

*Eastern North Carolina
Church of God*

21 DAYS OF

PRAYER & FASTING

January 4-24, 2021

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21 Days of Prayer and Fasting Guide 2021

— PREFACE —

This is a guide to enrich your participation in the 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting campaign from January 4-24, 2021. We hope you will fast and pray for spiritual growth and development in your walk with God. The goal during this time of spiritual consecration is to have a personal solemn assembly in God's presence.

This prayer guide will provide a devotional with scripture and prayer for each day of the campaign. These devotionals are designed to fix your focus on God and what He has to say to us through His Word - thoughts that will challenge or encourage. May God increase your own hunger for His presence and power to such a degree that you will make every adjustment required to experience a sacred time alone with God. I'm praying that God will increase your faith to believe Him for all He wants to do in your life.

There are daily suggestions for prayer. Prayer is a relationship with the Creator of the universe. Jesus wants you to spend time getting to know Him and His purposes and His ways as you pray. He wants to speak to you about your life and your part in His plan for world redemption. You will notice that each day there is a suggested prayer. This is only provided to help you start your personal prayer concerning the focus theme for that day.

Fasting may be a new discipline for you. If so, do some research or ask someone about fasting. That may include denying yourself food, or it could include a fast from television or social media for a season. Fasting heightens your hunger for God and your focus on Him, but it also provides you with additional time to pray. Fasting and prayer go together.

Bishop Dennis Page

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting Guide 2021

— COVID-19 PANDEMIC REVIEW —

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused all of us to adapt to many changes as it relates to our normal routine and schedule. This past year has been challenging to say the least. However, on a positive note, it has created space in our life to evaluate our priorities, to determine what things in life are most important, to have the freedom to orchestrate change, to venture down untrodden paths and to get the church outside the building to reach the Harvest.

Our main goal has been to provide positive leadership, to put our best foot forward and to use Godly wisdom to operate and function appropriately. I am so proud of the leadership of Eastern North Carolina and how you have worked so hard to provide strong spiritual leadership and a message of Hope. It is our responsibility to lead by example in our churches and communities. The level of creativity to minister under social restriction and mandates has propelled the Gospel message outside the four walls of the church building in unprecedented ways to reach untold thousands.

THE GOOD NEWS! During times of uncertainty, we can rely on God to calm our anxiety, open up a new path and to give us hope that we can survive whatever the world throws at us.

“And your life will be brighter than the noonday; its darkness will be like the morning. And you will feel secure, because there is hope; you will look around and take your rest in security.” Job 11:17-19

WHAT NOW? We realize that life and ministry after the COVID-19 pandemic will never look exactly the same. How do we relaunch, recover or return? How can we have a NEW BEGINNING IN 2021? I really like what Andy Stanley stated, “We are not returning back, we are starting over!” For many churches and individuals, we are starting over! The way we do church will never be the same. However, as we continue to encourage families to return to gathering in our church buildings, may God help us never to lose the determination to continue to use every resource and means to spread the love and hope of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul said, “... I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.” 1 Corinthians 9: 22-23 (ESV)

“... I do everything I can to win everyone I possibly can.” (verse 22 CEV)

WHAT'S IN THE FUTURE? I hope that this time of “21 Days of Prayer and Fasting” will empower us to minister and relaunch in a Pandemic Culture. In addition to this prayer emphasis, we want to host several zoom sessions to discuss how to navigate through the lifting of mandates and restrictions and to pray for wisdom and direction in the Holy Spirit. We are a “Church On Mission” and ready to GO REACH an end-time Harvest.

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 1 - A NEW BEGINNING

*“Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old.
V.19 – Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not
know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”
Isaiah 43:18-19 (NKJV)*

Another translation of this verse states:

*“Forget what happened long ago! Don’t think about the past. V.19 – I am
creating something new. There it is! Do you see it? I have put roads in deserts,
streams in thirsty lands.”*

Chapter 43 refers mainly to the promise of deliverance for Israel from Babylon. The people of God were suffering a long and painful captivity and the main objective here is to comfort them with the assurances of deliverance, victory, change and a future of hope.

In the previous chapter, God rebuked the Jews because their sin had caused them to become blind and deaf to His ways. Fear and doubt had set into their spirit. They could not see a way out of their current situation. Yet, God now turns to them with a message of hope....

*Isaiah 43:1 “Descendants of Jacob, I, the Lord, created you and formed your
nation. Israel, don’t be afraid. I have rescued you. I have called you by name;
now you belong to me.”*

Remember..... 1. God specializes in giving individuals a new beginning! 2. Things can change! 3. The past does not have to dictate the future! 4. There is hope!

During the past year, we have experienced unprecedented times to say the least. Living through the year 2020 with a pandemic, high unemployment rates, nationwide rioting and racial/political unrest has been very stressful and challenging on us all. However, we are trusting God for better days ahead. We are praying for the church to experience revival and a tremendous harvest. Believing that 2021 will bring a NEW BEGINNING!

PRAYER: Let today start a new beginning with hope, wisdom and faith for a better tomorrow! Let us walk in complete surrender, forgiveness and trust in the Lord. Provide a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert that leads to victory, revival and a new beginning in the Lord!!

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DAY 2 - MOVE FORWARD

When Israel was in the wilderness, God spoke to Moses and said,

“speak unto the children of Israel, that they “go forward.” (Exodus 14) Earlier in verse 12, the children of Israel said, “It is better for us to serve the Egyptians, than to die in the wilderness.”

God had high objectives for Israel when they left Egypt, but they had a tendency to look back. God wanted to lead them into:

- Untried territories
- Down untrodden paths,
- Toward an unknown land
- Into untapped resources

They couldn't see the bright future of victory, because of looking back to the security of the past. Fear and doubt stopped their progress and put them in reverse. This conflict raged for 40 years even on the doorstep of the promised land.

In Numbers 13 & 14, the spies brought back a negative report about the promised land that created a fear of people, a fear of failure and fear of being forgotten and forsaken. This fear produced a doubt that God would not do what He promised.

Numbers 14:4, they said: “Let us return to Egypt.”

The known held more assurance than the unknown – even with God's promise. Joshua and Caleb had another spirit. They said, “Move forward.” Always remember that God will lead His people as rapidly as they are prepared to follow.

Fear and doubt can cause you to be so preoccupied with the security of the past that you fail to see the abundant blessings that await your pursuit. It is not until you realize that there are glorious heights to be achieved and that you actively pursue them. This can only be communicated by the Spirit as it was with Joshua and Caleb.

It is human nature to gravitate to the familiar and the convenient while staying within our comfort zone. This is why so many people become content and satisfied with defeat, captivity and settle for less or even the status quo.

Exodus 14:13-14 “And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.”

PRAYER: Lead us into the bright future that you have prepared for us. Help us to breakthrough the barriers of fear and doubt into our promised land and future. We pray for faith to move forward into the abundant blessings that await our pursuit.

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DAY 3 - VISION

While the children of Israel were at the threshold of the promised land, Moses sent spies to Canaan to see what the land was like and if it was a land bad or good. There were only two that returned with faith and vision to take God at His Word and to move forward!

“But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: “The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ‘a land which flows with milk and honey.’ Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them.” Numbers 14:6-9

Joshua and Caleb said – “If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land and give it us, a land which flows with milk and honey.” Remember, the majority of the spies said, we cannot move forward, we cannot overcome the enemy and we cannot possess the land.

But in verse 24, “Joshua and Caleb had another spirit.” They said, “Move forward.”

It is not until you envision that there are glorious heights to be achieved, that you actively pursue them. This can only be communicated by the Spirit as it was with Joshua and Caleb. They saw God’s promise through eyes of faith while the other spies saw nothing but negative circumstances through eyes of doubt and fear!

