



21

DAYS OF PRAYER

How to Use this Book



We invite you to dedicate a specific time of your day for 21 days to praying through the prompts, stories, and prayers in this book. There is room for you to take notes and write your own prayers.

This book is split into three focuses, one per week:

Praying God's Names
Praying God's Character
Praying God's Promises

Join in doing this with our church family. You are joining many others that are praying with and for you as you embark on these three weeks of prayer! We encourage you to engage with others as you take these steps. You are not doing this alone.

Deciding to commit 21 days to prayer is powerful, and it can also have challenging moments. Staying connected during this time is a great way to remain encouraged and determined to finish strong!



COM MIT MENT

Writing down your intentions is a powerful way to begin. Prayerfully consider your commitment for these 21 days.

Sensing God's leading, I commit myself to prayer and worship for the next 21 days. During this time, I will concentrate on prayer, engaging in worship, and knowing God and His Word.

Signed _____

Date ____ / ____ / ____

Praying God's Word

Mandy Santos

Welcome to 21 Days of Prayer!

Whether this is your first time joining us or you've done this before, starting a new season with 21 days of prayer is a life-changing practice that will encourage and inspire you as much as it will challenge and correct you in your pursuit to become more like Jesus in your everyday life.

Prayer begins with a posture of humility and by asking the Holy Spirit to align our minds and posture our hearts to receive what God has for us. While we don't know what this new season will bring or the joys and sorrows that lay ahead, we can trust that regardless of our circumstances, the Holy Spirit will give us the courage and grace to face every situation and the confidence that God will be faithful.

Praying God's Word is a form of prayer that reminds us who God is, who we are as human beings created in the image of God, and God's purpose for creation. When we read the Bible, our minds are filled with beauty, truth, and wisdom from above; our hearts are filled with faith, hope, and love.

Through its vast array of stories, poetry, and teachings, the Bible offers insight and understanding into what it means to truly live a life that pleases God— a life that each of us were created to live. As Eugene Peterson once wrote, "We read the Bible in order to live the word of God.*"

We don't want to be a church that merely knows a lot about God. We want to be a church that knows God intimately and seeks to live out God's calling individually and collectively.

As you pray through each passage of the Bible this week, ask God to show you how to apply it. As you pray God's Word, not only will God's presence become more of a reality in your life, but you will become a conduit for His grace to flow through and into the spaces you inhabit and the people surrounding you.

**Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading by Eugene Peterson*

PRACTICE:

Read this passage 3 times aloud, pausing in between each reading. Ask God to make these words your heart's desire. Don't force it; wait for His Spirit to fill you until you can embrace the truth of these words.

Psalm 119:1-8

"Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the Lord. Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts. They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in his paths. You have charged us to keep your commandments carefully. Oh, that my actions would consistently reflect your decrees! Then I will not be ashamed when I compare my life with your commands. As I learn your righteous regulations, I will thank you by living as I should! I will obey your decrees. Please don't give up on me!"

Psalm 119:1-8

Jehovah Jireh (God my Provider)

Gene Quiocho

"And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19

Every person— regardless of the type of need— has needs. Needs show up in many forms such as physical, spiritual, mental, social— the list goes on and on. Sometimes, our "daily" needs move away from being "common" and become "desperate."

These are the moments when it seems that if something doesn't change really soon, we most likely will lose our marriage, most likely lose our home, moments where we will most likely lose our battle with sickness or our mental stability, or maybe moments where we are looking at losing our children to addiction.

Regardless of the situations, our needs, whether common or desperate, require provision.

In Genesis 22:14, God reveals Himself to Abraham as the name "Jehovah Jireh." Abraham is obeying God by offering his only son Isaac on the altar of sacrifice. As we read the story, it is clear that Isaac represents and encompasses all of the promises of God for Abraham, yet God was requiring Abraham to sacrifice his son.

Even though it was painful, Abraham took a step to obey. Just before he was about to bring the knife down God in sacrificing Isaac, God stops Abraham. Instead of using Isaac as a sacrifice,

God provides a ram in his place. Because God intervened, Abraham called the place Jehovah Jireh (The Lord Will Provide).

