

# 21 Days of Prayer

A Companion to the "A Better Story" Message Series



Grace Chapel  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

# 21 Days of Prayer

This guide belongs to:

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The Way I Will Fast for 21 Days:

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People With Whom I Will Be Fasting and Praying:

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# Introduction

The following guide has 21 days' worth of devotional thoughts and prayer prompts. This is a resource that can be used by individuals, families, small groups, and the like. The prayers that have been crafted were done so hopefully and purposefully. It is my hope that at some point in praying from **Luke 10** and **Colossians 4**, we will all hear the call in our lives to be workers sent into the harvest field, and that we would be watchful and thankful for opportunities we get to share God's love and truth. The concepts that follow will both aim to compliment the texts we hear together in worship on Sunday mornings, and to move us from prayer to action.

The guide is available as a downloadable PDF, both online and in our app, and also as daily emails sent to your inbox. If you have them all in one shot, I recommend printing it out and writing additional notes and prayers alongside what has been prepared. Otherwise, you may find it helpful to keep a journal for this three-week exercise to record prayers, peoples' names, and ways that you see God move and answer.

May God bless you as we seek him together.

**Rob Shaver**

Discipleship Minister

# Day One

## PRAYING IN COMMUNITY

In **Luke 11:1**, Jesus' disciples see Him praying. When Jesus finishes they ask Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

Jesus complies, and the instructions He gives have been used as both a word-for-word guide and a model to be followed. Either way, a distinction that can be overlooked while reading the prayer is the use of pronouns used by the Lord. Each aspect of the Lord's Prayer uses the term "us:" "give us," "let us," "forgive us," etc.

There are two prayers we are asking everyone to pray today and for the next 20 days. **Luke 10:2** is Jesus's instructions to the 72 when they are sent out on the limited commission. Seventy-two people praying together for God to send more workers into the proverbial harvest field.

**Colossians 4:2-6** has aspects of community and prayer as well. The Apostle Paul is calling the whole Colossian church to pray, and the request is, "pray for *us*, too."

As you pray this month, consider these things. Pray for yourself—but pray for "us" too. Pray by yourself, but also find times to pray with others in your family, your small group, your church, or with whomever God puts you.

If you haven't already, ask a couple of people to partner with you in this time of praying and fasting. Pray especially for one another, and go the extra mile to lift up and encourage one another in your efforts.

## PRAYER

*Lord, as we enter into this time of praying and fasting as a church, may it be an exercise of community. Help us to be one, as you and your son are one. May we be in you as you are in us. May our unity may be made complete so the world will know Jesus as Christ.*



# Day Two

## PRAY WITH HUMILITY

On Sunday we were reminded of the time when Peter put his own version of how things should play out as more important than God's. When it comes to sharing good news and bringing in God's harvest, the Bible is chock full of surprising accounts and unlikely heroes.

**First Corinthians 1:27** says, "God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong." Then, **verse 30**, "It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus."

## PRAYER

*Lord, we know that you are the author of life. We trust in your plan and your wisdom. Help us to not let our desires interfere with our service to you. May we remember that our own entry into your kingdom is not based on any good deed we've done. We weren't called because of our power, influence, wisdom or wealth. We were like sheep without a shepherd and you rescued us. Remind us of that good news. Change us so that we see the world as you see it.*

# Day Three

## PRAY WITH PERSISTENCE

"Then Jesus said to them, 'Suppose one of you went to your friend's house at midnight and said to him, 'Friend, loan me three loaves of bread. A friend of mine has come into town to visit me, but I have nothing for him to eat.' Your friend inside the house answers, 'Don't bother me! The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.' I tell you, if friendship is not enough to make him get up to give you the bread, your boldness will make him get up and give you whatever you need. So I tell you, ask, and God will give to you. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will open for you. Yes, everyone who asks will receive. The one who searches will find. And everyone who knocks will have the door opened. If your children ask for a fish, which of you would give them a snake instead? Or, if your children ask for an egg, would you give them a scorpion? Even though you are bad, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:5-13 NCV)

This is what Jesus says to his disciples after they ask him how to pray, and after he teaches them what we call "The Lord's Prayer."

