

90 Days of Intentional Prayer

Prayer Guide and Journal

“Prayer is to the church as fuel is to a fire.”

3 Key Reminders about Prayer

#1. Prayer is Eternally Significant and Powerful (The Nature of Prayer)

What if I told you that life and death hung in the balance of your prayer life? What if I told you that as a direct result of your prayer, the lost can be saved, the sick can be healed, the church can change, and the hand of God can be moved? Would it change the way that you pray?

Unfortunately, because of a misunderstanding of intentional prayer, churches have lost their power and members have lost their desire to seek the face of the living God. We don't know if our prayer works because we don't always see answers to our prayer. We are confused as to why prayer is so important. So, we choose to spend more time in our day on other things rather than to pray. Losing a sense of burden for the lost decreases our urgency to pray. Our theology may push us toward prayer, but our practice often lags behind.

It's time to re-evaluate our understanding of prayer. The attitude of our prayer life should not be mundane or apathetic. The attitude of our prayer life should be one of desperation and expectant dependence upon God. Prayer is an outward expression of our relationship with God. Chuck Lawless says, "The fact that we can communicate with almighty God ought to amaze us, overwhelm us, and drive us to our knees - all at the same time" (The Potential and Power of Prayer, 25). **Our Prayer has eternal significance.** What we pray matters to God!

Because of prayer, the Israelites and the Ninevites were spared from the wrath of God (Exodus 32:11-14, Jonah 3:7-10). Because of Prayer, Hannah was able to conceive a child (1 Samuel 1-2).

Because of prayer, David found forgiveness of sin (Psalm 51). Because of prayer, the apostles were able to continue preaching with boldness and had a renewed zeal to share the gospel (Acts 4:24-31). Because of prayer Paul and Silas were able to walk out of prison doors with a converted jailer (Acts 16:25-34). We could go on with numerous examples of prayer all throughout the Bible. **When God's people pray, God moves!** Because of prayer, this church will experience *new life again*.

2 Questions for you to consider: Do you believe in the power of prayer? Answer this honestly. Most people say yes, of course I do. Here's the second question: **Do you pray *as if* you believe in the power of prayer?** Someone wise once asked, "If every lost person you prayed for became saved, how many people would come to faith in Christ?" It's time to recognize the very simple statement James makes in James 4:2-3. You have not, because you ask not. It's time to come to God and pray, because it is eternally significant in the eyes of God.

Scriptures: Genesis 20:17, 25:21, Numbers 11:2, 1 Samuel 1:27, 2:1, 1 Kings 8:37-39, Chronicles 7:14, Ezra 10:1, Nehemiah 1:4-6, Psalm 37:7, Psalm 38:15, Psalm 40:1, Psalm 62:1,5, Psalm 130:5-6, Isaiah 55:6, Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 11:28, Hebrews 4:16, James 4:8, Colossians 4:2, Acts 12:7-8

#2. Prayer is Steadfast and Unceasing (The Work of Prayer)

Take in the sheer magnitude of the commitment you are making. Prayer is more than uttering mere words to God. It is an expression of **absolute dependence** on God. Prayer is not just in the words we say, but in the heart that we express. Prayer is about Abiding with Christ. Prayer is about leaning into the heart of God. Prayer is about being led by the Spirit.

Oft in the scriptures, we are told to pray without ceasing, to pray continually, and to pray with fervor. This means that everything we do as a body of Christ is done in an attitude of prayer. It means that before consulting with others on a decision, I have brought it to the Lord. It means that when God gives me direction, I can contribute it to my intimate time with God.

Thus, **we can see prayer as a diligent labor**. A labor that sometimes requires deep thought, intentional time, and a proper posture before the Holy God of the universe. When I pray, I recognize that God seeks to bless us with his presence and his provision. In the story Jesus tells us of a father who gives a gift to his son, he says, “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

We also recognize that prayer requires patience. God moves in His own time and in His own way. We can always know that God will answer our prayer, but sometimes He answers in a timing different than ours. In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus gives another parable of the persistent widow, teaching them to always pray and not lose heart. He says, “And will not God give justice to his elect, **who cry to him day and night?** Will he delay over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily...”

Prayer is certainly a command in the scripture. But **prayer is only burdensome to the believer who is not walking daily with God**. So many of us see prayer as a fire escape in difficult times or emergencies. This believer tends to call on God only when he cannot work out a solution to a difficult situation, that is, he has no the option. For this person, prayer is a duty and burdensome. But 1 John 5:3 says, “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and ***His commandments are not burdensome.***”

This is because when we are daily walking with God, spending time in His word and in prayer, the command to pray comes with natural obedience in our lives. **A holy life is the fertile soil for prayer that changes life around them.** Our Prayers are only as powerful as our lives.

