

June 7, 2020

40 Days of Prayer

Dear FBC of Wollaston members,

We have been worshiping online services and activities since March 15. We plan to reopen our church building in July.

Before we gather at our church building, I would like to propose to do 40 days of prayer for our spiritual preparation.

I plan to mainly use two devotional books, "*Streams in the Desert*" by L. B. Cowman (LC),¹ who was a missionary in Japan and founder of the Oriental Missionary Society, and "*Turning Points*" by David Jeremiah (DJ),². I hope Their deep and mature spiritual meditation helps our spiritual strength in Christ so that we can walk with the Holy Spirit to grow up to Christ's expectation in love.

Our ultimate life goal is to renew our mind in Christ and to practice our faith in a righteous and holy manner to please the Lord as in Ephesians 4:23-24, "*and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*"

In Christ,

Pastor David Choi
First Baptist Church of Wollaston

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1. "Streams in the Desert" by L. B. Cowman
Copywrite © 1997 by The Zondervan Corporation
 2. "Turning Point" by David Jeremiah
Copywrite © 2005 by David Jeremiah

DAY 1 – 6/7

Everything is possible for him who believes. (Mark 9:23)

~~ Genuine moral fiber ~~

The “everything” mentioned here does not always come simply by asking, because God is always seeking to teach you the way of faith. Your training for a life of faith requires many areas of learning including the trial of faith, the discipline of faith, the patience of faith, and the courage of faith. Often you will pass through many stages before you finally realize the result of faith – namely, the victory of faith.

Genuine *moral fiber* [*the capacity to keep up faith, no matter what the circumstance*] is developed by enduring the discipline of faith. When you have made your request to God, and the answer still has not come, what are you to do? Keep on believing His Word! God will often purposely delay in giving you His answer, and in fact the delay is just as much an answer to your prayer as is the fulfillment when it comes.

No amount of persecution will try you as much as experiences like these – ones in which you are required to wait on God. Once He has spoken His promise to work, it is truly hard to wait as you see the days go by with no fulfillment. Yet it is this discipline of faith that will bring you into knowledge of God that would otherwise be impossible. (LC – May 12)

~~ Pray ~~

Thank you, Lord, for calling me as your child through Jesus Christ! I will keep up my faith, no matter how long it takes. Please help me to hold on to your promise and to surrender my desires to your timeline. I know you want me to build the genuine *moral fiber* of my commitment to you in Christ. (DC)

DAY 2 – 6/8

We do not know what we ought to pray for. (Romans 8:26)

~~ Pray to be like Jesus ~~

Often it is simply the answers to our prayers that cause many of the difficulties in the Christian life. We pray for patience Father sends demanding people our way who test us to the limit, “because ... *suffering produces perseverance*” (Rom. 5:3). We pray for a submissive spirit, and God sends suffering again, for we learn to be obedient in the same way Christ “*learned obedience from what He suffered*” (Heb. 5:8).

We pray to be unselfish, and God gives us opportunities to sacrifice by placing other people’s needs first. We pray for gentleness and quickly face a storm of temptation to be harsh and irritable. We pray for love for others, and God sends unique suffering by sending people our way who are difficult to love and tear at our heart.

Yes, we pray to be like Jesus, and God’s answer is “I have tested you in the furnace of affliction” (Isa 48:10)

The way to peace and victory is to accept every circumstance and every trial as being straight from the hand of our loving Father; to live “with him in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 2:6) in the very presence of His throne. Amen. (LC – May 13)

~~ Pray ~~

Abba Father,

Please forgive my pride and confidence on my faith. I thought I know Your heart. And, I want to be obedient and matured enough to walk with the Holy Spirit and exercise my faith in the name of Jesus. Please help me to accept every circumstance and every trial as messages from You, and make me humble and obedient. (DC)

DAY 3 – 6/9

For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Corinthian 4:18)

~~ Heaven on Earth ~~

Do a survey of today's local newspaper, or pay close attention to the evening news broadcast on television. Here's what you will likely find; stories on the U.S. economy, ongoing military efforts against terrorism, medical and technological advances, and other such stories. Here's what you'll likely not find: news reports about heaven.

Let's face it: the world we live in is not focused on heaven. Atheists, agnostics, and pagans aren't concerned with heaven at all, and we can understand their inattention. The surprising reality is that many Christians hardly give heaven a second thought either. We live as if this world is the real thing, that which defines who and what we are.