What are the things that would keep you from praying with persistence these next 18 days?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## PRAYER

*Lord, I know that you are a good father who loves me as his child. Thank you for the right, in Christ, to be called your son/daughter. Help me to care enough about the harvest field that I will pray for workers and opportunities every day. Remove the barriers that will get in my way. I pray also for those I am partnering with in prayer. Give them clear paths and apt reminders to be diligent in prayer.*

# Day Four

## PRAY FOR PEOPLE YOU LOVE

"Brothers and sisters, the thing I want most is for all the Jews to be saved. That is my prayer to God." (Romans 10:1, NCV)

The Apostle Paul had a deep love for his Jewish brothers and sisters. In the chapter before he wrote the above lines, he said this: "I wish I could help my Jewish brothers and sisters, my people. I would even wish that I were cursed and cut off from Christ if that would help them" (Romans 9:3 NCV).

Who are the people you love the most—people you'd desperately want to see reconciled with God?

## PRAYER

*Lord, help me to love you more than anything else. May the love I have for people grow to reflect the love you have for them. Help me to take up my cross daily to follow Jesus. I pray for the hearts and lives of the ones I love the most. It's no good if they gain the whole world yet forfeit their souls. Do whatever it takes to reach them, Lord. May I be your willing servant.*

# Day Five

## PRAY FOR DIRECTION

Some of the great conversion stories in Acts are not when an apostle shared the gospel with his mother or childhood friend, but when they followed the prompting of the Holy Spirit and helped the person God was already preparing for His kingdom.

Remember the Ethiopian Eunuch? Cornelius? Lydia?

The Lord of the harvest may call you to reap where you have not sown. Are you ready?

## PRAYER

*Lord, put me in the right place at the right time to speak the right words to the right person. Give me wisdom and make me alert. I know you have decided the exact times and places that we all would live and be. Open my eyes to see every encounter as a gift and opportunity from you, and help my prayer partners as well. May we all be in step with your Holy Spirit.*



# Day Six

## PRAY THAT PRAYER CAN BE ENOUGH

In our results oriented culture we often feel that if we aren't busy we aren't getting anything done. That thinking can easily contaminate our Christianity. Certainly we don't want to use prayer as an excuse not to obey God in other ways, but far be it from us to think that our human wisdom and strength can get more done than God can. *Praying is doing.*

From our greatest example, Jesus: "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:31-32 NLT).

Imagine all the different things that Jesus could have done for Peter. The best thing was to pray.

## PRAYER

*Lord, you hold us all in your hands. You are the Almighty, the King of all kings, the Lord of lords. We praise your holy name. We repent of the kind of thinking that makes our works and our teaching and our moving more important than yours. Unless you build the house, Lord, we labor in vain. We can plant and water, but you make things grow! We ask for you to move. We ask for you to send workers. We ask for you to open doors and open hearts for the gospel.*

# Day Seven

## PRAY TO BE BOLD

Whether speaking to a stranger or sharing with a loved one, a common story amongst Christians is not speaking up when we ought to. We are gripped by fear and anxiety rather than compelled by love and emboldened by God's Spirit. The Samaritan woman at the well returned to her hometown bursting with joy at strangely good news, "He told me everything I ever did!"

In Acts 4, after Peter and John had been arrested then released, they gathered the believers together to pray: "And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word" (**Acts 4:29 NLT**).

We tend to deal a lot less with actual threats from the government or enemies. Our biggest threats are usually the voices in our own heads.

## PRAYER

*Lord, you are the Lord of the harvest. You are the creator and sustainer of everything. If you are for us, who can be against us? Renew my confidence and joy in my salvation. Perfect love casts out fear. Fill me with your love, Lord, and let it overflow out of my life into the lives of those around me. Help me to know when it is time to speak. Give me the right words. Give your servants great boldness in preaching your word!*

# Day Eight

## PRAY TO LIVE A BOLD LIFE

"Dear friends, I warn you as 'temporary residents and foreigners' to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world." (1 Peter 2:11-12 NLT)

Sometimes actions speak much louder than words.

Maybe you've heard this one: "Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary."

## PRAYER

*Good Lord, you know we aren't perfect. You made us perfect through the blood of your son and have called us out of darkness. You call us to be holy as you are holy. Help us to cast off the sin that easily entangles and run the race marked out for us. May we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. May we live in such a way that people will see our good works and give you all the glory you deserve.*

# Day Nine

## PRAY FOR OPEN EYES

This past Sunday we learned about the woman at the well. She traded in the story she'd been living for the new story Jesus was willing to share with her. We are praying and fasting because we've done something similar with our own stories.

Look at Paul's prayer for the church in Ephesus. Pray through it today for yourself and those you've committed to pray for and with this week.

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe." (Ephesians 1:17-19 NIV)

As we seek to join the Lord in his mission to seek and save the lost, may we continually grow in our knowledge of our hope and his wisdom and power.