Today, God has the ability to supply all of your needs. He has the ability to reveal Himself to you as Jehovah Jireh– the God that provides. Whatever your needs are, continue to obey God and trust Him and believe that you too, like Abraham, can rename your present location, circumstance, or season after Jehovah Jireh!

As you pray, consider how God has provided for you in the past as you present today's needs before Him.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for the needs of those in your life, that they would see God as their provider.

CHURCH: Pray that God would meet the needs of our church and of the Church at large.

CITY: Pray for God to open our eyes to our own resources, how He can use them to provide for those in our community.

Adonai (Lord)

Stacie Wood

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Who is driving your life?

Adonai. This name means "Master" or "Lord." God, our Adonai, is worthy and wise enough to lead and guide our lives as we trust in Him and let Him drive. Consider the top country pop song of 2005, "Jesus Take the Wheel." In this song, Carrie Underwood sings the story of a single mom who almost crashes her car and her life. And in a prayer of desperation, she cries out for Jesus to save her and become the driving force in her life.

That's part of what it means to let Jesus be Lord, Adonai. It is a conscious, committed choice to put Jesus in the driver's seat and TRUST him to lead your life and direct your paths.

As we reflect on our own lives, most of our crashes (spiritual, moral, relational, financial, etc.) are the result of driving our own lives apart from God.

Today, as you pray, picture yourself giving Jesus the steering wheel of your life and then boldly declare that you will TRUST Him to lead and guide you as you follow Him as Lord, Adonai.

Consider these questions:

How can learning about this aspect of God help me pray and submit my life to Him? What does the Bible teach me about Him, and why is that important to how I pray? Why is it important to my prayer/devotional/personal life to know this about God?

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for those in your circle to have a deeper trust in Christ and a willingness to let be their Adonai.

CHURCH: Jesus is the Head of the Church! Pray for our church to have a renewed passion for His kingdom to Come and His will to be done.

CITY: Pray for revival to break out in our city and that more and more people would cry out in desperation for Jesus to save them and become the driving force in their lives.

El Roi (The God Who Sees Me)

Paul McGovern

"She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: 'You are the God who sees me,' for she said, 'I have now seen the One who sees me.'"

Genesis 16:13

Tucked away in Genesis 16 is a beautiful story about the very personal way God sees and wants to interact with us. Hagar, our main character here, was a slave. She had no rights and no authority to make her own choices. She lived at the whims of her masters, Sarai and Abram. Everyday, life was decided FOR her.

That's never an ideal position, but sometimes it can go from bad to intolerable. Her masters weren't just assigning her chores for the day or telling her what to eat; they planned to use her as a surrogate mother for their child. Sarai was unable to conceive, so it was decided that Hagar would bear Abram's child on their behalf.

When Hagar conceived, her plight intensified. Hagar began to despise Sarai, and Sarai began to mistreat Hagar. The mistreatment was so severe, in fact, that Hagar ran away. Imagine how horrible the oppression would've had to have been for a pregnant woman with no resources to run away into a desert! Hagar had decided that the risk of death was a better option than the certainty of her current suffering.

It was there that God found her, comforted her with a promise, and reminded her that He SEES her. While He didn't remove her from her very challenging circumstances, He did remind her that He was with her in the midst of them.

When Hagar experienced the tender, personal compassion of God, she gave Him the name "El Roi", meaning "You are the God who sees me." I love this. This is the first time in the Bible that God is given a personal name, and isn't it amazing that it came from a woman who lived on the margins of society? A woman who was overlooked. Beaten down. Struggling internally and externally with her life. Can you relate to her?

Whatever situation you're facing today, know that our God is the God who SEES you. You are not alone in your struggle. Even if dying in a desert feels like a better option than your current circumstances, He can meet you, even there. Call out to Him today.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Who in your circle of influence needs to be reminded that God SEES them and is with them in their struggle? What is something personal you could do today to show them love?

CHURCH: Thank God for His personal care and intimate knowledge of everything that is going on in our church— both with individual lives and organizationally. He SEES and it matters to Him. Our God is not far off; He is personal.

