

PRAYER
FOCUS
BOOKLET

MAKE **ME** LIKE
YOU LORD

DEVOTIONS ON BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS



main street
C H U R C H

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What If...?

What if an entire church committed to stopping each day to be reminded of God's presence and power?

What would happen? What would that look like?
Would that church be different?

We desire to be that kind of church. We want to know the power of God's presence in our lives individually so we can make a difference in our world corporately.

We want to go inward and upward so we can go outward.

This prayer booklet is a resource to help you and equip you to live your life in the awareness of God's presence by committing to a rhythm of prayer.

Prayer that will grow you in your relationship with Jesus. Prayer that will instill in you God's heart for His church. Prayer that will lead you to intentionally and consistently hear God's voice so you can live with an awareness of His presence in your life.

Here's how.

This booklet is going to give you insights, scripture and questions that will help you learn to hear the voice of Jesus daily. Each week you will be given direction on how to live in response to God's presence and on how to prepare yourself for prayer and what to pray for.

It's all about learning to answer the question we began with.

What If...?

LET'S GET STARTED

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READ - LISTEN - PRAY!

In the following pages are some weekly devotionals and prayer points for you to follow. You will be given different passages of Scripture to read and as you read through a passage of Scripture, it is essential to ask God what he wants to reveal to you from the passage and then pray it back to Him.

READ

- Pick a Bible reading plan (Bible in a year, NT in a year, 30 day plan, two week plan, etc)
- Read the scripture passage for the day
- As you are reading it, in your journal write out any verses that pop out at you or speak to you in a particular way (that's the Holy Spirit speaking to you)

LISTEN

- Ask Jesus to reveal to you in a deeper way the truths from the passages of scripture that you wrote in your journal
- Ask Jesus if there is anything in the passage of scripture that you read today that He wants you to obey
- Ask Jesus if there is anything in the passage of scripture that you read today that He wants you to believe (something that you may know in your head is true but isn't in your heart)
- Ask Him if there is anything that He wants to reveal to you about His character, through the passage of scripture
- Ask Him if there is anything that He wants to teach you from the passage of scripture, something that you can apply to your life right now

- Ask Him if there are any actions that you need to avoid or actions that you need to start doing from the passage of scripture

PRAY

- Thank Jesus for what He showed you in the Word today
- Confess any sin that He revealed to you today
- Pray the truths of the scripture
- Pray that you will follow through on what He showed you today
- Pray for your family, friends, the church, ministries, etc.

As you pray and spend time meditating on the truths in His Word, the Holy Spirit will begin to tenderize your heart. Be persistent in asking Him to open the eyes of your heart. The Holy Spirit will gradually cause your insight to increase.

Make sure you record your thoughts in your journal as you read-listen-pray through the Bible. Write down the ideas that come to you, prayers and commitments.

For further study here are some links to some teaching on prayer from Pastor Shawn:

PRAYER

mypcc.ca/portfolio-item/prayer

PERSEVERING IN PRAYER

mypcc.ca/portfolio-item/persistence-in-prayer

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EFFECTIVE PRAYER & JOURNALING

One of the things that we put a high priority on at Promontory Ministries is the fact that we believe God speaks personally to people. We want to say right from the start that you don't have to go to a priest, pastor, televangelist, or your horoscope to hear from God. All you need to do is go to the bestselling book (the Bible) that He wrote and we guarantee He will speak to you.

This is called the discipline of Journaling. We have included some information for you below on how to get started. We know that God has some great and exciting things he wants to share with you.

FIVE THINGS TO BRING WHEN YOU JOURNAL

- 1. BIBLE** – If journaling is new to you, you may want to use a Bible that is easy to read. We recommend and teach from the New Living Translation.
- 2. PEN/HIGHLIGHTER** – When you are reading through the Bible, feel free to mark up the passages that really impress you. Circle words or underline sentences that speak to you as you are reading (note: it is O.K. to write in your Bible).

- 3. JOURNAL** – Of course this is an important part of the process. You can use any kind of wordless book, be creative and find something that appeals to you.
- 4. READING SCHEDULE** – One of the best online resources for finding a Bible reading plan is youversion.com you can download this APP to your phone or tablet or visit it online to download a reading plan.
- 5. DAILY PLANNER** – As you're journaling you will discover that your mind sometimes wanders towards things you need to do or people you need to call. Simply take a moment to write them down so that your mind remains uncluttered and focused.



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When you look at a family it is often easy to see the resemblance between parents and children. You can tell whose kids belong to whom because of their family resemblance. They have the same eyes and smile or they talk or walk the same way. It's quite amazing how a child naturally picks up the looks and mannerisms of their parents. It's the same for a Christian. A man or woman who commits to getting to know their heavenly Father will naturally begin to look and act like Him. God loves it when that happens. His heart is that we would be like Him and that our lives would be reflection of His character.

That is what this prayer focus booklet will focus on. Over the next number of weeks we are going to ask Jesus to make us more like Him. We'll look at a number of principles, characteristics and actions that when understood and practiced will naturally lead us to become more like Jesus.

So take a moment and ask Jesus to prepare you to receive all He wants to do in your life over the next seven weeks and to bring you to a place where you begin to look and act more and more like your Savior.