Proverbs 29:18 “Where there is no vision, the people perish”.

The statement “no vision” means; no revelation, no guidance or an ignorance of God. Perish means that people will cast off restraint, that law and order will disappear or crime runs wild. The darkest time in the history of Israel was when there “was no open vision” at such a time the people perished and were left to run wild without purpose, vision or direction.

Another translation states,

“If people can’t see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves – But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed”

What is God preparing for you? What things are there for you to gather into your spirit as you prepare to walk into God’s promised blessing?

DAY 3 - VISION

We need the same spirit, vision and determination that Joshua and Caleb possessed to move into God's promise and destiny for our life. A clear vision of what God is doing will help us to walk by faith into His revelation and blessing!

Every now and then, God breaks across established guidelines and does a new work – every now and then, the Holy Spirit breaks across accepted patterns and initiates a new development for His own purpose. Are you prepared and ready for a “New Beginning”? Can you see it!!

PRAYER: Lord, give us vision and revelation of your ways so we may walk above any hindrance and distraction into your promise and blessing for our life and ministry! We want to see what you are doing right in the middle of our wilderness or circumstances as we walk into your agenda and possess the land. Amen!

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DAY 4 - BORN WITH PURPOSE

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

Another translation states,

“I know what I’m doing. I have it all planned out – plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for.”

This verse declares that God has plans to bless you with a future filled with hope – a future of success. This verse is a letter to the captives in Babylon. The Jews had no thoughts of peace – only misfortune, no confidence - only despair. But God reminds them that even though they may be struggling to find their way, He has a plan and it is a good plan.

The Lord is never uncertain about our destiny, purpose or future. He wants to reveal to us His plan for our life. Even in adversity and difficult times, we can walk in purpose and clear direction. We can make plans, while believing God is working out His purpose.

Proverbs 16:9 “We should make plans, counting on God to direct us” This means that we can expect God to direct us. We can have a clear vision of His will and destiny! You were created for a reason. We are people of destiny and purpose. You are not an accident. You exist for a reason!

Psalms 139:13-16 “You made all of the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit them together in my mother’s womb. 14 -Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! It is amazing to think about. Your workmanship is marvelous and how well I know it. 15 - You were there while I was being formed in utter seclusion. 16 - You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in your book.”

Another Translation v.16:

“when my form was not yet developed, when yet an embryo and when nothing could be determined by the eye of man, my future was known to God, what I should be.”

Another translation of that verse reads,

“Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, the days of my life all prepared before I’d even lived one day.”

DAY 4 - BORN WITH PURPOSE

The word “embroidered” means to variegate or to weave with treads of color. We were wonderfully created by God to fulfill a unique purpose.

New life possesses human DNA. In the fertilization stage, all human chromosomes are present and unique life begins. By the fourth week of human development, the fetus is 3/8th of an inch in size. By the twelfth week of development, fingerprints are formed. The postmodernist believe “that there is no grand design and all is based on chance; however, when you consider the detailed process of conception, development and birth of each unique person, we must recognize the structure, order or boundaries of God. According to the scripture, you were formed and birthed in God’s eyes as special.

Romans 8: 28-29 “called according to His purpose...predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.”

Another version states, Romans 8:27-29,

“He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That’s why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good. God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him.”

PRAYER: Thank you Lord for your plans to prosper me and for plans to give me hope and a future. Help me to walk humbly and obediently before you into the destiny that you have ordered for my life. Help me to see through eyes of faith your ways and sovereign plan. Let me see this from an eternal perspective and not just what I am going through in the present. Give me the ability to discover my destiny in You and not create it in my on selfishness. Amen!

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DAY 5 - GOD HAS A PLAN

“Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.” Psalms 139:16 NKJV

The Psalmist declares that the days of his life were determined and written in a book. You might say, If my days are destined or determined, then it does not matter what I do, I will be blessed. God-determined events do not take the choice-factor and grace out of the equation. You can hinder God’s plan for your life by making bad choices, living disobediently, rebellion or sin.

Genesis 2:16-17 “ the Lord commanded the man, “you are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

1 Peter 5:8 “Be careful, watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy..... Stand firm when he attacks, trust in the Lord.”

God gives man the ability to choose and to overcome. You must protect your God-given destiny and purpose. No one can alter God’s ultimate plan but you. You have a choice!

Proverbs 19:21 “There are many plans in a man’s heart, nevertheless, the Lord’s counsel (purpose), that will stand.

The Lord’s counsel will STAND. We must understand that regardless of any disadvantages and negative experiences, the Lord has a plan. Many struggle because of ideals, philosophies and untruths that were instilled in them through their lifetime. Negative voices of the past such as, you are an accident, you do not matter or you will never amount to anything. But God says you are significant, you are special with meaning and purpose. That is why it is so important to “Point your kids in the right direction...” Reinforce a child’s interest and abilities during his or her early years in life. God has a plan!

Proverbs 20:24 “A man’s steps are of the Lord; how then can a man understand his own way?

Remember that God’s thoughts equal peace, a future and a hope. What does God think about you? That is what matters!

Romans 8:26-29 NKJV “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know

DAY 5 - GOD HAS A PLAN

that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

PRAYER: Lord, help me know the plan and council of God. Let me walk boldly in faith and confidence knowing that my future is secure in you, Lord. I know that I belong to you and your ways are good and that you are continually working out your purpose. I surrender to your ways and counsel. Amen.

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DAY 6 - DESTINY KILLERS

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV

Another translation says:

“I know what I’m doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for.”

God provides a plan, then gives man the ability to choose and to overcome. You must protect your God-given destiny and purpose. No one can alter God’s ultimate plan but you. You have a choice!

There are some destiny killers that we need to avoid:

A NEGATIVE PAST - We all have things in the past that the enemy will try to use against us. A negative past should be used as a learning experience – learn from your mistakes!

LACK OF VISION - Proverbs 29:18

“Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law. Rick Warren said, “Vision is the ability to see the opportunities within your current circumstances.” If we don’t base our lives, decisions, and direction on God’s revelation, we will do what is right in our own eyes, live by our own goals and agenda, then pray!

Barna stated: “Vision for ministry is a reflection of what God wants to accomplish through you to build His Kingdom.” It has been said that dissatisfaction and discouragement are not caused by the absence of things, but the absence of vision.

CIRCUMSTANCES - “the condition or state of a person”. We need to see what God is doing right in our own circumstances and move into God’s agenda.

“Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:” Philippians 4:11 NKJV

COMPARISONS - “You are a GREAT YOU! While at best a mediocre somebody else.” BE YOURSELF! Joyce Meyers stated, “Those who succeed at being themselves don’t allow others to control them. They are led by their heart, not by the fear of displeasing others or being rejected by them..... When we struggle to be like others, not only do we lose ourselves, but we also grieve the Holy Spirit. God wants us to fit into His plan, not to feel pressured trying to fit into everyone else’s plans.”

DAY 6 - DESTINY KILLERS

Galatians 6:4 "scrutinize and examine and test your own conduct and his own work. He can then have the personal satisfaction and joy of doing something commendable without boastful comparison with his neighbor."

VICTIM MENTALITY - This mentality is a personality trait in which a person tends to recognize or consider themselves as a victim in every situation. This limits a persons potential and creates a false sense of power and disappointment.

You need to remind yourself that you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9

PRAYER: Lord, open my eyes to your purpose and plan for my life. Give me a fresh vision of who I am in the Lord. I pray for spiritual development and growth this year in my life. Amen!

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DAY 7 - BREAKTHROUGH

“And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered together to ask help from the LORD; and from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.” II Chronicles 20:3-4 NKJV

The people of Moab with the people of Ammon came to battle against Jehoshaphat and he was afraid. However, he positioned himself before the Lord and called a time of prayer and fasting. The people of Judah and all the cities gathered to seek the Lord. When we set ourselves before the face of God and pray, God will speak to us.”