CITY: Pray for the people in our city who feel overlooked and marginalized. Pray that they would come to know El Roi, the God who SEES them.

The Prince of Peace

Tim Castagna

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7

For a lot of us, the last two years have been some of the most challenging, stressful, and anxious years of our lives. I never considered myself an anxious person before, yet here I found myself: melting in my chair at the sight of my day's Google calendar.

I've been craving this kind of peace that Paul talks about in his letter to the Philippians— "Peace which exceeds anything we understand"— yet it seems so elusive.

When I look back at Jesus' last day before being crucified (Matthew 26), I can see how much He agonized over what was to come. He was sweating blood and begging God the Father to relieve Him of the foreboding task. It doesn't seem like He was experiencing peace that surpasses all understanding.

There's obviously no comparison between our 21st-century first-world-problems and an impending crucifixion. But I have to say, I do find relief and comfort in knowing that even Jesus, the Prince of peace Himself (Isaiah 9:6), wasn't beyond the stress and anguish we feel.

The difference isn't in His experience; it's in His response. In the midst of Jesus' agonizing pain, the Father did not relieve Him of His pain or fate. Instead, He sent an angel in order to strengthen Jesus.

Maybe like me, you've found your default reaction to most uncomfortable situations is to escape. If I can find an exit from any level of discomfort, I'll take it. I'll beg God: "Please relieve me of this!" But I've come to realize those spaces in the tensions of life are often where God is most at work in us. That desire to escape the discomfort might also be "escaping" me from the miraculous works and provision of God in my life.

The invitation from Paul in Philippians 4 is not an immediate escape from our anxious thoughts but instead an invitation to bring God into our frustrations, stresses, and discomforts, to share with Him in the tensions of our lives, and to allow Him to bring peace as He strengthens us from within.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for your friends / family who need to invite the peace of God in their lives.

CHURCH: Pray for the church to be peacemakers and bridge builders in our community.

CITY: Pray peace over our city during these divided times.

Abba Father

Sarah Rogers

"For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'"

Romans 8:15

As important as it is that we understand God as a Father, it is also, for most of us, complicated. We tend to view fatherhood through the lens of our personal experience. Some of us had fathers who were absent, some had fathers who were abusive, and even those of us who had present, loving fathers didn't have one that was perfect.

We are broken people being raised by (and raising) other broken people. Thank God for the way He redeems.

Seeing God as a perfect Father encompasses a wide range of qualities— He is kind, He disciplines in love, He is just and good, and He is present. But we need to also understand Him as "Abba." It's an Aramaic term, one that denotes an intimate, close, comforting, and obedient relationship. It is familial. It is relational. It is a gift to us.

Whatever our parentage, we need to understand God as our very personally involved Father. We need Him in a way no earthly father, however good or bad, could satisfy. And we are invited, through God's great love for us, into a Father-child relationship with the Creator of the whole world.

He doesn't intend for us to go through life alone.

He doesn't intend that we'd meet all of our own relational needs. He intends that we would cry out to Him and that like a perfect Father, He'd meet us with all that we didn't even know to request. He is that good.

When we pray, we can approach Him as Father, and we can cry out for His help, His comfort, and His guidance, knowing that He loves us as His children.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for someone in your circle or community that could use God's presence as a Father right now.

CHURCH: Pray that our church would seek closeness with God as Abba Father both as individuals and as a congregation.

CITY: Pray for the fatherless in our city, and pray for our church to care for them with the heart of Abba, God.

Reflection

Prayer is a practice, a discipline, and a means of communication between God and His people.

Take a few minutes of silence to listen for God's voice and to reflect on this past week.

Answer these questions prayerfully:

How did your perspective on God grow and change this week as you prayed through some of His names?

How did the practice of daily prayer impact your everyday life?

If you are spending time in worship, how has it been? Easy? Difficult? Have you wanted to give up? Pay attention to the moments where you feel opposition, for God can meet you there. Where we are weak, He shows up in strength.

Meditate on this verse as we close out the first week of prayer and worship:

"But may all who search for you be filled with joy and gladness in you. May those who love your salvation repeatedly shout, 'The Lord is great!'"