I am praying with you and for you,

PASTOR SHAWN



HOW IT **WORKS**

Each week will begin with a devotional written by one of our staff. Then for the next week you will daily be given Scripture to read, a question to ask Jesus and then be directed to pray into what Jesus speaks to you about.

We encourage you to get a Journal for yourself to write your thoughts and prayers in. Be intentional about this. Write down what Jesus shows you and speaks to you about as you go through the daily devotionals.

We also encourage you to use the New Living Translation of the Bible. It is the translation we use to teach from and is the version we have used for the Scriptures listed.



Thankfulness

Jesse Criss - Student Ministry Pastor

At first glance the topic of thankfulness seems really easy. Most of us know how to be thankful. We recognize we have a lot to be thankful for. We live in a country that has an incredible amount of freedom and liberty. We have a roof over our heads. We may have a car to drive or at least public transit we can take. There are options for food at the grocery store and clean drinkable water coming from our taps whenever we want. I could really keep going on about all the blessings we have in life. The reality is we have a lot to be thankful for.

However, I think we have two primary issues when it comes to thankfulness. First, we struggle with whom to thank for the good things we have. Our world thinks the thanks belong to us. After all, you have worked hard for the second home, you earned that boat, and you sacrificed time with your family and friends for the fancy house on the hill. Thankfulness has almost become a pat on one's back. However, as Christians we should believe and practice thanking God for what we have. He gave it to you. None of our stuff is actually ours, in reality it belongs to God. He has chosen to bless you and it's this blessing that leads us to our second issue around thankfulness.

“...we need to not only thank God for the things he provides in our lives, but we need to have a posture of thankfulness even when He takes things away.”

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We often believe we are entitled to blessings. This is where the problem is, sometimes God chooses to take something away, and after all it was His in the first place. We think it belongs to us... so we get angry, bitter, and hateful to the one who took it away, God.

In my own life the best example of this played out when my 21 year old friend Martin died suddenly and tragically. I remember sitting with people at the funeral who were sad that Martin was gone. They were also very angry at the One that took him. Most people assumed Martin's Dad Herman was angry with God for taking Martin. As I sat with Herman he instead recognized that Martin belonged to God. He was able to take care of Martin for a while on this earth, but in the end Martin was God's. So there at his son's funeral I saw Herman devastated by sadness, and demonstrating thankfulness to God for having the time with his son. The situation reminds me of the worship song "Blessed Be The Name" in one of the courses it reads, "You give and take away, You give and take away, My heart will choose to say, Lord, blessed be Your name".

See we need to not only thank God for the things he provides in our lives, but we need to have a posture of thankfulness even when He takes things away. This week I want to challenge you to thank God not only for the good blessings in your life, but also come to a place where you can thank Him for the hard times as well.



MONDAY

Read – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-1

Ask – God, what circumstances today do I need to be thankful for?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you to focus your prayers on - actually thanking Him.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to help us be a church that thanks Him for all the little things He does for our church and community.

TUESDAY

Read – Colossians 3:15-17

Ask – God, do I thank you for the things you do in my life? Or do I just thank myself?

Personal Prayer – Use what God reveals to you and pray through the issues.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to show us as a church how to best share the good news of Jesus with our community.

WEDNESDAY

Read – Philippians 4:6-7

Ask – God, where do I need you to show up in my life?

Personal Prayer – Spend some time praying through the needs you have in your life and write them down. Then thank God as He meets or exceeds those needs.

Corporate Prayer – Pray for the various ministries of our church; Kidcity, Youth, Adult Ministries, Life Groups, Worship.

THURSDAY

Read – Psalm 105:1-6

Ask – Ask God to reveal to you someone you need to tell about Jesus and what He has done in your life.

Personal Prayer – Pray for strength, wisdom, and knowledge as you share your faith today.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to help us be a church that is intentional about reaching people who are far from Christ.

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FRIDAY

Read – Ephesians 5:20

Ask – God, what are all the things in my life I have to be thankful for? (Use your journal and make a list).

Personal Prayer – Pray for each item on your list using these words “God the father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ thank you for_____”.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to show you the same thing about your local church and pray through the list with the same word statement.

SATURDAY

Read – James 1:17-18

Ask – God, what does it mean that I’m a “prized possession”?

Personal Prayer – Pray through the response God gives you.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to continue to help us be a church that treats all people as “prized possessions”.

SUNDAY

Read – Psalm 95:1-7

Ask – Ask God to give you a joy and passion as your worship at church this morning.

Personal Prayer – Spend time thanking God for this journey in thankfulness this week.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to continue to fill His church with people who are filled and overflowing with thankfulness and praise towards God.

WEEK

2

Holiness

Shawn Vandop – Lead Pastor

When you hear the word “holiness” what comes to mind? For many years I understood the word “Holy” by the things you don’t do. You don’t swear. You don’t dress a certain way. You don’t hang out with certain kinds of people. You don’t watch certain shows. You don’t dance. You don’t drink. You read your Bible every morning and pray at least twice a day. You simply follow a list of rules and you will be holy. What I basically believed is that holy people have no fun.