“And he said, “Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s. Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you.” II Chronicles 20:15-17 NKJV

Jehoshaphat had a breakthrough!! The Lord said, “you don’t need to be afraid or let this powerful army discourage you. God will fight on your side!” In other words, the battle is not yours but God’s.

God told them go before the enemy and do nothing! He said, you will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourself, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. So often we feel that we have to take things in our own hands when all God wants us to do is stand still and see the deliverance of the Lord.

FIVE THINGS THAT LEAD TO A BREAKTHROUGH:

1. Be moved by a Supernatural Vision... “Do not be afraid nor dismayed”. We see through our natural eyes our circumstances, battles and difficulties. We need to see beyond that and see supernaturally our faithful God at work. God is always at work even when we don’t see it.
2. Live with a stewardship Mentality... “For the battle is not yours, but God’s”. Learn how to manage your life and decisions by giving everything to God.
3. Prepare for what God is about to do in your life..... “Tomorrow go down against them”. Be ready to listen and respond to the Holy Spirit. Live in a level of expectation that things will change or that God will provide. Tomorrow will be a better day even if your circumstances don’t change. “We walk by faith and not by sight.”

DAY 7 - BREAKTHROUGH

4. Demonstrate the courage to do nothing and wait... “Position yourselves and stand still”. It takes faith and courage to wait on the Lord. Sometimes we are tempted to take things in our own hands rather than wait on the Lord.
5. Rest in your relationship with God... “For the Lord is with you”. You can depend on the Lord. He is faithful and upholds His covenant and promises.

Psalms 98:8 “You are Lord God all-powerful! No one is as loving and faithful as you are!”

***Listen, Lord, as I pray! You are faithful and honest and will answer my prayer.
(Ps. 143:1)***

PRAYER: Help us to realize that in all the chaos that life can bring, the battle is not ours, it is yours. Give us strength and courage to wait on you, Lord. We rest today in your love and care for us. Accomplish your will and destiny in us while we live by faith and not by sight. Amen.

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DAY 8 - DETERMINATION

Daniel 1:8 "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself" (NKJV)

Another Translation:

"But Daniel determined that he would not defile himself."

Determination means, "the act of settling a purpose", "a fixed purpose", "firmness of purpose or intention", and the "quality of being resolute."

This means that Daniel had decided his purpose and resolution with a spirit of perseverance and tenacity. You could say that Daniel possessed a dogged spiritual stubbornness. He knew in his heart what he had to do and he did it.

It is one thing to know what to do, and then it is another thing to just do it! Most people have discovered what they need to do, but are not willing to sacrifice or pay the price to do it. The reason could be fear, lack of discipline, resources, lack of faith, low self-esteem, pride, weakness, or even laziness. Whatever is holding you back from pursuing God's purpose, calling, or work; let the Holy Spirit give you victory over it.

A determination that does not involve the **heart** will not last. Daniel's determination was not a normal resolve; it was based on conviction and belief. It was based on a dedication and conviction of the heart. It was a holy ambition to please the Lord. That was the driving force – truth, belief and desire. True convictions must be established by the Word of God and your convictions will become the foundation of your determination.

If you are tempted to walk away from the battle or the challenge that you are facing in life, take on the spirit of Daniel and say, "I will not yield, give in, capitulate or quit. I will remain firm in my commitment to please God and to do His will.

It wasn't easy for Daniel to display such courage and determination. It certainly wasn't because of favorable circumstances. He was a captive in enemy territory. You cannot allow your circumstances to dictate your level of destiny, commitment, determination or relationship with God. You must set your eyes on Jesus and believe that He is bigger than any battle, challenge or problem.

Hebrews 11:27 "By faith he (Moses) forsook Egypt; not fearing the wrath of the King; for he endured (determination), as seeing Him who is invisible."

The word "endured" means that he kept right on going, he persevered, he held staunchly to his purpose and he never flinched.

DAY 8 - DETERMINATION

Philippians 3:12-16 "I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: by no means do I count myself an expert in all this, but I've got my eyes on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward – to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back. So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision – you'll see it yet! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it."

Paul discerned what hindered him and he removed the distractions. He discovered what he wanted and pursued it. He determined how to get it; with a single-minded passion for Christ.

Daniel's purpose and determination was a "holy" and "sacred" commitment to serve God. The mountain that you are climbing may seem insurmountable, it may be the mountain of debt, marital problems, sickness, fear, rejection or depression. It would be easy for you to give in and quit. But by God's grace and Spirit, you can overcome, you can be strong, you can be victorious, you can succeed, you can be healed, you can understand, you can be blessed, you can see clearly, you can walk and not grow weary, you can make it!!!

Stay determined, know your purpose, stay the course and watch God go before you. Let your determination be found in God and His Spirit.

PRAYER: Lord, let the individuals that read this devotion depend on you! Let them realize that it is not in who we are, or what we have; it is in you alone. We believe that the determination to stand in your grace, love and strength will bring victory over whatever problem is in their life. Amen.

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DAY 9 - JESUS FIRST

Romans 1:21-22, 25 "Their thinking became useless. Their foolish minds were filled with darkness. They said they were wise, but they became fools. They traded the glory of God who lives forever for the worship of idols. They traded the truth of God for a lie. They worshiped and served what had been created instead of the God who created those things, who should be praised forever."

An idol is an image, person or thing regarded with blind admiration, adoration or devotion other than God. Anything that takes the place of God in your life is an idol. Notice the scripture said, "they traded the glory of God who lives forever for the worship of idols. All of us battle with things in our life that is constantly trying to rise above God.

How can you identify your idols....

1. WHAT DOMINATES YOUR THOUGHTS?

Matthew 6:21 "Where your treasure is, there is your heart also."

2. WHAT FRUSTRATES YOU ABOUT CALLING?

Are you willing to obey the Lord regardless of what it cost you? Are you willing to do whatever the Lord asks you to do?

3. WHERE DO YOU TURN FOR COMFORT AND REFUGE?

Is God your only source of true comfort? Is He your refuge? Are there other things that bring you temporary satisfaction which has taken the place of God?

4. WHAT HAS YOUR HEART? Colossians 3:1-5 tells us to set our hearts on things above and not on earthly things. Paul encourages us to put to death whatever belongs to earthly nature such as sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed which is idolatry.

WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT:

- Everything in our life needs to be beneath Jesus in PRIORITY...
- Everything in our life needs to revolve around Jesus in PRACTICE....
- Everything in our life needs to be smaller than Jesus in PERSPECTIVE....

How can we replace our idols with Jesus? How can we keep Jesus first in our heart and life?

***Passionately Celebrate God.** Giving all the glory to God and truly worshiping the Lord will help to keep Him as our primary focus.

DAY 9 - JESUS FIRST

***Aggressively engage the enemy.** Deuteronomy 7:25-26 “These idols are disgusting to the Lord your God. Never bring a disgusting idol into your house. If you do, you and the idol will be destroyed. Consider it detestable and disgusting. It must be destroyed.

***Consistently adhere to boundaries.** 1 John 5:21 “Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God’s place in your life.” Identify your strengths and your weaknesses and set your boundaries accordingly.

***Confidently rest in your covenant.** Cultivate your relationship with the Lord. You can always depend on God without fear of being forsaken. He has made a covenant with you to always be there to help, heal and deliver.

PRAYER: Life is filled with challenges, distractions and temptations. However, God’s grace and strength is sufficient for you to live above the things of the world and to put God first. Let the Holy Spirit convict you of any thing that has risen above God in your heart and once again, make Jesus first and the Lord of your entire life. He deserves first place!!!