Psalms 40:16

Praying with Confidence

As we continue this practice of prayer, fasting, praying God's Word, we are going to continue to focus on Him. We began by learning some of the ways we can address God, and we will move into observing His character.

The more God becomes our filter and our focus, the more aligned our prayers are with Him. The more we understand who He is and how He works, the more drawn we are into His presence.

When we study and pray through what the Bible says about God, it should increase our awe of Him. He is far above and beyond anything we could imagine. And yet, at the same time that He is perfect and beyond us, He has also given us the opportunity to come to Him with boldness.

We can pray in confidence that God will hear, that He cares, and that He will speak and move. The all-powerful God invites us to approach Him. If we ponder this phenomenon for any amount of time, gratitude begins to overflow.

When we pray, especially as we invite God's Word into our prayers, we can know that there is power in our words. God has given us His Spirit, and that Spirit is with us when we pray. He has given us the ability to speak life and death over situations.

And we should never forget to whom we are praying. He holds all power to redeem, bring life, make things right, and move mountains should they need moving.

This is not a time for weak words. Be encouraged to pray bold prayers. Lift your head, and ask God for the confidence you need to pray for His Kingdom to come in your life, in our church, in our city, and in the world.

PRACTICE:

Read this passage 3 times aloud, pausing in between each reading. Ask God to make these words sink into your heart. Don't force it; wait for His Spirit to fill you until you can embrace the truth of these words.

"So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most."

Hebrews 4:14-16

God is Redemptive

Filipe Santos

"Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! His faithful love endures forever. Has the LORD redeemed you? Then speak out!"

Psalm 107:1

One of the greatest characteristics of God is the fact that He is a Redeemer. To redeem is to reclaim a person or a thing. In the Bible, it was also defined as the act of buying the freedom of a slave by paying a ransom.

This one truth about who God is can drastically transform the way we see our past and the way we pray today. The Scriptures teach us that though we were designed to live in full freedom as sons and daughters of God, our sins have broken that relationship - earning us eternal separation from God as our Father.

However, the scriptures also describe God as being abundant in redemption (Psalm 130:7), which was primarily displayed when Jesus took our sins upon Himself and gave us back our rights as children of God.

God is therefore able to take all our brokenness - our own sins and the ones committed against us - and leverage it for good. He redeems it.

So, whether it is your first time or hundredth time, take a few minutes today to acknowledge to God out loud the areas that you desire Him to redeem in your life.

A broken relationship, a sinful habit, a wound from the past,

an addiction that has brought shame to you– whatever comes to mind, ask Him to free you from it and redeem it for good.

God not only wants to reclaim you as His child, but He also wants to take your pain, your sins, your sorrows, and mistakes and redeem them - bringing good out of each one of them.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for God’s redemptive work in the lives of those in your circle. Be specific and ask Him to free them from their past and to leverage all that’s happened to them for His purposes.

CHURCH: Pray Psalm 107:1 over our church - that we would live with deep gratitude for what God has done and boldly tell others that He is a Redeemer.

CITY: Pray that those who live in slavery to sin in our region would turn back to God and allow them to reclaim them as His children - beloved by Him.

God is Wise & All-Knowing

Kendall Hibiske

"If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do. Believers who are poor have something to boast about, for God has honored them."

James 1:5-9

Have you ever stood at a fork in the road and needed God's wisdom to know which path to take? I have.

I needed to make an important decision once, and I told God I wouldn't take one step until He told me exactly what to do.

As you can imagine, it didn't go very well. He was not as specific as I wanted Him to be. I became really frustrated by this because I truly did want to please God and make the right decision.

We'd often like to know God's instructions before we take a step so that we'll be sure to get it right. Yet, often that's not how it works because our relationship with God is just that— a relationship. I can ask God for guidance and wisdom at the outset, but it's often WHILE I am moving that the way becomes more clear.

Faith is what helps me move forward with Him.

If I see all the right places to step before I start moving, then it doesn't require much faith on my part, does it?

Remember that God's wisdom doesn't make us all-knowing. It's not a spotlight to the future; it's more like a lamp to guide our next steps.