In fact, just the opposite is true. This world is a very temporary parenthesis in the eternal plan of God. Christians' citizenship is heavenly, not earthly. While on earth, the way we keep our eyes focused on heaven is to live in the presence of God through continual worship and communion with Him. Though the media is full of news, don't let it distract you from the good news of the Gospel. (DJ – June 8)

This meditation was written in 2005 is still true after 15 years.

~~ Pray ~~

Father God,

Now, I realize again that my shortcoming is procrastinating in obeying the Word of God. Please help me not to postpone my desire to obey my Lord, Jesus. Help me deliberately to put more efforts to know and listen to the Holy Spirit so that I can live a victorious life in this ungodly world. Amen. (DC)

DAY 4 – 6/10

On that very day, Abraham [did] ... as God told him. (Genesis 17:23)

~~ Instant obedience ~~

Instant obedience is the only kind of obedience there is, for delayed obedience is disobedience. Each time God calls upon us to do something, He is offering to make a covenant with us. Our part is to obey, and then He will do His part to send a special blessing.

Postponed obedience can never bring us the full blessing God intended or what it would have brought had we obeyed at the earliest possible moment.

What a pity it is how we rob ourselves, as well as God and others, by our procrastination! Remember, “On that very day” is the Genesis way of saying, “Do it now!” – from *Messages for the Morning Watch*.

And I refuse to be one of those people who “unless ... [I] see miraculous signs and wonders ... will never believe” (John 4:48). I will obey without questioning. Amen.

“Obedience is the fruit of faith; patience is the early blossom on the tree of faith.” – *Christina Rossetti*. (LC – May 14)

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DAY 5 – 6/11

After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to Moses... in the desert ... Then the Lord said to him, "... Now, I will send you back to Egypt." (Acts 7:30,33-34)

~~ Waiting time is not wasting ~~

Often the Lord calls us aside from our work for a season and asks us to be still and learn before we go out again to minister. And the hours spent waiting are not lost time.

An ancient knight once realized, as he was fleeing from his enemies, that his horse need a shoe replace. The prudent course of action seemed to be to hurry on without delay. Yet higher wisdom told him to stop for a few minutes at the blacksmith's along the road. Although he heard the galloping hooves of the enemies' horses close behind, he waited for the new shoe. As the enemy got closer, he jumped into the saddle and dashed away. Then he knew his stopping had actually hastened his escape [because his horse could take a break.]

Quite often God will ask us to wait before we go, so we may fully recover from our last mission before entering the next journey. –
from Days of Heaven upon Earth