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DAY 10 - HE CARES

“Humble yourself therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”
1 Peter 5:6-7

Another Translation states,

“Be humble in the presence of God’s mighty power, and he will honor you when the time comes. God cares for you, so turn all your worries over to him.”

God is always working things out for the good in our life. This scripture admonishes us to stay humble under or in the presence of God’s mighty power. In other words, surrender the power of your own will and independence to stay under God’s control and lead. Knowing this, He cares for us. So, if you keep this humble posture before God, the promise is clear, “He will honor or exalt you when the time comes.”

In all of life’s circumstances, victories, defeats, laughter, tears, trouble, heartache or joy, GOD CARES ABOUT YOU!!! Faith says that He will always bring you into that moment, sooner or later, when God will honor or exalt you when the time comes; at the right time. Let God’s timing take place.

It is so easy to get caught up in “the mad dash” of life. One of my favorite poems is by Virginia Brasier.....

“This is the age
Of the half-read page
And the quick hash
And the mad dash
The bright night
With the nerves tight
The plane hop
And the brief stop
The lamp tan
In a short span
The Big Shot
In a good spot
And the brain strain
And the heart pain
And the cat naps
Till the spring snaps
And the fun’s done!”

DAY 10 - HE CARES

The everyday trappings of life can take control of you, manipulate your time, work, thoughts and activities. Even the good and necessary acts of your daily routine can become a controlling factor. You begin to feel overwhelmed! This is normally the moment you try to take things in your own hands, never inviting God to be involved and to take control. But you have a choice; 1. Let all this control you or 2. Humble yourself under the mighty power of God and when the time comes, He will honor, exalt or bless you! Remember.... Casting all your care on Him, for He cares for you.

God's promise, as we walk by faith today under his power and authority, is that He cares for us and will bless us in His timing. He wants to walk with you in your everyday activities and routine. Make this day's journey with God at the center of all of it. Remember this:

1. God is not accidentally late – Satan will try to convince you that you are forgotten or unimportant.... It is a lie.
2. Forget about your own timetable. Don't panic, trust His arrangements!
3. Implore the Lord for new strength.
4. Avoid the urge to manipulate people or situations. When this happens, you transfer your trust from God to self and others instead of God.

THOUGHT: GOD ALWAYS KEEPS HIS WORD AND HE CARES ABOUT YOU!!

PRAYER: Lord, not my will, but your will be done! I surrender my life to your control and mighty power. Thank you for caring for me. I release all my care on you. Help me to walk by faith under your power and authority. Amen.

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 11 - AN EXAMPLE OF CARING

James 2:15-17 "If you know someone who doesn't have any clothes or food, you shouldn't just say, "I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to eat." What good is it to say this, unless you do something to help? Faith that doesn't lead just to do good deeds is all alone and dead."

Mark 7:6-7 "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written, These people honor me with their lips, but their teachings are but rules taught by men."

God wants your Christianity to be characterized by love, compassion, and holy living. Christianity is about relationships. Building relationships through benevolence, kindness, caring and compassion will provide the greatest opportunity for evangelism. This is the model of caring that is taught in the Bible. It is one thing to say we care! But another thing to prove we care by taking action to meet the needs of others.

Let's look at the pattern of the early church in Acts chapter 2. They were together in fellowship, doctrine, breaking of bread and prayer. They continually practiced acts of kindness by giving to those in need. They went from house to house and ate together with gladness. Fear came upon every soul, and many signs and wonders were done through the apostles. Signs and wonders followed them. They did not follow the signs and wonders. Their acts of benevolence created an atmosphere for signs and wonders to follow the apostles and they experienced spiritual results. The outpouring of kindness and the anointing caused people to experience the love of Christ in a real way. The scripture said, **"The Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved."**

I talked with a pastor located in an urban location. He shared with me what the Lord had impressed him to do to reach his community. He and his congregation would set up a table in front of the church on Wednesday night and serve free food and water. Many of the individuals that stopped allowed Pastor and his church to pray with them. The inter city traffic walks right by the Church. On a recent Wednesday night, Pastor had a free car wash and served free hot dogs. Hundreds have been prayed over and blessed by this outreach.

On a recent Sunday, the Lord led this pastor to have a free breakfast for anybody that wanted to come. It was advertised in the inter city and several people came to the breakfast. Most that attended decided to stay for the Morning Worship service. The results of this was - 1 saved, 1 restored and one Asian young man in a church service for the first time in his life. This young man experienced the love of God that morning and is now attending Bible study each week.

The pastor reported that members of the church are excited about this outreach and are volunteering to help. A former Catholic Priest, now a member of the church, would volunteer to go out and invite people to come to the breakfast and morning service. He said, "I am having fun". They decided to serve breakfast every Sunday morning.

DAY 11 - AN EXAMPLE OF CARING

What an example of New Testament evangelism, reaching the harvest through caring and giving. I was so excited to hear this testimony and I wanted to share it during this prayer campaign.

PRAYER: I pray for God to give all of our churches a new burden to reach the lost by caring and giving. The church must build relationships through kindness and compassion. God is calling you and your congregation to reach your community with the Gospel through the spirit of benevolence. **May God help us to reach the harvest by sharing the love of God.**

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 12 - PARTNERS WITH GOD

“We work together as partners who belong to God...” 1 Corinthians 3:9

All of us have a specific calling and giftedness. It is so important that you understand what the will of the Lord is for your life and pursue it with all your heart. **What would the Lord have you to do?**

SATISFACTION COMES WHEN WE SERVE THE LORD.....

1. With a pure motive
2. With a servant's heart
3. With a determination
4. With a clarity of purpose
5. With a singleness of heart
6. With a dependence on the Holy Spirit
7. With a focus
8. With an appreciation

1 Corinthians 3:5-8 “Who do you think Paul is, anyway? Servants, both of us – servants who waited on you as you gradually learned to entrust your lives to our mutual Master. We each carried out our servant assignment. I planted the seed. Apollos watered the plants, but God made you grow. It’s not the one who plants or the one who waters who is at the center of this process, but God, who makes things grow. Planting and watering are menial servant jobs at minimum wages. What makes them worth doing is the God we are serving.”

Paul was saying we are simply busy doing what God has assigned us to do!!! Paul was a tent maker by trade and made his living by manufacturing tents to pay for his service as a missionary. Paul gave his best in both sacred and secular work. It was the right thing to do. He represented God in both places of service.

We must be **diligent** in our work and not lazy!

“The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich. Proverbs 13:4 (NKJV)

“I once walked by the field and the vineyard of a lazy fool. Thorns and weeds were everywhere, and the stone wall had fallen down. When I saw this, it taught me a lesson: Sleep a little. Doze a little. Fold your hands and twiddle your thumbs. Suddenly poverty hits you and everything is gone!” Proverbs 24:30 – 34 (CEV)

All God requires is for us to do our very best as Christians in whatever we do in life.

DAY 12 - PARTNERS WITH GOD

Before you complain about your job, listen to the regulations that employees at Mt. Corry Carriage and Iron Works were asked to follow in 1782.

- Employees will daily sweep the floor; dust the furniture, shelves and show cases.
- Each day fill lamps, clean chimneys and trim wicks, wash windows once a week.
- Each clerk will bring a bucket of water and a shovel of coal for the day's business.
- Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to individual taste.
- The office will be open at 7 am and close at 8 pm daily, except on the Sabbath.
- Men employees will be given an evening off each week for courting purposes, and two evenings if they go regularly to church .
- The employee who has performed his labors faithfully and without fault for a period of five years, who has been thrifty, attentive to his religious duties, and is looked upon by his fellow man as a substantial law-abiding citizen, will be given an increase of 5 cents per day in his pay, providing just returns in profits from the business permit. (From "The Word for You Today" April 8, 2004 daily devotional.)