There is an access point between you and God's wisdom, and that access point is faith. You can pray and choose to trust in the goodness of God. Choose to believe that, as He has promised (Psalm 32:8-9, 37:23-24; Prov 3:5-6), He will walk beside you and provide you with the wisdom you need as you go.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Model the way in faith for those around you, be open about not knowing the answers but trusting God to guide you. This way, not only do you experience God walking with you as you figure it out, but others get to see your authenticity as well and be encouraged in their own journey.

CHURCH: Pray for guidance in how you can step out in greater levels of faith with your community. Giving, serving and being connected to others in groups are all areas where God may invite us to trust him at greater levels. God has promised to continue to give wisdom and guide your steps as you trust in Him.

CITY: Pray for to find new and innovative ways to stand in the gap for our city. Pray for our church to continue moving in cooperation with the wisdom of God to meet needs and love those around us.

God is Faithful to Forgive

Queen Quiocho

"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

Isaiah 43:25

There was a point in my life around my decision to follow Christ that I struggled with questions like

"Does God forgive?"

"Will he forgive me?"

"Is true forgiveness possible?"

Maybe you struggle with these, too. This line of questioning was something that weighed on me heavily. I felt that even though I was making this incredible decision to follow Him, sooner or later God was going to see the true and real me. He was going to figure me out– the "me" that had been hiding for a while behind some really ugly feelings and mean-spirited thoughts. I thought God could love me but not forgive me.

That is how we as humans process forgiveness. We tend to compare God's character with ours. We think because we compartmentalize what gets on the forgiveness line first, next, and later that God forgives us this way, too. Not so!

When we approach forgiveness, it's natural for us to selectively forgive someone based on an incident. And this can influence the way we assume God forgives us.

In reality, God is a faithful God so His forgiveness is not displayed on a case-by-case basis, but simply because it is a part of His character. Rather than being withheld, God's forgiveness is given freely.

As you process through this, trust that God not only loves you, but also He is near and faithful to forgive you, no matter what you have done.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for your friends and loved ones to forgive as Christ has forgiven you.

CHURCH: Pray for the church, that we will model the same forgiveness that we have received.

CITY: Pray for the city to begin to see and receive the forgiveness of God in every believer that they meet.

God is Just & Righteous

Karen McGovern

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' ...

And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'

Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?'

"And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.'"

Mathew 25:34-45

We want the oppressor punished, the weak and innocent protected. Human beings being sold, the elderly scammed for money, the abusers getting off scot free or with a slap on the wrist– it all makes us cry out, "We want justice!"

Do you know that our sense of justice comes from God? We are made in His image, and like us, He hates it when the innocent

are falsely accused and the guilty go free (see Prov. 17:15) and when people do nothing about the needs around them. He hates injustice because He loves every person so much. Jesus takes it personally when injustice occurs.

In Matthew 25, Jesus rolls out the heavenly welcome mat to the ones who show compassion, kindness, and generosity to those who are hurting, while those who refuse to help are punished.

I don't know why injustice and suffering still happens. It doesn't seem fair. It would be great if God would just zap it all away.

Though He doesn't, I do know from His Word and by experience that He is a fair and just God, that I can trust Him in what I don't understand. And I am confident that one day He will make all things right, that we will see perfect justice carried out by a merciful God who simply cannot be unjust.

Until that day, I will do my best to be like him and to practice justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with my God (Micah 6:8).

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for someone in your life who is lonely or hurting, and ask God how you can serve them.

CHURCH: Pray that we as a church will be carriers of God's goodness and justice in practical ways to our community.

CITY: Pray that Christians would rise up to positions of leadership in our city, that just laws would be enacted and programs would help those in need.

God is Love

Steven Zeier

"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever!"

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

In a culture that throws the word "love" around, using it in so many different facets, it can be confusing for our brains to understand the difference between the love for my job, my house, and my local coffee shop compared to the love for my friends, my kids, and my spouse.

Even though it is the same word coming out of our mouths, when we say we "love" something, it can mean a wide range of things.

But Jesus says clearly, "For the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart." This leads us to understand that the value we place on the word "love" can and should be significant.

Personally, I think about how often I use the word "love" in contexts where it doesn't hold equal weight to how much God loves us. This leads me to examine this well known passage on "love" from 1 Corinthians 13.