But then I would see people swing to the other side of the pendulum and confuse holiness with happiness. In fact most people live their lives pursuing happiness and sadly happiness has led a lot of people astray. They say things like, “But God wants me to be happy doesn’t He?” I hate to make you unhappy but God is way more committed to your holiness than your happiness. He is way more focused

If you live your life with a bent towards pursuing happiness you will end up living a self-centered life rather than a God centered life.

on helping you make life decisions that lead to you becoming more holy than happy. If you live your life with a bent towards pursuing happiness you will end up living a self-centered life rather than a God centered life. Happiness at the cost of holiness is a dangerous path to walk because we will end up walking away from the things that God wants to use to make us holy.

So what is ‘holiness?’ To be Holy is to be distinct and separate and different. Holy is what God is. He is unique with no rivals or competition. He is completely morally pure. Holy is what

God is and what He wants you and me to be.

So then – how do you become Holy?

You always begin with God. There is no chance for us to be holy until we first recognize that God is holy. When I gave my heart to Jesus I

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immediately entered into the realm of the holy. God saved me through His shed blood and set me apart for Himself moving me from the kingdom of this world into the Kingdom of God. It's in that understanding that I get a glimpse of who God really is. I begin to learn and see what it means to serve a holy God.

In order for you and I to live a holy life we have to personally know our Holy God. He sets the standard and gives the definition for holiness. That's why God tells us in the Bible that we "...must be holy because I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15, Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2, 20:7). The standard for being holy is found in knowing who God is.

Becoming holy like God is holy is a journey that leads us to freedom and wholeness. If you are serious about living a holy life here are few things you can expect:

- **Holiness will cost you your sins.** If you really want to be holy than you will do all you can to rid your life of sin.
- **Holiness challenges lukewarm living.** A life of holiness seeks to know God in all His holiness. A commitment to holiness will challenge your lifestyle and your choices and forces us to confront the idols we worship and remove the destructive habits we have become comfortable with.
- **Holiness will bring you closer to God.** God's desire is that you know Him more and more and for that to happen we must and need to invite Him to make us holy.

This week as you spend time with Jesus ask Him to make you more holy. Seek to know Him in His holiness and then invite Him to deal with your sin so that you will continue to look more and more like Jesus.



MONDAY

Read – Isaiah 6; Exodus 15:11; 1 Samuel 2:2; Psalm 86:8-10

Ask – Lord what do you want to show me about Your holiness?

Personal Prayer – Lord give me a clear picture of your holiness. Help me grasp the depth of your holiness. Thank you that you are holy, that you are perfect in purity and that you long to make me holy like you are holy.

Corporate Prayer – Father help us a church to have a greater respect for your holiness. May we worship you with greater awe and we invite you to lead our church into a greater awareness of your holiness.

TUESDAY

Read – Psalm 24:3-5; Isaiah 6:3-5; Habakkuk 1:13a

Ask – Lord where in my life do I need you to purify me? Please surface the impurities in my life that hinder me from becoming holy. (write down what the Holy Spirit shows you)

Personal Prayer – Lord thank you for your grace and love. Thank you that you want to set me free from those the impure things in my life that hinder my growth in you. (Use what God has shown you and confess to God your impurities and receive His love and forgiveness).

Corporate Prayer – Lord, make us a pure church. A church without spot or wrinkle. A church that longs to be pure and set apart for your glory. May others see your holiness through our church and be drawn to you.

WEDNESDAY

Read – 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Revelation 3:14-16; 1 Peter 1:14-16

Ask – Lord when you look at my life would you approve of how I live? Please show me the areas in my life where I am not practicing or growing in holiness.

Personal Prayer – Lord please lead me to live a life that stands on the foundation of what you call holy. Forgive me when I set my own standards for “holiness.” Lead me to be holy as you are holy.

Corporate Prayer – Spend some time praying for our church leaders today (Pastors/staff/Board) and ask God to protect them and lead them to live holy lives.

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THURSDAY

Read – 1 John 3:6-10; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Peter 2:9

Ask – Lord show me what I am abiding in. Where in my life do I tend to go to find satisfaction instead of you?

Personal Prayer – Lord lead me into a path of living that abides in who you are and what you've done for me. Forgive me of my sin and deliver me from continually falling into sin. Thank Him that I am your child.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that we would be a church where the Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin so that they can live in the freedom that God's holiness brings.

FRIDAY

Read – 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Philippians 4:8

Ask – Lord, what are the things in my life that I tend to think the most about? Help me to focus on your holiness and your ways and to see the best in people and circumstances.

Personal Prayer – Pray that you would live with the 'mind of Christ.'

Corporate Prayer – Pray that our church would be a place where the good things of God are championed and lived out.

SATURDAY

Read – Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:9-19

Ask – Lord, are there any areas of my life where I am dishonoring my body (your temple)?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for prayer today.

Corporate Prayer – Ask Jesus to show you someone you can pray for today who needs a physical touch in their body or someone who needs God's power to take steps to becoming more healthy.

SUNDAY

Read – Psalm 51:10-12

Ask – Lord, what in my life today do I need you to clean me in?

Personal Prayer – Ask God to create in you a clean heart and to give a fresh new joy in your life for what He has done for you and for what He is doing in you.

Corporate Prayer – Pray for our church today. Pray for all the services and ministries and for God to work in hearts. Pray for the holiness of God to invade our church today.