In comparison with the good old days maybe your job isn't so bad after all.

"The Story About Investment". In **Matthew 25:14-30**, Jesus said that it's like a man going on an extended trip and called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave 5000 dollars, to another 2000 dollars, and to a third 1000 dollars. Notice this, **"according or depending on their abilities."** Then he left.

Right away, the first servant went to work and doubled his master's investment. The second did the same. But the man with the 1000, dug a hole and buried his master's investment. The master returned to settle up with them. The first was commended – "Good Work". The second was commended – "Good Work, you did your job well."

The third said, Master, I know that you have high standards and hate careless ways or laziness and demand the best. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is safe and sound. The master replied, "If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers and gotten a little interest."

God does not want you to bury your talent, giftedness or ability. Be wise and diligent with your work and activities for the Lord. Look for ways to improve, excel and advance.

Did you notice that the master only expected a return “according or depending on their abilities.”

WE NEED A CLEAR BIBLICAL VIEW OF WORK.

The Bible does not teach that Church work is the only work that has any real spiritual value or only the people paid for Christian service are in work that matters to God. The Christian is to be faithful in work both the “sacred” and the “secular.” All of life is to be lived under Christ’s lordship. **All work that is within the boundaries of Biblical standards has essential value to God!**

God has delegated His work to everybody, not just people in full time ministry. God sees all people accomplishing His work in the world. The question we must ask is, **“Are we making our work promote values, beliefs and a lifestyle fitting for the Kingdom of God?”**

Colossians 4 tells about a man who had a menial, dead end job. This man was assigned tasks no one else wanted – ” the dirty work, the dangerous work. He was called out at all hours of the day and night to satisfy the whims of his supervisors. He had little hope for advancement. In fact, he’d be lucky to keep his job; plenty of others stood in line, ready to replace him. Whether he even lived or died mattered little. He was a first century Roman slave.

The Apostle Paul declared that all work, every position, every level, calling, assignment, appointment and job – matters to God. God told Paul to honor and respect this servant’s work. That he and his work mattered. Show everyone in the Lord’s work that what they do is important and it does matter!

Colossians 3:23-24, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

PRAYER: Lord, help us to do our very best in whatever you lead us to do. To put our whole heart into what we do for you and for your glory! Help us to manage our time and not be slothful and lazy in our work. Help us to **see things that need to be done** and pursue it with great joy with a servants heart. Amen.

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 13 - RESURRECTION PROMISE

1 Corinthians 15:14-15 "And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!"

Every year thousands of people climb a mountain in the Italian Alps, passing the "Station of the Cross" to stand at an outdoor crucifix. One tourist noticed a little trail that led beyond the cross. He fought through the rough thicket and, to his surprise came upon another shrine, a shrine that symbolized the empty tomb. It had been neglected. The brush had grown up around it. Almost everyone had gone as far as the cross, but stopped there.

Far too many have gotten to the cross and have known the despair, the heartbreak and agony, but then never move beyond the cross to discover the message of an empty tomb.

How does the cross and the resurrection impact the way you live your life? How has this glorious truth and experience made a difference and a change in your life?

It is a message of LOVE, LIFE, HOPE, POWER and HIS RETURN! But not only a message, but a PROMISE!

The cross and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the corner stone (bedrock) of our faith. It was the place Christ was betrayed, forsaken, and crucified. Through death and supreme sacrifice we have forgiveness from sin and victory over hell, death and the grave. Jesus died to become the full atonement for all sin of all mankind.

"We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once and for all"
Hebrews 10:10

The message and promise of the Cross, Resurrection and Christianity is described in Luke 23:34

"I will forgive the unforgivable..." v.41 "I will accept the unacceptable..." v.43 "I will do the unimaginable..."

The resurrection transforms the tragedy and agony of the cross into the Gospel. There is no truth that will have greater power over us – when properly believed- than the fact that Christ is risen from the dead.

Paul's message to the church at Corinth is that the Resurrection is irrefutable and conclusive. Christianity is true; and if true, then this chapter unfolds to us the most elevated and glorious truth to immortal man. JESUS IS ALIVE!!!!

DAY 13 - RESURRECTION PROMISE

THE EMPTY TOMB REPRESENTS POWERFUL PROMISES.....

- The evidence of Justification (Forgiveness). The source of Sanctification (Separation from the World). The pledge of all power that we ever need in this present life (Victory over all sin). The guarantee of our future Resurrection (Eternal Life – Life beyond the grave).

The uniqueness of our faith is the incredible fact and truth that death couldn't hold Him. HE IS RISEN!!

"But Christ has been raised to Life. And He makes us certain that others will also be raised to life. Adam brought death to all of us and Christ will bring life to all of us."

Through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, we have the promise of LOVE, LIFE, HOPE, POWER AND HIS RETURN.

PRAYER: Today Lord, we pray Philippians 3:10, "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." Help us to walk in the powerful realm of your resurrection power. As we conform to the likeness of your death, may we be in the likeness of your resurrection.

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 14 - POWER OF PENTECOST

Acts 2:1-4 “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

My denomination, Church of God – Cleveland, TN, enjoys a great Pentecost heritage. About the year, 1884, a spirit of dissatisfaction and unrest began to work in the heart and mind of R.G. Spurling and the members of his church. For two years he began to search the scripture and pray for reformation. After two years, they decided to meet with those that were hungry for more of God’s power. On Thursday, August 19, 1886, a small company of faithful individuals met at Barney Creek Meeting House and experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and formed what we know now as the Church of God. This is our Pentecostal Heritage.

In Acts 1, after the resurrection and before His ascension, Jesus commanded His disciples and followers to go to Jerusalem and tarry to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus did not want to leave His disciples comfortless or powerless. The Resurrection of Jesus was a display and manifestation of power, Pentecost was a transfer of power!

Jesus predicted his departure in John 14: 1-3. But later in that chapter, He promised that the Holy Spirit would come and be – “Another Comforter” to the disciples.

John 14:16, 26 – “And I pray the Father, and He will give you another comforter..... the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I have said to you.”

“**Comforter**” means, “**Para** – beside or along side” and “**Kaleo** – one called alongside of another to help and give power.”

“**Another**” means, “One of the same sort” (exactly of the same sort).

Think about it; **All that Jesus was to His disciples, the Holy Spirit is to us today!!** Praise the Lord!

Jesus cast His mantle of anointing upon the early church on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2 and the church was birthed in power to do the work of God under a powerful anointing on the face of this earth.

DAY 14 - POWER OF PENTECOST

John 14:12 - "The person who trust in me will not only do what I'm doing but even greater things, because I, on my way to the Father, am giving you the same work to do that I've been doing. You can count on it. From now on, whatever you request along the lines of who I am and what I am doing, I'll do it."

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit was given that we might continue the work Christ started; but in a greater quantity.

In the book of Acts, the rumblings of the Holy Spirit started a spiritual revolution... In the first 13 Chapters of Acts, there are over forty references to the explosive and powerful work of the Holy Spirit active in the church. Every year in May, we will celebrate "**Pentecost Sunday**". I encourage you to celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the early church and to desire the same anointing and working of the Holy Spirit in your life. Like the Barney Creek experience, we (the church) must be hungry for more of God.

Acts 2:39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

I am praying for you to have an Acts 2 outpouring that will lead to an Acts 6 experience.."**The Word increased and disciples multiplied.**" Our movement/denomination must never forget our rich Pentecostal heritage and the need to be "**endued with the Power of the Holy Spirit.**"

PRAYER: Lord, help the readers to desire more of your spirit and anointing. Let the promise of John 14 and Acts 2 be experienced in their life today! Help them to walk, live and function in the Holy Spirit's anointing to continue to do the work of Christ and to meet the challenges of our culture and society. Amen.