These words are often repeated in weddings as a charge for the bride and groom to love each other selflessly. As a husband, I

began to examine whether or not I was loving my beautiful wife the way Christ loves the Church. I know that I clearly fall short of the expectation set in this passage. However, God and His love do not ever fall short. He loves us with a depth that is hard to comprehend. He is love in the fullest sense.

As you read this passage, replace the word “love” with God. Reflect on that and then do the same thing but with your own name. Does it carry the same weight? Are there areas that you have to work on?

We all have our work cut out for us in this area, but the encouraging piece is that God doesn’t have any area to work on. As we ponder how perfect His love is for us, I can’t help but be captivated by it. Be encouraged that the God who created you is madly in love with you!

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray that those around you could experience God’s love personally.

CHURCH: Pray that our Church would love like this passage.

CITY: Pray for our City to encounter the life-changing difference of God’s perfect love in contrast to what the culture describes love to be.

Reflection

Prayer is a practice, a discipline, and a means of communication between God and His people.

Take a few minutes of silence to listen for God's voice and to reflect on this past week.

Answer these questions prayerfully:

What has God revealed to you this week about Himself?

Where is God challenging you through this practice of prayer?

How can focusing on God’s character help you pray more effective prayers?

Meditate on this verse as we close out the second week of prayer and worship:

*“Taste and see that the Lord is good.
Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him!”
Psalm 34:8*

Praying Constantly

We are about to enter into the final week in our 21 days of prayer and fasting. However this has gone for you personally, you can trust and know that God has been at work.

There is fruit when we pray— both in our lives and in the situations around us. God is on the move, and He invites us to participate as we pray both individually and as a community. Be encouraged, and keep going.

Our hope is that you become more and more equipped to pray powerful prayers as we couple our words with learning about and declaring God's names, character, and now promises. This does not have to end after 21 days. This is a practice that you can carry into the rest of the year and the rest of your life.

Praying God's Word is available to every believer, and knowing God allows us to see ourselves, our world, and our circumstances more rightly. It helps us keep our focus where it belongs. Knowing to Whom we pray can and should give us more peace, confidence, and hope.

Prayer is a discipline that multiplies. The more we practice, the more familiar we become. It does not have to be confined to one time of day, but setting aside time for it will open the door for continual communication with God throughout our days.

We can pray aloud in the car, in our hearts before a big meeting,

and over our families before bed. We can pray rhythmic prayers over our food and sporadic prayers over a friend in need. God is always available.

The more we pray, the more God aligns our hearts with His. The more we pray, the more we remember where our focus should be. And the more we pray equipped with knowledge of God and the power of His word, the dynamic and deep our spiritual growth will be.

Invite the practice of prayer into your life, and let it grow. Receive the invitation to communicate with God all throughout your day, in every situation. Let God turn this discipline into a characteristic of your life.

PRAY:

Read this passage 3 times aloud, pausing in between each reading. Ask God to deepen your practice of prayer. Don't force it; wait for His Spirit to fill you until you can embrace the truth of these words.

"Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

God will strengthen us when we are weak

Paul McGovern

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand."

Isaiah 41:10

What do you do when you feel weak and overwhelmed?

For most of my adult life, Isaiah 41:10 has been my survival verse. It started in college, especially when it was time to take a test. Tests had a way of stressing me out and making me feel anxious.

One of the ways God helped during those difficult college days was by helping me develop this coping mechanism: with every test, I would stop and remember this promise of His strength and help, I would pray for God to strengthen and help me, and then I would do the best I could together with God.

Though my college days are long gone, I still have lots of tests in my life, and my guess is so do you. To this day, Isaiah 41:10 has become a promise I cling to on days I feel weak and overwhelmed.

Whenever I am facing a test or challenge in my marriage, parenting, work, or ministry, I can return to this: God promises to be with me, to strengthen me when I feel weak, and to help me when I'm overwhelmed.

Whatever tests you are facing today, be reminded that you can take these moments to cling to God's promise to meet you with His own strength.

