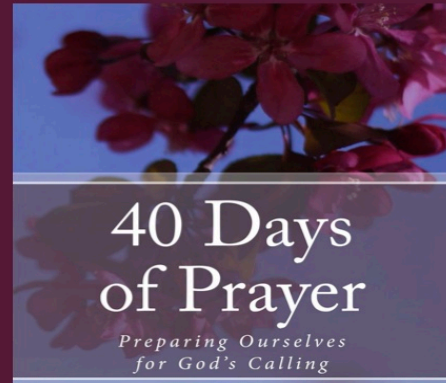
Day 5 – Starting Where You Are


John 3:1–10, John 7:45–52, John 19:38–39

Nicodemus. At first he was curious...he saw something in Jesus worth pursuing. Then he cautiously defended Jesus against some of his Pharisee colleagues. The last picture we see of Nicodemus in the Bible is of an openly supportive disciple, preparing Jesus' body for burial. Nicodemus' conversion to Christ appears to have evolved over time, becoming a disciple step by step. He began with curiosity, became a seeker, and then a full-blown disciple.

Like Nicodemus, we are a work in progress. As we are conformed to the image of Christ, our attitudes and motives shift. You may wonder how pure your motives are as you pray for yourself and your church. You may question if you just want what you want...and not what God wants. Don't let this fear (or awareness) hold you back. Don't wait until your motives are completely pure. Start praying, in humility and faith, and ask God to help your motives and agendas to grow more Christ-like. Start where you are and trust God to move you forward. It is easier to guide a moving ship, than one roped to the dock.

Prayer Thought: Consider asking God to purify your motives for you and for your church, even while you are praying the best you can at this moment.



 Mark Tidsworth

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Tuesday, March 12th

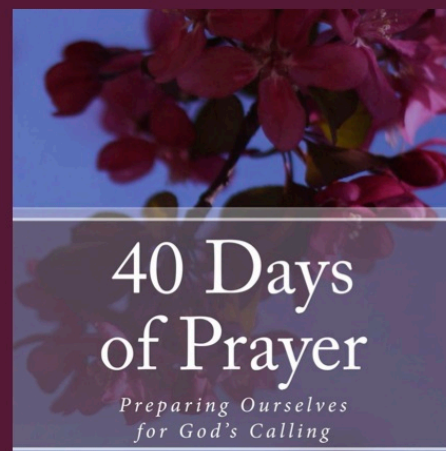
Day 6 – Faith: Small Quantities Will Do


Luke 17:1–6

While Jesus is informing the disciples that forgiving those who wrong us is a requirement of Christian discipleship, the disciples are growing overwhelmed. "How is this humanly possible?" is the question behind their request for more faith. Jesus essentially tells them that only a very small quantity of faith is needed for accomplishing great things in God's kingdom.

If all we need are small quantities, then where do we get our supply? Even this God will supply. God will give you what you need to do what God wants done. So, if you want more faith, ask – seek – knock – and trust that God will give you the amount of faith needed.

Prayer Thought: Consider asking God to increase your faith. The disciples before you felt the need to ask Jesus for more faith...and they were looking the Messiah in the eye. Surely it is a good request for those who have come along 2000 years later.



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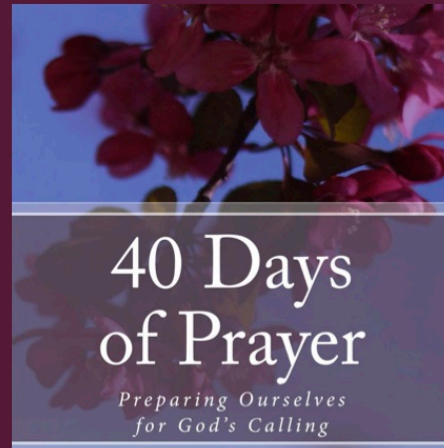
Wednesday, March 13th


Day 7 – Praying As Influence

James 5:13–18

Yes, the prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. But who among us is righteous? (Those who think they are certainly aren't) Righteousness comes from God. Righteous is how God sees us when we are washed clean by the sacrificial love of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, when we are in Christ, we are righteous. So, how does that influence your praying? Are you aware that your praying influences God's movement in your life and in the life of your church?

Prayer Thought: Consider believing your praying will make more difference than you have ever believed before. Pray today with that awareness.