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 15 - HEALING WATERS

Ezekiel 47:12 "Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine."

The major theme of Ezekiel is "The Glory of God". The nation of Israel had been disobedient toward God and had lost God's Glory. Ezekiel is troubled because the Glory left the temple. (Chapters 9-11) What a terrible thing to happen in the temple. We desperately need God's Glory and Favor!!

God's Glory is the total sum of His attributes. This is how we know God; it's through His revealed attributes. He has revealed Himself to us through His goodness, mercy, forgiveness, grace, love, provision, healing and the list goes on and on. God's Glory had vacated the temple.

Many churches and ministry leaders no doubt have allowed different things to become a substitute for God's Glory. Yes, churches function every week without the Glory. If you are not careful, you can replace God's Glory with.... programs, busyness, habit, hype, sensationalism, religious trends and gimmicks. We cannot afford to function and operate out of habit, but instead we need to flow in the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The only thing that will change us, our churches, our culture and our nation is a genuine move of God. It only comes through God's Spirit, power and anointing. Are we functioning just out of routine and habit or are we in the flow of God's Spirit and Word?

Habit is an acquired behavior pattern regularly followed. It leads to a customary practice. There is place for consistency in the work of God, but not routine. When we worship during the week as God's people, are we led by the Spirit and the Word of God or are we going through a routine and customary practice? God wants to bring freshness, victory, newness, and life to His people. It is not enough to show up on Sunday, sing a few songs and go through a regular routine. The question is, did we allow God to show up and flow through us.

Ezekiel sees a vision. Water is flowing out from underneath the Temple. It starts in the altar and becomes the origin of the river of God's power and glory. His vision reveals different levels; ankle deep, knee deep, waist deep and then over the head.

QUESTION: What is flowing out of your life?

God wants to start a mighty river of influence, change, healing, harvest, increase, anointing, power, blessing and favor flowing from the altar of your life. Let the Spirit carry you there! We need God's Spirit to take over our life, ministry and work. We need the river to flow from the Church into places of business, athletic fields, court rooms, the market place and throughout every home and community.

DAY 15 - HEALING WATERS

The river of God's glory will bring back vision, dreams, faith, freshness, sight, confidence, encouragement, relationships and LIFE!

Ezekiel promised, "Fruit trees will grow all along this river and produce fresh fruit every month. The leaves will never dry out, because they will always have water from the stream that flows from the temple, and they will be used for healing the people."

The scripture declares that the Holy Spirit was given as a life-giving source.... Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there will be life and healing.

John 7:37-39 states that rivers of living water will brim and spill out of the depths of anyone who believes in Christ this way... "you will have life-giving water flowing from deep inside you, just as the scripture says..."

John 14:12-14 "The person who trusts me will not only do what I'm doing but even greater things, because I, on my way to the Father, am giving you the same work to do that I've been doing. You can count on it. From now on, whatever you request along the lines of who I am and what I am doing, I'll do it. That's how the Father will be seen for who He is in the Son, I mean it. Whatever you request in this way, I'll do."

We stand on the edge of a real surge of growth and harvest. We cannot allow God's people to be rendered utterly powerless in a world of deception and enticement. Many have been so leavened with the spirit of the world, they need to know what it means to pray in the Spirit and live a deep, full, all conquering experience. We cannot simply exist. We need God's Glory to start once again in the altar of the church and flow like an all consuming river.

PRAYER: Lord, forgive us of our sins and remove any hindrance in our life that would prevent the flow of your Spirit in us. Let the rivers of living water rise to a level of overwhelming saturation and control every part of our life. Make us a vessel, full and overflowing, of your love, power and Spirit to a broken and sinful world. Let the flow of your Spirit bring healing to our life, churches and world. Flow through me!

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 16 - GUARD THE TREASURE

1 Timothy 6:20-21 "Timothy, guard what God has placed in your care. Don't pay any attention to godless and stupid talk that sounds smart but really isn't. Some people have even lost their faith by believing this talk. (CEV)

"And Oh, my dear Timothy, guard the treasure you were given, Guard it with your life. Avoid the talk-show religion and the practiced confusion of the so-called experts. People caught up in a lot of talk can miss the whole point of faith. (MSG)

The most significant choices you make are not about appearance or how it sounds, but they're about importance, truth, faith and substance. The things you decided to do, will directly influence your energy flow throughout your life. It must be more than just show and talk. It must be intentional, direct and with purpose.

Four questions that will help you evaluate the importance of your opportunity, ministry and calling.....

QUESTION #1: IS IT GOD-HONORING?

Will your decided action maintain its integrity once it's strained through the filter of your faith. If it's not a Kingdom priority, it has the potential to drain your energy instead of enhancing it.

Elmer Towns once said: "Greatness involves more than measurable achievement; it starts with the leader's heart and not his head." God-honoring activity will be rooted in virtues of self-sacrifice, love, courage, loyalty, accountability, humility, meaning, mission, passion and commitment.

QUESTION #2 DOES IT HAVE AN ETERNAL DIMENSION/VALUE?

Does the proposed action merely result in accumulation or does it invest in eternity? Actions that are centered in the temporal are energy drainers. Will your actions add to your account in heaven? Make sure that what you invest in is of value to you and the work of God.

QUESTION #3: WILL IT ADD QUALITY OR MERELY QUANTITY?

Busyness is a good thing as long as it is controlled. What dictates your time or schedule? Is it things that we choose to do. Busyness just for the sake of being busy will dominate and soon siphon your energy. Choices must be of significant value. You can't afford to waste time on any activity that does not add value to your life and advance the goals of your ministry. Just because you can do something, is no reason that you should.

DAY 16 - GUARD THE TREASURE

We must know our limitations, as well as our strengths. You are the only one that can set proper boundaries in your life. Learn when to say “yes” and when to say “no”.

QUESTION #4: HOW WILL IT AFFECT MY FAMILY?

Your spouse and family must be the first priority and even if all the kids are gone. Evaluate every opportunity carefully while considering your family. God does not expect us to neglect the important things in life. We are not indispensable.

Our focus scripture tells us to set boundaries or guard the treasure that has been given to us. The following are some important boundaries:

1. Theological boundaries – seek for truth and maintain a high level of theological integrity. Do not compromise your standard, belief or convictions which have been formed by the Word of God.

2. Ethical Boundaries – Practice appropriate behavior concerning morality and values. Set boundaries in areas such as dealing with the opposite sex, handling finances, keeping your word, being honest, places you go and things that you watch.

3. Personal Boundaries - Find time for yourself and family. Private personal space needs to be created by finding time away.

4. Family Boundaries - Protect your family from unreal expectations. Nobody will set this boundary for you. You will need to do this for your family. Encourage one another to work hard, but also to take time to be present for your spouse and kids.

“Guard what God has placed in your Care” (1 Timothy 6:20)

PRAYER: Lord help the readers to balance their life, work and every day activities in scripture, spirit and revelation. We pray for the strength to make tough decisions that will enhance our life and community. Help us to always be God-honoring and people of value. AMEN

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 17 - WAIT ON THE LORD

Isaiah 40: 27 – 31, “Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel: My way is hidden from the Lord, and my just claim is passed over by my God. Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”

The doctrine of instant satisfaction and gratification is a primary spiritual problem in the church today. Our society looks for instant results (better – quicker – richer); and therefore, we expect the same in our spiritual walk. We demand overnight success, spiritual results or even godliness. As a result, we end up discouraged and frustrated by a shallowness in our walk and spiritual maturity.