*"Waiting! Yes, patiently waiting! Till next steps made plain will be;
To hear, with the inner hearing, The Voice that will call for me."
- J. Danson Smith (LC – May 17)*

~~~ Pray ~~~

Father God,

It is so hard to be patient. Many times, my problem is going ahead of You. Please help me to learn how to wait for your signal. Help me to trust You more than my intelligence because Your time is the best time and right time. Amen. (DC)

DAY 6 – 6/12

Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder ... Then the man bowed down and worshiped the Lord, saying, “Praise be to the Lord... who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness.” (Genesis 24:15, 26-27)

~~ Be patient after praying ~~

Every godly prayer is answered before the prayer itself is finished – “Before he had finished praying ...” This is because Christ has pledged in His Word, “My Father will give you whatever you ask in my name” (John 16:23). When you ask in faith and in Christ’s name – that is, in oneness with Him and His will – “it will be given you” (John 15:7).

Since God’s Word cannot fail, whenever we meet these simple conditions, the answer to our prayer has already been granted and is complete in heaven as we pray, even though it may not be revealed on earth until much later. Therefore it is wise to close every prayer with praise to God for the answer He has already given.

When we believe God for a blessing, we must have an attitude of faith and begin to act and pray as if the blessing were already ours. We should respond to God as if He has granted our request. This attitude of trust means leaning upon Him for what we have claimed and simply taking it for granted that He has given us our request and will continue to give it. (LC – May 19)

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

Please forgive my lack of faith and unbelieving attitude when I pray and ask what I need. My prayer should end with thanksgiving because you already answered. I should trust your promise completely with all my heart. (DC)

DAY 7 – 6/13

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this. (Psalm 37:5)

~~ Commit you way ~~

The literal meaning of this verse is: “Roll your way onto Jehovah and trust upon Him, and He works.” This brings to our attention the immediacy of God’s action once we commit, or “roll,” burdens of any kind from our hands into His. Whether our burden is a sorrow, difficulty, physical need, or concern over the salvation of a loved one, “He works.”

When does He work? “He works” now. We act as if God does not immediately accept our trust in Him. We fail to understand that “He works” as we commit. “He works” now! Praise Him for the fact that this is true. Our expectation that He will work is the very thing enabling the Holy Spirit to accomplish what we asked.

The very thing that I may “cry out” for Him to do “for me,” with the calm assurance He will perform it. ... “The wise and what they do are in God’s hands” (Eccl. 9:1). – *Frances Ridley Havergal*

The Lord will follow through on His covenant promises ... Therefore His past mercies are guarantees for the future, and worthy reasons for continuing to cry out to Him. – *Charles H. Spurgeon* (LC – May 22)

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

Thank you for giving me faith in Christ so that I can have the privilege to pray and ask my needs. I need to completely commit my life to you so that You can work within me and through me to show your glory. Even if I don’t feel like totally surrender, I will continue to cry out to You for your grace and mercy. (DC)

DAY 8 – 6/14

Bring them here to me. (Matthew 14:18)

~~ Bring them to the Lord ~~

Do you find yourself at this very moment surrounded with needs, and nearly overwhelmed with difficulties, trials, and emergencies? Each of these is God's way of providing vessels for the Holy Spirit to fill. If you correctly understand their meaning, you will see them as opportunities for receiving new blessings and deliverance you can receive in no other way.

The Lord is saying to you, "Bring them here to me." Firmly hold the vessels before Him, in faith and in prayer. Remain still before Him, and stop your own restless working until He begins to work. Wait, and allow God time to work and He surely will. Then the very trials that threatened to overcome you with discouragement and disaster will become God's opportunity to reveal His grace and glory in your life, in ways you have never known before.

"My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4:19*

It is your heavenly privilege to trust "all your needs," to "His glorious riches," and to forget "your needs" in the presence of "His ... riches." In His great love, He has thrown open to you His exhaustive treasury. (LC – May 27)

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

Please forgive my lack of faith. Even though I read, heard, and knew Your promises, I did not trust that You would bring my requests in Your great love. Also, though I prayed, then I forgot what I had asked and did not expect. Thank you, Lord, for reminding me that You are almighty God who numbers the very hairs of my head and provides what I need. In Jesus' name, Amen. (DC)

DAY 9 – 6/15

I have called you friends. (John 15:15)

~~ The same old relationship ~~

Years ago, there was an old German professor whose beautiful life was a wonder to his students. Some of them were determined to learn the secret of it, so one night, they sent someone to hide in the study where the professor spent his evenings.'

It was quite late when the teacher finally came. He was very tired but sat down and spent one hour with his Bible. Then he bowed his head in silent prayer, and finally closing the Book of books, he said, "Well, Lord Jesus, we still have the same old relationship."

"To know Christ" (Phil. 3:10) is life's greatest achievement. At all costs, every Christian should strive to "have the same old relationship" with Him.

The reality of knowing Jesus comes as a result of hidden prayer, and personal Bible study that is devotional and consistent in nature. Christ becomes more real to those who persist in cultivating His presence.

*Speak unto Him for He hears you, And Spirit with spirit will meet!
Nearer is He than breathing, Nearer than hands and feet.*

- Maltbie D. Babcock (LC - May 29)

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

I know you love me so much. That's why you died for me to save and give me eternal life. You called me with your unfailing love so that I am in you, and you are in me. We are one in Christ. I will continue to strive to keep up my relationship with you by walking with the Holy Spirit at every moment. Amen. (DC)

DAY 10 – 6/16

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed. ... Without weakening in his faith. (Romans 4:18-19)

~~ Great faith comes from great trials ~~

I will never forget the statement which that great man of faith George Mueller once made to a gentleman who had asked him the best way to have strong faith: "The only way to know strong faith is to endure great trials. I have learned my faith by standing firm through severe testings."