WEEK

3

Repentance

Eryn Moore – Community Life Pastor

Have you ever found yourself going in the wrong direction in life? Sure, we all have. I know that I have... many times. Whether it's while we're driving, hiking, or doing a variety of other activities... if we realize that we are going the *wrong way*, the logical and mature solution is to *stop, turn around, and go in the right direction*.

C.S. Lewis wrote *"Progress means getting nearer to the place you want to be. And if you have taken a wrong turning, then to go forward does not get you any nearer. If you are on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; and in that case the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man."*

We might feel that repentance is all about us, but in fact, our repentance begins with God's character, presence and initiative.

This turning around is what we call **Repentance**.

Somehow this 'turning around' seems much harder when it comes to personal things like relationships, and especially our relationship with God. We can struggle with the *what, when, where, why and how* of repentance. Perhaps we need to focus a little more on the **WHO**. Who are we repenting towards?

It's important to recognize the error in our direction and stop, but it's more important to actually take a step in the right direction. But who or what are we turning to?

We might feel that repentance is all about us, but in fact, our repentance begins with God's character, presence and initiative. The Bible says it is God's kindness and patience that leads us, or helps us turn around (Romans 2:4).

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Repentance is not just an invitation from God, it is a constant command of His throughout Scripture, and from the mouth of Jesus, to those who wish to live.

Prior to His ascension Jesus said, *“Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: ‘There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.’”* (Luke 24:46-47).

The Apostle Paul experienced the challenge and blessing of repentance first hand, and continued to preach its message throughout his ministry -*“God overlooked people’s ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him.”* (Acts 17:30)

To repent means to **change direction** and **go** the other way. Instead of continuing to live a life of sin, you make a sincere effort to live a life the way you know God wants you to live. Confession is part of this, but it is only the initial step of agreeing with God’s perspective (You’re right God, I’m wrong); repentance is surrendering to God’s perspective and leadership with our attitudes and actions (You’re right God, I’m sorry, which way do I go from here). Repentance is the real life application of God’s truth and grace, and the best part is that He is willing to help us if we let Him. Not only that, but God calls us to be a source of strength and encouragement for each other as we journey together. Accountability with others ensures that we don’t walk alone through the battlefield of life.

I have experienced the deep power and freedom that comes through walking the path of repentance with Jesus as my guide and strength. He has impacted every area of my life, and the transformation has impacted my marriage and family with great blessing. I am passionate about seeing others experience the power of Christ through their repentance as well.



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MONDAY

Read – 2 Chronicles 7:14, Luke 13:1-5 & 2 Peter 3:9 [God's Heart for Repentance]

Ask – Jesus, as I spend time with you this week, help me understand how much You want people to experience the blessing of real repentance.

Personal Prayer – Lord, you have a huge love for lost people. Help me to take your commands and teaching on repentance more seriously as I learn and grow in my relationship with You this week.

Corporate Prayer – God, please develop our understanding and experience of repentance, and grow our heart for the lost people you love.

TUESDAY

Read – Luke 18:9-14, Matthew 7:3-5 & Romans 2:1-4 [Religious Repentance=Counterfeit Repentance]

Ask – Jesus, how I am focusing more on the sins of others, rather than dealing with my own sin? What sin do you want to confess and repent of today?

Personal Prayer – God, forgive me for my sin of _____, and help me to stop comparing my sin to others to make myself look better or feel better. Thank you for Your kindness, which leads me to repentance.

Corporate Prayer – Jesus, transform us into a church that sincerely & honestly deals with our own stuff, so that we can be free and empowered to assist others who need to repent. (Psalm 51:10-13)

WEDNESDAY

Read – Psalm 51:16-17 & John 5:1-15 [Pagan Repentance=Counterfeit Repentance]

Ask – Jesus, is there any way in which I've repented, but only with the motive of manipulating You or your blessing in my life? (eg. "If I tell God I'm sorry, then He has to do something for me, or bless the bad choices I'm still making)

Personal Prayer – Father God, create in me a sincere and honest heart that longs to see Your will done, rather than my own.

Corporate Prayer - Lord, help us practice and model the selfless and biblical repentance you call us to experience and teach to others.

THURSDAY

Read – Micah 6:6-8, 2 Corinthians 7:8-13 [Wordly Sorrow=Counterfeit

Repentance]

Ask – God, is there any sin in my life that I feel sorry about, but I'm not actually repenting of at this point?

Personal Prayer – Jesus, I choose to confess my sin of _____ and by your grace and strength, move beyond confession towards full repentance.

Corporate Prayer – Father God, I pray for stories of lasting life-change in our church this year. Stories that bring You Glory, and bring about the blessing of reconciliation between relationships that are broken by sin. (marriages, parents & children, friendships...).

FRIDAY

Read – Psalm 32 & Romans 6:1-4 [Taking Grace for Granted]

Ask – Lord, how have I abused or taken Your grace for granted this week?

Personal Prayer – Jesus, forgive me for ever taking your grace for granted. May I let Your grace transform me rather than using it as an excuse to sin all the more.

Corporate Prayer – Father God, I pray that your Holy Spirit would remind us of Your Holiness and grace as we corporately worship you together through song, communion and service. Help our perspective and appreciation of Who You are to be more accurate and sincere.

SATURDAY

Read – Galatians 6:1-5; Luke 17:1-4 & 1 Thessalonians 5:11 [Helping Others Repent]

Ask – Jesus, who in my life needs encouragement in their repentance?