I believe God can do great things in an instant. Some things promised in the Bible are given immediately, such as forgiveness through Jesus Christ. However, what about the principle of “Waiting on the Lord”? What about the process of sowing, watering, growing, learning, spiritual maturity, patience and believing God for the long haul?

1 Peter 5:10 “But may the God of all grace who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus after you have suffered (endured) a while, perfect, establish, strengthen and settle you.” (NKJV)

Another Translation states:

“So Keep a firm grip on the faith. The suffering (enduring) won’t last forever. It won’t be long before the generous God who has great plans for us in Christ – eternal and glorious plans they are! – will have you put together and on your feet for good. He gets the last word; yes, he does.”

God does not always work within the framework of our schedule. He isn’t ruled by our wristwatch. A part of believing God for answered prayer and spiritual results is waiting on the Lord.

Psalms 40:1 “I have waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.” (NKJV)

The Psalmist offered unto God an earnest, persevering prayer. This reveals that his prayers were not answered at once; but he waited on the Lord.

DAY 17 - WAIT ON THE LORD

God Keeps His Word!!! He never tells us one thing and then does another. He doesn't lead us on, to let us down. God has veracity, He is trustworthy and faithful. He will not and cannot lie!

Hebrews 10:23 "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised." (NKJV)

Throughout any life lived honestly and reflectively, there have been moments of doubt, times we feel that we cannot cope. Many times doubt comes to us when we reach the limits of our understanding. For instance, when we encounter a sudden unexpected calamity... when we pray for a certain thing and the exact opposite occurs... when a respected saint suddenly denies the faith and walks away... when we obey and do what is right and suffer for it... when life takes us through twists and turns that make absolutely no sense... (sudden shifts and changes) or when we see innocent people suffer.

These circumstances often raise unsettled questions and challenges our faith. REMEMBER – “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.”

Consider Abraham – Romans 4:20

“He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.”

Abraham waited twenty-five years for his son, a promised heir – Genesis 21:2

“For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.” (At the set time)

PRAYER: I pray to experience big faith and learn to “Wait on the Lord”. That my mind, heart and soul be rooted, grounded, and established in the faith. I pray that this will not be moved by your emotions, circumstances and negative words that would hinder your faith in God's short-term and long-term plan. I pray that your strength will be renewed. Remind us, that you see, know and understand what we are going through! Amen

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 18 - WALK IN WISDOM AND WORSHIP

Ephesians 5:15-20 "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be not unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit. Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul exhorts us to "walk circumspectly"; which means - watchful, cautious and intentional. **Walk in wisdom and not in foolishness.** Keep your focus on the Lord and what he would have you to do.

We are exhorted to "redeem the time" because the day in which we live demands it. Do not be caught in profitless or meaningless activities. Do not spend your energy on things that are worthless. But spend your time wisely. How often do we allow the distractions of the enemy and our culture to rob us of our important time.

Another translation of Ephesians 5 states;

"Act like people with good sense and not like fools. These are evil days, so make every minute count. Don't be ignorant, instead, find out what the Lord wants you to do. Don't destroy yourself by getting drunk, but let the Spirit fill your life. When you meet together, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, as you praise the Lord with all your heart. Always use the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to thank God the Father for everything."

Paul encourages Christians to act like people with good sense.... and be not drunk with wine, which is dissipation. It is hard to be in your right or sound mind if you are intoxicated on the things of the world. Dissipation is to indulge in excessive pleasure or sensual activity. It is a devotion to worldly pleasure. We must be spiritually minded and not carnally minded. This scripture encourages you to be under the influence (intoxication) of the Holy Spirit and not worldly things or carnal pleasures. We should strive to be under the control of the Spirit and practicing the will of the Lord.

We must make a mental choice not to focus on the bad, negative, carnal and even our circumstances and live a life of praise to the Lord!! A Spirit controlled life will be actively involved in worshiping the Lord in all that we do. "Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Instead of carnality, indifference, anxiety, mental anguish, or apathy dominating or manipulating your life, let Praise and Thanksgiving produce a joyous carefree spirit.

DAY 18 - WALK IN WISDOM AND WORSHIP

A friend of mine recently said, “Think greater thoughts. Love more intimately. Walk more intentionally. Breath more deeply. Laugh more joyously. Sleep more peacefully. Oh, and sing. Don’t let anything steal your song.

This passage encourages us to praise the Lord always and for all things and SING! “Singing and making melody in heart to the Lord.” That should be our focus! If you do that, you can have good focus, make good decisions, live a happy life; even in the good times and bad times.

The Bible commands:

“Sing a new song to the Lord”
“Shout for Joy”
“Sing Praises”
“Sing the song of the Lamb”
“Come before His presence with singing”
“I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever”

CELEBRATE GOD!!

Worship is to experience the reality of God.. to know.. to feel.. to experience the resurrected Lord in the midst of our everyday life. It is not only celebrating God in the good times, but it is breaking through the mundane, weariness, heartbreak, pain, fear, doubt, the difficulty of life into the presence of God.

Let the object of your worship and celebration this week be nothing but the Lord Jesus Christ!!

Accept the Invitation.....

Matthew 11:28 “Come unto me...”
Isaiah 45:22 “Look unto me...”
Isaiah 55:1 “Come to the waters...”

PRAYER: Today we choose to “Enter His gates with Thanksgiving and enter His courts with praise, Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. We implore the Wisdom of God to walk upright and to make right decisions.

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 19 - VALOR AND VALUE

Judges 11:1-11, "Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor...."

Jephthah is an example of how God takes an ordinary man and used him mightily in His service, despite his many disadvantages. Jephthah was the son of a prostitute. He came from a very dysfunctional family. After his father married and his wife bore sons, the brothers grew up and decided to drive Jephthah out of the family's house because he was the son of another woman. He then fled to associate with the wrong crowd.

The scripture said, "a band of worthless men that was constantly raiding."

But despite all of his disadvantages, bad fortunes, rejections, background and lack of resources, God saw something in Jephthah that nobody else could see. God sees you in a totally different way than others see you. God sees the potential of what you can be despite all the junk and stuff in your life and in your past.

Many of you have labeled your life based on:

- What others say about you
- What others think about you
- Things of your past
- Comparing yourself with others

How about what God thinks and says about you? God say Jephthah, "I will make you a mighty man of valor and value". **Valor means** one of boldness, determination, heroic courage and bravery. **Value means** one of importance, significance and usefulness.

God's thoughts about you are recorded:

"I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out – plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for." Jeremiah 29:11

Two things that can prevent greatness in you: 1. Wrong view of God and 2. Wrong view of self. God is greater in your life than all your feelings of insecurities, fear and inadequacies. You must stop allowing your weaknesses to control your life, destiny and future. Your trust in God will help you go beyond inspiration to participation in God's plan for your life. A wrong view of God and self will produce a spirit of reluctance. This will hold you back from reaching your full potential in God. This is why you go through life unwilling to try, volunteer, speak out, participate, or move forward.

When Jephthah surrendered every thing over to God, He became a person of valor and value.

DAY 19 - VALOR AND VALUE

- He became a person of Forgiveness
- He became a person of Faith
- He became a person of Focus

This is your time to discover your full potential in God, his plan and to know that God is working greatness in your life. God turned Jephthah's life around from defeat to Victory, fear to Courage, weakness to Strength, misfortune to Divine Direction.

PRAYER: God help those that read this devotion to discover your overcoming power and anointing in their life. Help them to walk in your full potential and to cast away all distractions, sin and lies of the enemy. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, I pray that the readers will have greater faith to walk in your plan and to experience a courage to step out into your promise, favor and blessing. Help them to discover faith, trust you, forgive wrong, defeat the enemy, become a powerful influence in their community and church. Amen

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 20 - BEARERS OF TRUTH

We find in Ephesians 4:11 that Christ gives to the Church some very important spiritual leaders. What we see in these verses is God's calling upon a variety of leaders that serve in different capacities with one common goal; "to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God,".