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Thursday, March 14th

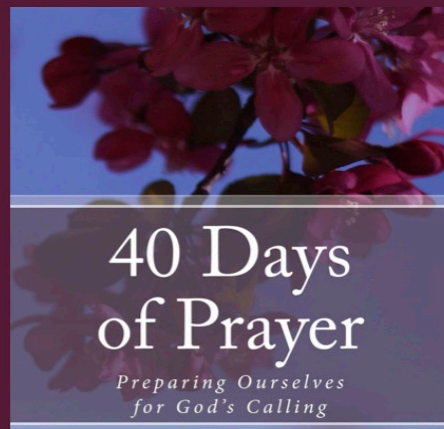
Day 8 – Shalom Practicing


John 14: 25–27

“..my peace I give to you.” Whenever we pray with sincerity and openness, change happens. We follow a God who is on the move; on mission in the world. This awareness can raise anxiety. What will happen when we pray? What will be asked of us as individuals and as a congregation? Will my life become miserable? I hope you are asking these questions. If not, perhaps you don't grasp the ramifications of praying. Praying will bring change.

Is there guidance for us around these questions? Certainly. As Jesus prepared his disciples for his departure, he informed them they would be filled with his peace. They had observed him, sharing life together, as they travelled across the Middle-East landscape. Obviously, Jesus had a source of peace that exceeded human calmness. This is the peace Jesus promised them.

Prayer Thought: Bring your anxiety about praying for God's will to God. Remember Jesus' promise to those first disciples. Ask God for whatever level of peace you need in order to engage prayer with confidence and joy.



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Friday, March 15th

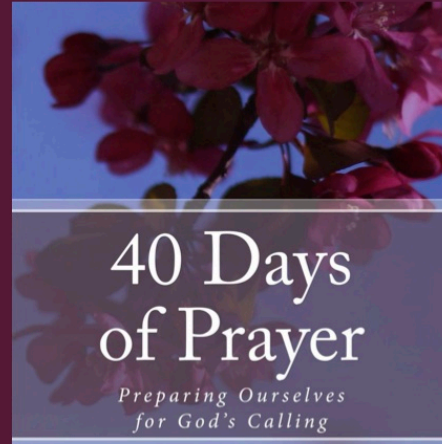
Day 9 – Praying With Confidence


Hebrews 4:14–16

“Been there, done that,” is a saying Jesus can use to describe the human experience. There is no challenge, difficulty or temptation with which Jesus our Brother cannot sympathize. However hard you experience life, or temptation, or challenge to be...Jesus has been there. We follow a Savior who is experienced in the human dilemma.

Jesus has cleared the way through his triumph over sin. So, we can approach God with confidence, boldness and anticipation. God invites us to do so! Pray for yourself, for your loved ones, for the world with gusto. Jesus says, “Bring it on.”

Prayer Thought: Don't hold back. Ask God for what you and your church need in order to fulfill your callings.



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Saturday, March 16th

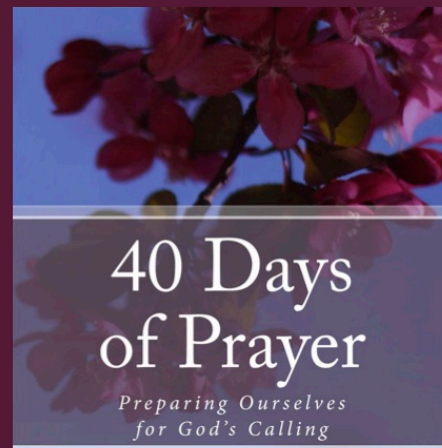
Day 10 – The Prayer of Surrender


Luke 22:39–46

“Father, is there any other way?” Jesus knew that his mission involved laying down his life. His humanity did not want to give up control over his destiny. Who in his/her right mind would want to endure suffering? Jesus knew what was coming, and he did not want to go through it. Father, is there any other way?

Regardless of the anticipated suffering, Jesus was willing to lay down his will for the Father's will. God's way is better. How much do we believe (and practice) that? God's way is better for you as an individual, and for your church community.

Prayer Thought: Ask God what in your life needs the Prayer of Surrender, and then consider praying it in faith. Consider sharing this prayer with another disciple who you trust and would be supportive of your prayer.



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