Personal Prayer – Lord, is there anything I need to deal with in my own before I help this other person in their repentance? Please guard my heart from pride and other temptations as I reach out to them.

Corporate Prayer – Father God, make us a church that is relentless with truth and grace. Help us to confront and restore others in a spirit of gentleness, while keeping short accounts ourselves.

SUNDAY

Read – Proverbs 27:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; James 5:16 [Strength in Accountability]

Ask – Jesus, who in my life can I pursue accountability with so that we have greater strength in our path of repentance? (eg. a friend, family member, life group)

Personal Prayer – Lord, please lead me into greater community and accountability this week. Help me to take the initiative to be accountable and repent when needed.

Corporate Prayer – Father God, please strengthen the community, accountability and freedom in our church this year. Help us to keep short accounts with You and others through confession and repentance.

WEEK

4

Forgiveness

Shawn Vandop – Lead Pastor

Let me ask you a question, *'Are you a forgiving person?'* Seriously, think about it. Are you quick to forgive? Is forgiveness your natural reaction when someone offends or hurts you? My guess is that you're probably like me. When I get hurt or offended the first thing I do is hold an imaginary conversation with the person who owes me an apology. Those conversations are great because I'm always right and I always win. I envision telling that person what I think and all the imaginary people listening to my imaginary conversation always agree with me. It's pretty amazing, except for the imaginary part.

When we get hurt we tend to lose our grasp on reality. Let me explain how this works. Let's say I fell and got a deep gash in my leg. The first thing I would do is protect my wound and make sure no one touched it. I would be very concerned about my well being causing me to become very self-centered. That's what happens when we get hurt. The more pain we

experience the more self-centered we become. It's true isn't it? I know that when I'm in pain the only thing I'm interested in at that moment is... ME!

Self-centeredness is the bi-product of pain. When you've been hurt, abused, criticized or offended your focus becomes all about protecting your wounds.

Self-centeredness is the bi-product of pain. When you've been hurt, abused, criticized or offended your focus becomes all about protecting your wounds. Hurt creates distance which keeps us from getting the help we need. Our energy is poured into defending ourselves rather than taking steps to becoming whole. That's why God is

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so passionate about forgiveness and it's why he tells us to forgive (see Matthew 18:21-35). God knows that forgiveness is what actually heals our pain. The problem is that often the choice to forgive can hurt just as much or even more than the pain we were initially dealt. It's like going to the doctor and asking him to fix your leg without touching it because when he touches it, it hurts more. For many people forgiveness isn't worth the pain. However, that pain is the very thing that positions and prepares us to heal and forgiveness is God's loving way of beginning the healing process in your life. It's not easy and it's not comfortable but it's necessary.

It's like the old slogan says, "*no pain - no gain!*" When you choose to forgive you may not feel all that good about it at first, but if you stick with it God begins to heal you and before you know it you're no longer controlled or defined by the hurt that was done to you. I don't know about you, but if that's what it takes to experience a life free from anger, bitterness and resentment then that's a pain I'm willing to endure.

This week invite Jesus to show you how to forgive as He has forgiven you. If you can settle the forgiveness issues in your life you position yourself for a freedom in your life that is better than anything you could ever imagine. Un-forgiveness holds so many of us back but Jesus wants to move you forward and make you more like Him. One of the keys to seeing that happen is through forgiveness.



MONDAY

Read – Matthew 6:14-15; 1 John 1:9; Acts 3:19

Ask – Lord show me area(s) in my life where I am harboring un-forgiveness.

Personal Prayer – Confess your sin of un-forgiveness. Ask God to give you the strength to forgive.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that our church would be a place where we extend and express forgiveness freely.

TUESDAY

Read – Isaiah 43:25-26; Hebrews 10:1-18; Psalm 103:12

Ask – Lord who in my life have I chose to hold and remember their sin against them?

Personal Prayer – Help me to make the decision to not hold captive those who have sinned against me byu continuing to bring up their offenses. Help me to truly forgive.

Corporate Prayer – Take some time and pray for those who will be going to the next Encounter Retreat. Pray that they will find the freedom that forgiveness brings to our lives. (NOTE: if you have not attended an Encounter Retreat you can sign up here - <http://mypcc.ca/encountergod/>)

WEDNESDAY

Read – Micah 6:9-15

Ask – Lord who do I need to show compassion and grace to today?

Personal Prayer – Take some time and pray through this verse focusing on the attributes and character of God. Ask Him to develop these traits in your life as well.

Corporate Prayer - Pray that we would be a church that radiates a culture of forgiveness.

THURSDAY

Read – Matthew 6:9-15

Ask – Lord – where in my life am I not forgiving the way you forgive?

Personal Prayer – Use this Scripture as a model for your prayer time today.

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DEVOTIONS ON BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS

FRIDAY

Read – Isaiah 1:18; Matthew 26:28; Ephesians 1:7

Ask – Lord, show me the area(s) in my life where I need to appropriate your blood and receive your healing so that I can forgive?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as your prayer focus.

Corporate Prayer – Pray the blood of Jesus over your life and our church. Pray that people will discover the power of forgiveness that comes from the blood of Jesus.