"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," Ephesians 4:11-12 (NKJV)

".....to train Christ's followers in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the Church," (verse 12 - MSG)

"..... so His people would learn to serve and His body would grow strong." (verse 12 - CEV)

This is Christ's order/pattern for the church—that spiritual leaders provide Biblical learning and training so that all believers become mature unified Christians actively serving and doing the work of the ministry while uplifting one another. The primary focus of the church is to reach, teach, empower and release!

In our current culture of political and racial tension, deceitful schemes with evil purpose and many winds of false doctrine, it is imperative that we stay on course with our calling, ministry and mission.

"GO therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; (Matthew 28: 19-20 (NKJV)

Regardless of what is going on around us, our mission remains the same—to reach the lost and to make disciples. It is so easy to get caught up in the undue use of exaggeration or the rhetoric of our time. The platform that social media provides airs everyone's opinion and philosophy. Everyone has a right to their opinion and the right to express that opinion. I have always encouraged individuals to speak up and share how they feel. However, as spiritual leaders, our opinions should never drain out the Message of God's Word that we are sent to deliver.

"Hold fast the pattern of sound words..... in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 1:13 (NKJV)

Another Translation...

"So keep at your work, this faith and love rooted in Christ, exactly as I set it out

DAY 20 - BEARERS OF TRUTH

for you. It's as sound as the day you first heard it from me. Guard this precious thing placed in your custody by the Holy Spirit who works in us." (MSG)

I love Paul's exhortation to Timothy in Chapter 2:14-17...

"Repeat these basic essentials over and over to God's people. Warn them before God against pious nitpicking, which chips away at the faith. It just wears everyone out. Concentrate on doing your best for God, work you won't be ashamed of, laying out the truth plain and simple. Stay clear of pious talk that is only talk. Words are not mere words, you know. If you're not backed by a godly life, they accumulate as poison in the soul."

Paul encouraged Timothy to take courage in tough times and to defend the truth of the Gospel message. As bearers of the truth, we cannot get trapped into arguing and bickering over irrelevant issues or subjects.

Paul's instructions to Timothy about leading other believers includes two important themes—avoiding pointless bickering and holding to sound Biblical teaching. Arguments over non-essential issues quickly turn into feuds, poisoning the body of Christ, just as gangrene attacks the physical body. He reminds Timothy that gentleness and patience are the keys. (bibleref.com)

It is imperative that the variety of leaders positioned in the church to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, avoid the temptation to weigh in on subjects or matters that are not within your knowledge or calling. Remember, you are messenger of the Gospel, a bearer of good news. **PREACH THE WORD!**

"Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching." 2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV)

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things! So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing the Word of God." Romans 10:14-15, 17 (NKJV)

*"No one can have faith without hearing the message about Christ."
verse 17 (CEV)*

PRAYER: I am praying for God to raise up pastors, teachers, evangelist and laity to preach and share he Gospel of Jesus Christ, under a bold anointing, to a world and culture in need of hope. "Here I am Lord, Send Me!"

21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

DAY 21 - THE DAY OF THE LORD

The Book of Joel contains a total of three Chapters with four Sections of Prophecies.

- The immediate and latter day destruction of Israel
- Future Events/ The Day of the Lord
- The Restoration / The outpouring
- The Judgment

This was the day that disaster struck the Southern Kingdom of Judah without warning. An ominous black cloud descends upon the land in the form of dreaded locusts. In a matter of hours – every living green thing has been stripped bare.

It should not surprise us that society in general has moved in the direction of ancient Israel, when Judges states, "... every man did that which was right in his own eyes..."

Many in Western civilization have deliberately turned away from the Bible as its moral authority.

Joel 1: (God's man, seized this occasion to proclaim God's message) You think the locust are bad, wait until you see the final judgment of God. God will destroy His enemies while bringing unparalleled blessing to those who faithfully obey Him.

Joel brings a cry and a divine call to return unto the Lord!

Joel 2:1 "Blow the trumpet" "Sound an alarm" (Rally the Troops) v. 16 "Gather the people" Jude 3 "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints."

Do Battle! When apostasy arises, when false teachers emerge, when the truth of God is attacked – it is time to fight for the faith.

Joel 2:11 The Lord gives voice before His army, For His camp is great; For strong is the One who executes His Word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible. Who Can Endure It?

First things First: A call to Repentance! (Salvation)

- Return and He will heal
- Return And He will bind us up

DAY 21 - THE DAY OF THE LORD

Joel 2:12-13, "The Lord says ... Turn to me with all your heart. Rend your hearts and not your garments... return to the Lord your God."

2 Chronicles 7:14 - 15 "If my people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Joel calls a Solemn (Sacred) Assembly. He declares that this sacred assembly will be a time of sorrow (repentance) that will lead to supplication (total unconditional surrender) that leads to joy and celebration (outpouring, blessing, restoration and abundance).

Like Judah, many are utterly powerless in a world of deception and enticement. They have been so leavened with the spirit of the world that they do not know what it means to pray in the spirit and live a deep, full, all conquering life in the Lord.

They Simply Exist!

Many are like a shallow well that must be primed in order to give forth water. When the water does come, it comes with grumbling and protest.

The church must never forget the need to return to the Lord. Prayer will produce a positive and powerful result for the Kingdom of God. There are two major influences in our culture today, 1. The pervasive influence of sinful society, 2. The life-changing influence of the Word and Spirit. May these 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting result in.... 1. A time of repentance, supplication and spiritual development, 2. A time of joy, victory and celebration!

PRAYER: We pray that the Word of God will be our foundation, conviction and belief. May the Word create in us a repentant heart that leads to a full, all conquering victorious life of salvation. May we walk above deception and enticement to a Spirit-Led life. We return unto the Lord to rend our heart in the depths of true dedication and overwhelming celebration of deliverance, outpouring and abundance!

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA PRAYER COVENANT COMMITMENT

I commit in the Spirit to continue to pray weekly with other Pastors and Intercessors in ENC for God to bless our state.

MY PRAYER COMMITMENT IS TO:

1. PRAY daily for Spiritual Awakening
2. PRAY for Laborers to reach the Harvest
3. PRAY for Favor with State and Community Leaders
4. PRAY for Truth and Integrity to Prevail and Guide our Nation
5. PRAY for Love, Respect, Humility and Grace for all People
6. PRAY for Families to be Strong in Faith and the Foundational Unit of our Society
7. PRAY for the Healing of Broken Relationships
8. PRAY for Spiritual Leaders to be Encouraged in the Lord
9. PRAY for Financial Increase to Support Ministry
10. PRAY for the Ability to Navigate through Complex Decisions and a Pandemic Culture

“Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.” (Matthew 18:19 NKJV)

CHURCH OF GOD – ENC PRAYER COMMISSION

To share a prayer request, call: 919-284-3039 ext. 201
or email: absec@enccog.org

Intercession & Discipleship Prayer Emphasis
21 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING
January 4 - 24, 2021

The “21 DAYS OF PRAYER & FASTING” Campaign is a time of daily intentional prayer and discipleship for personal spiritual development. This manual is designed to lead you in a specific prayer emphasis to develop a discipline for a daily encounter with God in a three dimensional concept and format:

1. Devotional 2. Scripture Reading 3. Prayer

The daily devotionals in this manual can be used to lead in personal growth, prayer groups or congregational prayer discipleship.

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NKJV)

“Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance, but laying hold of His willingness.” Martin Luther.

**“God does nothing except in response to believing prayer.”
John Wesley**



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