## PRAYER

*God of our Lord Jesus Christ, glorious Father, I want to know you better. Give me the spiritual wisdom and insight that come from the Holy Spirit. Make my eyes focused and clear, so that I may see exactly what you're calling me to do. Help me to understand the hope you have chosen me to receive, and to know your incomparable great power that works for us as believers.*



# Day Ten

## PRAY WITH PATIENCE AND EXPECTATION

The hope we have is that we will see God move in extraordinary ways. That will mean lots of excitement and a lot of stories being shared about God's goodness and works. Even with that expectation there's a realization that some of the greatest stories we've heard that stem from the prayers of the most faithful people in history are NOT answers received by God in a 21-day window.

**Genesis 24:15** is an example of a prayer being answered before the person praying had even finished making their appeal to God.

**Exodus 3:7-10** is the account of God answering the cries of the Israelites after 400 years of them crying out to him!

We pray while holding that tension in our hearts. We balance the desire to see fruit come quickly with the faith that God works in ways and times that we cannot always see or understand.

## PRAYER

*Lord, as we pray for workers for the harvest and opportunities to share good news, help us to be patient. May we also be full of anticipation, expecting each day that you are answering those prayers. Help my friends who are praying with me to be hopeful and faithful as well. Open our eyes to see and hearts to know when we are not just the person praying, but when we are the answer to someone else's prayers.*

# Day Eleven

## PRAY THAT PRAYER WILL MOVE YOU

“What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don’t show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, “Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well”—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?” (James 2:14-16 NLT)

In the same way, how can we fast and pray for the gospel to be proclaimed clearly and lives to be changed, and yet not speak or act when God gives us opportunities?

## PRAYER

*Father, you have created us in Christ Jesus to do good works; works that you have prepared in advance for us to do. May my faith and my actions be aligned with your plans. We don’t want to be only hearers of your word, but doers also. We don’t want to be people who pray for opportunities, but people who faithfully take them. Move us to action.*

As you have been praying for people you love, people you know, and the general harvest, how is God prompting you?

List the names of three people and needs they have that you and your friends could meet.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Day Twelve

## PRAY WITH GRATITUDE

"When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. ... 'Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.'" (John 13:12, 17 NIV)

As we look to serve and give to others, let us pause to remember what has first been done for us.

## PRAYER

*Savior, remind me of all the times and all of the different ways you have knelt before me and washed my feet. Remind me of all the people who, from love and faith, helped me along the way in big ways and small. Lord, send workers into the field so that more and more can know your love by way of your faithful and humble servants. Make me a servant Lord, make me like you.*

# Day Thirteen

## PRAY AND PUT ON, PART 1

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” (Colossians 3:12-14 NIV)

If you have been faithfully praying **Luke 10:2** and Colossians **4:2-4**, it’s possible to be looking for how God might be answering those prayers outside of you and your life.

Hopefully God is moving by sending workers into the harvest field and opening doors for the gospel to be shared.

How is this time of prayer and fasting changing you?

Today as you pray, pray remembering that you are holy and dearly loved. Pray, aware of the kind of spiritual clothing God has set out for you to be wearing.

## PRAYER

*Lord, transform me by the renewing of my mind. Help me to be more like you every single day. Outwardly our bodies are wasting away, but inwardly you make us new everyday. May the light of my life shine. May I be like a candle in the middle of the room. May we be like a city on a hill. May our lives and good deeds be seen by our neighbors, and may they give all glory and honor to our wonderful creator and king.*



# Day Fourteen

## PRAY AND PUT ON, PART 2

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes... Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” (Ephesians 6:11, 14–18 NIV)

The more we feel the call to be one of those workers and the more opportunities God puts in our lives to share the gospel, the more ready we need to be.

## PRAYER

*Lord, we know that there are unseen forces working against the advancement of your kingdom. As your people, we need your guidance and protection. May we put on the things you’ve lovingly and faithfully given to us, and may we stand firm. Help us to be ready with the gospel. This week as I start to reach out to some people that I know, I pray that you will work through those efforts to soften their hearts and pique interest in knowing you.*

*Specifically I pray for (names and needs):*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Day Fifteen

## WATCHFUL AND THANKFUL

Zacchaeus's story in Luke 19 happens because Jesus notices him.

God is going to do some amazing things through you and your friends this year. Many people you are already connected with are yearning for a relationship with the Lord, as are many others who you've never met.

Today as you pray through **Colossians 4:2-4**, ask that God will give you an eye to see the Zacchaeuses in your life.