SATURDAY

Read – Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:17-19

Ask – Lord, who are my enemies? Who if I am honest do I see as an enemy?

Personal Prayer – Pray for your enemies by name. Pray that God will bless them.

SUNDAY

Read – Daniel 9:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Ask – Lord, help me to see those who have hurt and offended me the same way you see me (because I have offended you with my sin). Make me aware of my need to continually live with an attitude of forgiveness.

Personal Prayer – Ask God to give you the perspective you need to live a life forgiving others.

Corporate Prayer – Pray for our church this morning. Pray that people will discover the love and forgiveness of God.



Obedience

Chris Ross – Children’s Pastor

I was not a very obedient child. When I tell people this today, some are surprised and others are not. But the fact remains, in my younger days I was a straight-up rebel-rouser! How ironic that I became a children’s pastor.

Being the youngest of 3 boys, people were always telling me what to do growing up. Many times I got tired of not having any say or power when it came to making decisions. So I’d rebel. By the time I reached 6th grade, I had garnered a pretty good reputation for being an unruly boy. When my parents, teachers and other authority figures told me to do something I didn’t like, I would reveal my surplus of nasty responses. Sometimes I would talk back, or mimic my teacher’s voice to my friends, subtly showing my lack of care for their authority. Other times I would just ignore their commands altogether and pretend I didn’t hear.

In a way, my authority issues as a child are not unique. Scripture tells us that we are all born with an authority problem. Obedience does not come naturally to any person since sin entered the world. Adam and Eve’s impulse to disobey and rebel against God in the Garden is the same impulse that exists in our hearts as well. We are not naturally obedient.

To complicate things, we face a world system that believes obedience is terribly un-cool. In our culture particularly, being known for your obedience to authority is not really in vogue. We live in a culture of picket lines and petitions. Speaking your mind and questioning authority are encouraged virtues. We are suspicious about everybody and anybody who is in a position of authority because we reason they must surely be “hiding something” or they “can’t be trusted” so we rebel, complain and grumble against them. And we do the same to church leaders as well. No wonder it is so difficult to swallow when our modern ears hear God’s word tell us, *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls”* (Heb 13:17).

The Christian way, is the way of obedience. But this cannot simply be conjured up. Though it is true that each of us can learn to behave in an obedient way, true obedience to our heavenly Father requires a transformation of the heart. What we want is not mere behavior modification, but new hearts, hearts that obey, hearts that want to obey!

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...true obedience to our heavenly Father requires a transformation of the heart. What we want is not mere behavior modification, but new hearts, hearts that obey, hearts that want to obey!

Through faith in Jesus we can be given this kind of heart through the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus himself “learned obedience from the things he suffered” (Heb 5:8). Jesus obeyed his heavenly Father completely; submitting himself to his Father’s every command. God promises to give us this same heart of obedience through faith in his obedient Son. The good news is that God can transform our rebellious hearts into hearts that yield to his commands. This week, may you grow in your obedience to Christ, your church, your boss or any other authority in your life as you spend time in God’s Word and as you become filled with his Spirit.



MONDAY

Read – Genesis 2:5-17; 3:1-13

Ask – Lord, what is the root behind my disobedience?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for your prayers. Repent and confess your sins to God so that you may experience his grace.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to help us be a church that joyfully submits to God's commands and displays a humble obedience to the human authorities in our lives.

TUESDAY

Read – Read Joshua 6:1-27

Ask – Lord, show me the keys to Joshua's obedience and show me how to obey like he did.

Personal Prayer – Use what the Holy Spirit shows you to pray and seek a heart of obedience.

Corporate Prayer – Ask the Lord to make us into a church that is willing to follow him even when it doesn't seem to make sense.

WEDNESDAY

Read – 1 Samuel 15:1-23

Ask – Lord – where in my life do I think my way is better than your way? Where I am I trying to gloss over disobedience and pretending that I am obedient?

Personal Prayer – Thank God for what He shows you and use it as your point of prayer today.

Corporate Prayer – Ask Jesus to make us a church that is more passionate about obedience than about sacrifice. Pray for your leaders to be obedient followers and not presume on God with their own agendas.

THURSDAY

Read – Romans 4:1-13

Ask – Lord, where I am still trying to use my obedience to be accepted by you rather than simply to please you?

Personal Prayer – Thank and praise God that your salvation and acceptance are not based on your ability to obey, but by grace through faith in Jesus. Ask the Lord to drive this truth deep into your heart.

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Corporate Prayer – Pray for others in the church who are struggling to believe in the grace of Jesus because of past disobedience.

FRIDAY

Read – Romans 10:4-10

Ask – Lord, where do I need to let go of my self-righteousness and accept and believe in your grace?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for your prayers.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to make us a Gospel-powered church, one that is obedient as a response to God's grace, not because we are trying to earn God's grace.

SATURDAY

Read – 1 Timothy 6:2b-14

Ask – Lord, which of the areas that Paul discusses are you calling me to grow in greater obedience.

Personal Prayer – Use the above answers to guide your prayers.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to help stay away from the love of money and to pursue the Godly qualities of righteousness, love, faith, steadfastness and gentleness.

SUNDAY

Read – 1 John 5:1-3

Ask – Lord, where I am believing that your commandments are burdensome?

Personal Prayer – Use the above answers to guide your prayers. Ask God to reveal his love to you as you learn to trust him further.