You can stop and remember, pray for help and strength, and trust that God will be with you.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: It's good to pray for God's help and strength for someone in your circle who is discouraged and struggling. Even better— go to them, share the promise of this verse, and pray for them in person.

CHURCH: Pray that God would help NCC walk in faith and not fear. Pray that God would guard our church against discouragement and grant us the strength and help us to do His will His way.

CITY: Pray that God would grant us favor in the eyes of the city and for a heart of courage and boldness as we trust God to help us serve our city with the love of Christ.

God will be with us

Grace Tran

"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

Hebrews 13:5

If we're honest, many of us have a constant inner nagging: an insatiable desire for more.

Perhaps we see people's travels on social media ("Why can't I be there?"), read about someone's achievement in the news ("What am I doing with my life?"), or check our financial apps way too often ("How can I be making more?").

Most of us already know that it's better to be grateful. And yet... we so easily go back to still wanting more.

So what is driving our discontent?

Often we don't realize when we're living out of some false beliefs: that we're on our own, that our lives are up to us, and the only person we can count on is ourselves.

When we couple our instinctual desire to survive with fear-inducing beliefs, we turn to money, our career, experiences, and countless other things for security. But those things aren't at the root of the problem. The main issue is that we keep forgetting that we are not on our own.

As someone who grew up very independently, I constantly have

to remind myself that I am not alone, it's not all up to me, and in fact, God is not just WITH me— He is beside me, within me, and goes before me to prepare the way ahead.

This is why another name for God is “Jehovah-jireh,” which is translated to “The Lord will provide” (Genesis 22:14). He knows what's ahead, He will provide what He knows is best for you, and not only that, but the God of the whole universe is always with you, and He'll never leave your side.

Let's pray:

God, I'm sorry for the times I forget that you're with me, and the times when I doubt your goodness. I pray you'd help me to grow more aware of your presence every day. Help me to trust that you really do have the best in store for me. I release my anxieties to you and trust in you, my Jehovah-Jireh, my Provider. Amen.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Ask God to bring someone to mind who may need some encouragement, and send them a prayer or an encouraging verse. How could you help remind them of God's presence today?

CHURCH: Invite God's presence into NCC, and pray that everyone who steps through our doors (or watches our YouTube) would find comfort in knowing He is with them.

CITY: Ask God to radically encounter those who are far from Him throughout our local communities, and to use people with willing hearts as conduits of His truth and love!

God will order our steps

David Hibiske

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Have you ever been lost in the woods? (Some of you may be thinking, "I don't do woods!")

I have always loved being in the woods. However, I have this memory as an elementary school kid being lost in the woods with my friends. We had no idea where we were and no clue which direction to move in. I still remember the anxiety and despair I felt as a young boy (there may or may not have been a "fear tear" in my eye).

Like a child lost in the woods, we can sometimes feel lost in life. Lost in how to pay the bills, lost in how to save my marriage, lost in the direction for my career, and lost in grief from a loss.

When we find ourselves in this place, there are all kinds of emotions that flood in and cause anxiety, fear, and confusion.

I wonder where you are feeling lost today?

When we feel lost, we have a decision to make. We can ask ourselves: will I go at it alone, or will I look to God for direction?

He promises to guide us, to give us wisdom when we ask, and to order our steps. The only thing we need to do (which isn't always easy) is to trust and submit to Him. He promises when we look to Him to make our paths straight.

Take time today to pray, asking God where to trust Him and pray His promise of direction over your situation.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Pray for someone in your relationship circle who is in need of direction.

CHURCH: Pray for our church leadership to hear clearly from God and trust Him greatly for our future direction.

CITY: Pray for the lost in our city to look to God and to discover a relationship with Him.

God will give us His Spirit

Billy Rogers

"But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. And when he comes, He will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.

When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever He receives from me.'"
John 15:7-8; 13-15

This conversation between Jesus and the disciples comes after He tells them that He will be leaving and returning to His Father in heaven. The disciples are distraught, confused, and somewhat angry at the idea of Jesus abandoning them.