## PRAYER

*Lord of all creation, open my eyes. Who are the people I encounter in my life, yet overlook? Show me the ones to whom you are calling, but are waiting for some acknowledgment or an invitation. Keep making me into the humble servant I want to be. I repent of the times I've tried to shape your kingdom after my desires or fill your church with the people I'd like to be around. Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

# Day Sixteen

## BE IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." (Galatians 5:24-25 NIV)

When it comes time to share the good news with others, some opportunities are lost because we have already judged people to be uninterested. Maybe we've already decided that they will listen, but they'll never respond.

Are those judgments from our flesh or the Spirit of God?

In Acts 16, we see that the church in Philippi is established with the first Christians there: a woman, a slave and a gentile... all people who could have easily been overlooked in that world and time.

What prejudices and assumptions do we need to give up today?

## PRAYER

*Lord, change the way I see people. Help me to no longer view others from a worldly point of view, but to know that you have called the foolish things of this world to shame the wise; the weak things to shame the strong; the lowly and despised things to nullify the things that are significant. Remind me, Lord, that when you called me it was not for who I was, what I'd accomplished or what I looked like. Help me be in step with your Spirit.*

# Day Seventeen

## PRAY FOR THEM TO BELIEVE

"Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony... They said to the woman, 'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.'" (John 4:39, 42 NIV)

We can tell people about Jesus. We can testify to what He's done for us in our lives. That will make an impact. Ultimately, we want them to encounter the Savior of the world themselves and experience the joy and salvation that we know.

## PRAYER

*Savior of the world, make yourself known to the world around me. Make yourself known through me and my life and my story. Help my church to grow together, that we may be witnesses in our neighborhoods and marketplaces while we shine brightly as a body of believers.*



# Day Eighteen

## PRAY FOR POWER

“When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.” (1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

What does someone need to hear? How can I convince them about Jesus?

Though we certainly don’t want to sound uninformed, we can take comfort in knowing that one of the greatest evangelists of all time had a very plain message. Plain, but empowered by God.

## PRAYER

*Almighty God, we trust you to give us the right words to say. We trust that you will help people hear what they need to hear. We believe that you’ll be faithful to send workers and open doors for the gospel. Send your spirit to demonstrate your power in wonderful ways in people’s lives—so that they would know and believe the good news of Jesus Christ. I pray specifically for these people, that they would see you and come to know you:*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Day Nineteen

## TRUE FASTING

You'd be remiss to spend time fasting without reading from **Isaiah 58** at least once. Read the whole chapter for context. The Lord is asking them what kind of fasting they think He expects from them, and then in **verses 6-9** he gives them the answer:

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:  
to loose the chains of injustice  
and untie the cords of the yoke,  
to set the oppressed free  
and break every yoke?  
Is it not to share your food with the hungry  
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—  
when you see the naked, to clothe them,  
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?  
Then your light will break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing will quickly appear;  
then your righteousness will go before you,  
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.  
Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;  
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I."

God is not secretive in that he desires mercy over sacrifice.

Fasting is a time of sacrifice on our part. God certainly welcomes it, but if we are not living lives full of mercy...

## PRAYER

*God who hears us; hear our plea. Lord, we want to be with you in all things. We want to be called friends of God. We want to be your co-workers in the field. We don't want our fasting to be sacrifice without mercy. We don't want to be hearers of your word and not doers. Move us, guide us, show us where we can be extenders of your mercy to those around us who need it.*

# Day Twenty

## KEEP PRAYING

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

We only have a couple of days left in our 21-day campaign for praying and fasting.

Take some time to reflect on this journey. What practices have you developed in these three weeks that you want to have continue in your life? What areas of prayer would you like to focus on more?

## PRAYER

*Sustainer of all things, sustain me. In a dry and thirsty land, may I yearn for you. Turn my weaknesses into strength for the glory of your name and for the good of your kingdom. Each day helps me to die to myself and live for you. Show me your ways, O Lord, and teach me your paths. And thank you, Lord! Thank you for filling me up. Thank you for always giving and always being a reason for rejoicing.*

# Day Twenty-One

## PRAY CONTINUALLY...

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." (Ephesians 6:18 NIV)

Keep praying for one another.

Over the last three weeks, the Lord has done some amazing things. The evil one has also been working to meddle, distract, tempt and undermine. Remember, "our struggle is not against flesh and blood."

## PRAYER

*God of angel armies, we have willing spirits but flesh that is weak. Keep us alert and aware of the devil who prowls around, seeking to devour us. Free us from the sin that so easily entangles. May we be wise to flee from the devil and courageous to stand firm in our faith. We know that you have given us your church as a stronghold; may we encourage each other every day so that our hearts don't get hard. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*