Corporate Prayer – Ask Jesus to make us a church that joyfully submits to his commands and trusts that he knows what is best for us.



Courage

Shawn Vandop - Lead Pastor

Have you ever been in a fight? A moment where you had to stand up for yourself and show some courage? It's the time just before you engage in the battle...the staring....the taunting....when your heart is thumping and sweat is forming on the edge of your brow.

That's what it was like for me as I stared down Alex on that brisk school day during lunch hour. We were playing basketball in the schoolyard with a bunch of other grade 5 students. I had just jumped up for a rebound when it happened – Alex punched me. Hard! Right in the stomach. I bent over in pain and then slowly raised my head, looked in his eyes, straightened myself out and with confidence in my stance, and courage in my heart asked him – “why? Why did you hit me?”

COURAGE
is not the
absence of
FEAR but
courage is the
absence of
SELF!

You know what he said? Nothing. He just hit me again!

That's when my courage kicked in, and in a split second I had Alex in a headlock and with tears in my eyes and adrenaline in my blood I began to courageously defend myself by pummeling him to the ground.

Ok – I'll admit it, what I felt that day was more like blind rage. But I like to think that I was courageous that day

as I stood and defended my honor. Ok, maybe not my honor – more like my feelings got hurt because the whole time I was punching Alex I was crying like a little girl. BUT, the point is this: I did something that I normally would have turned and ran away from – I left that day feeling courageous.

I think that's why we love movies like Gladiator, and Braveheart – stories of bravery and courage because it kind of gets us off the hook. We can live what we long to be through those characters without actually having to be courageous. But here's the truth. God has called each one of us to a journey and this journey that we are called to will never be accomplished

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as long as we are living and are held captive by fear!

As I've read the Bible I've discovered that it's a book full of cowards! It's full of people like you and me. Whether it's Adam, or Moses, or Joshua or Esther – we discover that they were all cowards who needed God in their defining moments. They had fears just like us. They feared the unknown, they feared their enemies, they were afraid of rejection, and failure and loss. Why did they need courage? Because they were afraid!

You cannot have courage without fear! Fear is what ignites courage in our life – it instigates it. We can choose to be ruled by fear and never be courageous or we can use our fears as a platform for embracing a life of courage. We've all heard the term – "Face your fears." How do you that? By showing courage. By making a decision to live and act differently. That is what you do in moments of courage – you make decisions that require speed and urgency. Courage is a reaction!

Let me explain it this way. COURAGE is not the absence of FEAR but courage is the absence of SELF! Courage is a split second decision. Courage is a bi-product of who you are. Courage comes in the moments of decision. Courage is what most people want but what few people do! You cannot walk this journey with the absence of courage! Courage is caring more about something else than yourself! That is when you attain courage! This is where you ultimately care about the heart of God and the reputation of God more than your own.



MONDAY

Read – Psalm 27:1; Psalm 56:3-4; Romans 8:15

Ask – Lord, what are the things in my life that I am afraid of? What are the areas in my life that are driven by fear?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for your prayer. Offer you fears to Him.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that there would be a freedom from fear in our church. That people would not be lead by their fears but by the love and power of the Holy Spirit.

TUESDAY

Read – Isaiah 54:4

Ask – Lord show me any area(s) in my past that I have allowed to hinder me and hold me in fear.

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a point for prayer.

Corporate Prayer – Ask Jesus to show you someone in your life that is being held back because of past fears. Pray for their freedom and deliverance.

WEDNESDAY

Read – Psalm 27:1; 1 Chronicles 28:20

Ask – Lord are there any areas or issues in my life that I am avoiding because I am too fearful to deal with it?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as your focus for prayer. Ask Him to give you courage to face it.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that we would be a church that when God speaks and leads we obey.

THURSDAY

Read – Joshua 1

Ask – Lord where in my life do I need you to fill me with your strength and courage?

Personal Prayer – Whatever God shows you lay it down before Him and commit to stepping out in faith.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that we would be a church that is full of strength and courage willing to live out the values God has given us.

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FRIDAY

Read – 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Peter 3:13-14

Ask – What is something in God's Word that you are struggling to obey? What is it in your life that you know you need to be doing but have held back? Ask Jesus to show you.

Personal Prayer – Ask God for courage and then do what He has been asking you to do.

Corporate Prayer – Pray for a culture of courage in our church and that we would be a church that models obedience.

SATURDAY

Read – Acts 1:1-8; 2 Timothy 1:7

Ask – Who in your life needs to know the love and power of Jesus? Ask God to show you at least one person that needs to hear about who He is.

Personal Prayer – Ask God for courage to share your faith with that person. Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit so that you can be what He said He would make you – a witness.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that our church would never lose its zeal for outreach and evangelism.

SUNDAY

Read – 1 John 4:18

Ask – Where in your life do you need to replace fear with love? Ask Jesus to show you.

Personal Prayer – Pray that you would learn to walk fully in the love of Jesus rather than in the fear of man or circumstances.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that our church would be a church that is full of God's love. Pray that as people come through our doors fears would be extinguished and love would reign.



Urgency

Shawn Vandop – Lead Pastor

Have you ever lost something? Have you ever lost someone? At the beginning of my ministry I was an intern serving in the youth ministry of my church. We had organized a day hike with a bunch of teenagers and by the end of the day we realized we had lost one.