But in His gentle yet commanding voice, Jesus corrects their thinking by telling them that unless he goes back to his Father, the Holy Spirit, or "the Advocate," would not be sent. The word for advocate in the Greek is **paraclete, which means comforter, encourager, or counselor. Jesus is telling the disciples and He is telling us that we can live in daily communion and relationship with His very Spirit.**

This Spirit is our Comforter, our Counselor, our Encourager. This Spirit leads us into all truth and convicts us of sin. This Holy Spirit tells us whatever He receives from Jesus Himself.

I often wonder what it would be like to have Jesus Himself present with me in my day-to-day experience of life. In this

passage, Jesus literally tells us that daily life with His Spirit is better than life with “in-the-flesh” Jesus would be.

This is an invitation to us today, to experience and to encounter a rich and interactive relationship with the Holy Spirit.

This invitation is not just a Sunday morning experience but a Sunday morning reality. This is the kind of constant interaction that helps me become more like Jesus as I lead my family, or as I love my kids, or as I care for my neighbors. This is the kind of relationship that has the potential to change our city when the people of God live in communion with the Spirit of God and become the hands and feet of God.

So may we become people who recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in our day to day lives.

May we become so in tune with the Spirit that we hear His whispers. May we take Jesus at His word and believe that it is better that He went back to the Father so we could have a relationship with the Holy Spirit. May we live in the constant guidance of our Comforter, Counselor, and Encourager.

And may the world see us being the hands and feet of Jesus as we live filled with the power and presence of His Holy Spirit.

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Invite the Holy Spirit into your family, your marriage, your home, your workplace. Simply pause and say: “Come Holy Spirit. You are welcome here.”

CHURCH: Pray that our church would be a group of people who hear the voice of the Holy Spirit and respond to His promptings.

CITY: Pray that the Holy Spirit would send revival to the area and that He would start with us

God made us on purpose with purpose

Stacie Wood

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Ephesians 2:10

You are God's workmanship. His masterpiece. His intricate handiwork, marked with His seal of approval. After crafting you together, He stepped back and declared, "This is very good!"

He didn't just shape your nose and determine the color of your hair; He also gave life to your personality and knitted together your passions and giftedness.

You were created by a master designer, just the way He wanted. You may have been a surprise to your mother. Your father may have acted like he didn't want you. But, let me be clear, you were no mistake.

God made you ON purpose WITH purpose.

You don't have to be in vocational ministry to live on mission for God. He has good works prepared for you to do in every sphere of influence where you are.

Your family is your mission. Your neighborhood is your mission. And, certainly, your job is your mission.

- Nehemiah was a government official.
- Boaz was a land-owner and entrepreneur.
- Lydia was a high-end fashion designer.
- Paul could have been a supplier for REI with his tent-making skills.

- David was a shepherd by trade but a musician at heart.
- Peter, James, John, and Andrew were all small business owners.
- Ruth was poor and struggled every day just to make ends meet.
- Joseph was a craftsman.

Many different walks of life are represented in these stories, but the thread woven through each one is that God used their lives right where they were.

You don't have to work for the Church to build the Kingdom. If you are a follower of Jesus, the Spirit of God lives in you, and you carry His name everywhere you go. You carry His name to the board room. You carry His name in a sales meeting. You carry His name to a service call. And you carry His name to your dining table at home.

You were created ON purpose WITH purpose. How can you shine light today?

PRAY:

CIRCLE: Ask God how He can use your personality, experience, passions, and talents to more intentionally serve the people in your circle of influence.

CHURCH: Ask God how He can use your personality, experience, passions, and talents to more intentionally build His Church.

CITY: Ask God how He can use your personality, experience, passions, and talents to more intentionally invest in our city.

Reflection

Prayer is a practice, a discipline, and a means of communication between God and His people.

Take a few minutes of silence to listen for God's voice and to reflect on this past week.

Answer these questions prayerfully:

What will you remember most about God after praying through His names, His character, and His promises?

What will your practice of prayer look like moving forward?

Where did you see God move in your life as a result of these last 21 days?

Meditate on this verse as we close out the last week of prayer and worship:

"I will bless the Lord who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me. I know the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me."

Psalms 16:7-8

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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21 DAYS OF PRAYER

A resource from

 **ECHO.CHURCH**