Prayer pushes back against Spiritual Warfare. Going through Revitalization will be spiritually challenging, and our enemy is real. His desire is to bore us, deceive us, and destroy our walks with the Lord. But the Bible says that if we take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (the word of God) and **we pray at all times in the Spirit**, we will be able to keep alert and make supplication for all the saints (Ephesians 6:17-20).

Recommended Scripture Reading: Psalm 105:4, Luke 11:2-4, Luke 11:5-13, Romans 12:12, 15:30, 1 Cor. 7:5, 14:15, 2 Cor. 1:1, 13:9, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 1:3-4, 4:6, Colossians 4:2-3, 1 Thess. 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Hebrews 13:18, James 5:13-18.

#3. Prayer is the Key to Church Health and Direction (The Result of Prayer)

What happens when we intentionally and continually pray?

Well, what happened when the New Testament church prayed? When the apostles prayed, they were given direction for who to place in a position of leadership (Acts 1:24-26). When they devoted themselves to prayer, awe came upon every soul and the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved (Acts 2:42,47). When they prayed, they were empowered to minister to the needs of others (Acts 3:1-10). When they prayed, they were filled with boldness to preach the gospel to others (Acts 4:24-31). When they prayed, they set apart workers for the ministry (Acts 6:4-6). When they prayed, they found forgiveness of sin (Acts 8:22). When they prayed, Peter and Cornelius were given direction and vision that brought the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10:9, 30).

If we were to go chapter by chapter in the book of Acts, we would see how pray was the fuel and the key for Church growth, church health, and church direction and vision. If we were to go through each epistle in the New Testament, Paul urged every single church to pray in everything they do.

I cannot emphasize this enough - **if your church is going through Revitalization, you cannot move forward or make any difference without the power of prayer driving the soul of your church.** If prayer is not woven into the fabric of everything you do, you will tragically fail. The necessity lays upon every believer, every church member. Pray, pray, and pray more. Pray at your home, pray in each other's homes, pray at your church during your services, pray in your car, pray in your meetings, and pray without ceasing.

So often in the church today, **prayer is not organic**; it is often forced. We “squeeze” prayer into a church service, offering a quick tidbit because that’s the way we have always worked prayer in our church. A prayer here, a prayer there, often without intentionality and passion. When is the last time in a church service, your church paused to spend 10 minutes in prayer together and prayed for the lost, for mission efforts, for your community, and for the life of your church?

When is the last time the men of God met early on Sunday morning and prayed together as men? When is the last time you met in each other’s homes: just to spend time in prayer together as a body of Christ?

If this church goes through a Revitalization process, and they implement every process, every idea, every event, and every program, but they fail to pray, the church will be completely void of the Holy Spirit’s power.

Prayer is to the church as fuel is to a fire.

Recommended Reading: 1 Kings 18:36-46, Daniel 9:1-27, Matthew 21:13, John 17, Acts 1:14, 24, 2:42, 3:1, 4:23, 31, 6:4, 6:6, 8:15, 8:22, 24, 9:11, 40, 10:2, 4, 9, 30, 31, 11:5, 12:5, 12, 13:3, 14:23, 16:13, 16, 25, 20:36, 21:5, 22:17, 27:29, 28:8, Revelation 5:8, 8:3, 4.

Day 1: Pray for Personal Holiness in your life

Before Revival begins in the community, it has to begin in the church. Before it begins in the church, it has to begin with you.

Pray that God would help your heart be receptive to any change he needs to do in your life. Pray that God would show you whatever sin in your life needs to change. Ask for his forgiveness where you've fallen short. Pray for a heart to serve and love others. Pray that God would use you specifically in the life of this church.

Pray slowly through these scriptures: 2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Timothy 1:9, Psalm 139:23-24, Romans 12:1-2, Colossians 3:1-17

Day 7: Pray for Church Health and Revitalization

Pray through each one of these Healthy Characteristics of a church: Evangelism, Discipleship, Membership, Leadership, Biblical Preaching and Teaching, Biblical Ordinances, Biblical Worship, Biblical Fellowship, Biblical Prayer, Biblical Accountability and Discipline, Biblical Giving, and Biblical Mission.

If Jesus were to walk in and diagnose the health of your church based on these 12 characteristics, what would He say? Pray and ask God to make you a healthy church. Pray that He would have his way in this process. Pray that he would sanctify your church for His glory.

Pray through these scriptures: Matthew 16:17-19, Matthew 21:12-17, Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:15, 5:23, Colossians 1:18, Acts 2:42-47, 1 Peter 5:1-5, Revelation chapters 2 and 3

A Prayer Strategy

ACTS

1. Adoration
2. Confession
3. Thanksgiving
4. Supplication

JOURNALING

Answers to Prayer

Challenges to Prayer

Hearing from God

BOOKS

The Hour that Changes the World - Dick Eastman

Prayer - John Onwuchekwa

Prayer - A.W. Tozer

The Prayer Factor - Sammy Tippet

Power through Prayer - E.M. Bounds

The Potential and Power of Prayer - Chuck Lawless