Now, from a practical point of view it was a successful day. We had returned with all the kids except one. That's a 99% success rate. In most instances people are commended for that kind of achievement. However, people, especially parents get a little upset when you lose their child. In fact the

...when we live without a sense of urgency we forget that after this life we all end up in eternity where there are only two options – heaven or hell!

urgency meter goes off the chart. When we discovered that we lost a teenager we immediately went into action and spared no expense in order to find him.

There were search teams, helicopters, volunteers and prayers. People came out from all over and sacrificed their time and lives in order to find that kid. It was on that day that I learned some things about urgency:

- Urgency causes you to see the bigger perspective.
- Urgency takes your eyes off yourself and puts the focus on others.
- Urgency causes you to do something. It moves you to action.
- Urgency makes you see clearly the opportunity before you.

Jesus modeled this kind of urgency in his ministry and life. In fact He shared His mission with us in Luke 19:1 when he told Zacchaeus (a lost person) that He “came to seek and save those who are lost.” That is what a follower of

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Jesus does – they seek out the lost, just like Jesus. Sadly many don't live with this kind of urgency.

What if I did for that lost teenager what many of us do for the lost people around us?

- What if I simply decided to just commit to praying for him?
- What if I decided that it would be too uncomfortable to go out and look for him?
- What if I was too embarrassed to tell anyone?
- What if I thought a 99% success rate was sufficient enough?
- What if I decided that I would just sign up for a course on how to rescue lost people?
- What if I failed to realize that a person's life was at stake?

Things would have turned out really bad. You see, when we live without a sense of urgency we forget that after this life we all end up in eternity where there are only two options – heaven or hell! They both really exist and people really do go to one of them... for all eternity!

This week I want you to ask Jesus to fill you with a sense of urgency for the people in your life who do not know Him. Ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit and give you the same passion He has for lost people. The truth is, God has placed you right where you are to influence someone with His truth and love. Be open. Be ready. God wants to give you courage and use you to bring in His harvest.



MONDAY

Read – Revelation 3:14-22

Ask – Lord where in my life am I living with a lukewarm faith?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for prayer. Confess your sin as he reveals it to you.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that our church would not be Luke-warm. Pray that we would be a church that is on fire for God and that our passion would be consistent and impacting for God's glory.

TUESDAY

Read – Luke 9:57-62

Ask – Lord, where in my life have I been procrastinating in my faith? Are there any areas that my life where I have my priorities out of focus?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for your prayer time.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that our church would continue to be intentional about the priority of preaching the Gospel and calling people to the truth.

WEDNESDAY

Read – Romans 10:5-21

Ask – Lord who in my life do I need to tell and speak about you?

Personal Prayer – Ask God to give you an opportunity this week to share the Gospel with the person or people He laid on your heart.

Corporate Prayer - Pray that people would be bold enough to invite people to church. (who can you invite to church this weekend?)

THURSDAY

Read – Psalm 95

Ask – Lord is there any area in my life where I have hardened my heart against you or your ways? Where do I need to obey you “today”?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for your prayer time.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that our church would be a place where people hear the voice of God and obey Him.

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FRIDAY

Read – John 9:1-5 (focus on verse 4); Ephesians 5:16; James 4:14

Ask – Lord, how can I follow your example and live my life with a greater sense of urgency? Are there things in my life that I am doing that hinder me from living a life of urgency?

Personal Prayer – Pray that God will give you a greater awareness of the fact that there is a heaven and a hell. Ask Him to help you see lost people like Jesus sees lost people.

Corporate Prayer – Ask God to break our hearts for the lost in our community.

SATURDAY

Read – John 4:27-42; Luke 10:1-2

Ask – Lord where is the harvest in my life that you want me to bring in? What role do you want me to play in order to see the harvest reaped?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for your prayer time.

Corporate Prayer – Pray for workers in our church. Pray that people will see that they have a role to serve and how they can be used to help reap the harvest.

SUNDAY

Read – 2 Timothy 4:1-2; Revelation 22:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:2

Ask – Lord where in my life am I not living with the expectation of your return? Am I living my life today as if you are coming back tomorrow?

Personal Prayer – Use what God shows you as a focus for your prayer time.

Corporate Prayer – Pray that we would be a church that ministers with an urgency that expects Jesus to come back anytime. Pray that, that truth will spur us on to share the Gospel at all costs. Pray that we do not become a comfortable church.

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main street
C H U R C H

our values

We are whole life, faith filled, all in risk takers

We'll never insult God with small thinking & safe living

We are all about the local church

The local church is God's "Plan A" to reach the world - He has no "Plan B!"

We will do anything short of sin to reach people who don't know Christ

To reach people no one is reaching, we'll have to do things no one is doing

We will contribute more than we consume spiritually

The church does not exist for us. We are the church and we exist for the world

We will keep short accounts

The greatest weapon we have against the Devil is repentance and confession

We will be relentless with truth and grace

We will teach and model the hard truths of Jesus so that we can experience and model the deep grace of Jesus

We will practice irrational generosity

We truly believe it is more blessed to give than to receive

We will intentionally listen to the voice of God

We recognize that the voice we listen to the most will determine the direction of our life