How true this is! You must trust when all else fails.

Dear soul, you may scarcely realize the value of your present situation. If you are enduring great afflictions right now, you are at the source of the strongest faith. God will teach you during these dark hours to have the most powerful bond to His throne.

"Don't be afraid; just believe" (Mark 5:36). But if you ever are afraid, simply look up and say, "When I am afraid, I will trust in you" (Ps. 56:3). Then you will be able to thank God for His school of sorrow that became for you the school of faith. – A. B. Simpson

Great faith must first endure great trials.

God's great gifts come through great pain. Can we find anything of value in the spiritual or the natural realm that has come about without tremendous toil and tears? (LC – June 2)

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

I am sorry that I always pray for stronger faith to have greater spiritual power. I expected to have a greater faith through prayers. Oh, Lord! Please forgive my lack of patience and help me to endure suffering in Christ so that I can have stronger faith and hope in Christ to overcome any challenges from this world. Amen. (DC)

DAY 11 – 6/17

Let us go over to the other side. (Mark 4:35)

~~ Christ is in my vessel ~~

Even though we follow Christ's command, we should not expect to escape the storm. In this passage of Scripture, the disciples were obeying His command, yet they encountered the fiercest of storms and were in great danger of being drowned. In their distress, they cried out for Christ's assistance.

Christ may delay coming to us during our times of distress, but it is simply so our faith may be tested and strengthened. His purpose is also that our prayers will be more powerful, our desire for deliverance will be greater, and when deliverance finally comes we will appreciate it more fully.

Gently rebuking His disciples, Christ asked, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (v 40). In effect, He was saying, "Why didn't you face the storm victoriously and shout to the raging winds and rolling waves, 'You cannot harm us, for Christ, the mighty Savior, is on board'?"

Of course, it is much easier to trust God when the sun is shining than to trust Him when the storm is raging around us.

With Christ in my vessel, I smile at the storm.

Christ said, "Let us go over to the other side" – not "to the middle of the lake to be drowned." – *Daniel Crawford (LC – June 3)*

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

Thank you for your presence in the vessel of my life. Despite your promise, I keep forgetting your power and struggling with things that I am facing. Oh, Lord! Please keep my eyes and ears open to your presence so that I can have the courage to overcome any challenges in your name. You are my Savior, Jesus! Amen! (DC)

DAY 12 – 6/18

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. (Matthew 26:41)

~~ Prayer and temptations ~~

Dear friend, never go out into the danger of the world without praying first. There is always a temptation to shorten your time in prayer. After a difficult day of work, when you kneel at night to pray with tired eyes, do not use your drowsiness as an excuse to resign yourself to early rest. Then when the morning breaks and you realize you have overslept, resist the temptation to skip your early devotion or to hurry through it.

Once again, you have not taken the time to “watch and pray.” Your alertness has been sacrificed, and I firmly believe there will be irreparable damage. You have failed to pray, and you will suffer as a result.

Temptations are waiting to confront you, and you are not prepared to withstand them. Within your soul you have a sense of guilt, and you seem to be lingering some distance from God. When we give in to laziness, moments of prayer that are missed can never be redeemed.

We do not know all that Jesus gained from His time in prayer, but we do know this – a life without prayer is a powerless life. It may be a life filled with a great deal of activity and noise, but it will be far removed from Him who day and night prayed to God. Amen. (LC – June 6)

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

Please help me not too tired to make time to pray in your presence. Satan always gets me lots of excuses not to pray. Please help me to start and end my day with the time with you in prayer, and to cast away my laziness in your name. I know that is the best way to build my intimacy with you. Amen. (DC)

DAY 13

I have prayed for you ... that your faith may not fail. (Luke 22:32)

~~ Faith is the way to connect to God ~~

Dear Christian, remember to take good care of your faith, for faith is the only way to obtain God's blessings. Prayer alone cannot bring answers down from His throne, because it is the earnest prayer of one who believes that leads to answers.

Faith is the communication link between heaven and earth. It is on this link of faith that God's messages of love travel so quickly that even before we ask, He answers. And while we are still speaking, "He hears us" (1 John 5:14). So when the connection of faith is broken, how will we obtain His promises?

Am I in trouble? I can receive help by expressing faith. Am I being battered by the Enemy? My soul will find refuge by leaning in faith upon God. But without faith, I call to Him in vain, for faith is the only road between my soul and heaven.

Faith links me to Holy God and clothes me with the power of Jehovah. Faith ensures me that each of His attributes will be used in my defense, and causes me to march triumphantly over my enemies. So without faith, how can I receive anything from the Lord? Amen.

Therefore, O Christian, carefully watch your faith. "Everything is possible for him who believes." (Mark 9:23). – *Charles H. Spurgeon*
(LC – June 14)

~~~ Pray ~~~

Abba Father,

Even though you have given me faith in Christ, more than many times, I forget to exercise my faith. Especially when I am not right with the Lord, I try to use my own intelligence, not the faith you have given to me. Oh, Lord! Please help me to be upright always so that I can exercise my faith for your glory in Christ. Amen.

DAY 14

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We do not know what we ought to pray for. (Romans 8:26)

~~ produces ~~

The way to peace and victory is to accept every circumstance and every trial as being straight from the hand of our loving Father; to live “with him in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 2:6) in the very presence of His throne. Amen. (LC -)

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Abba Father,

Please forgive my pride and confidence on my faith. I thought I know Your heart. And, I am obedient and matured enough to walk with the Holy Spirit and exercise my faith in the name of Jesus.

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Abba Father,

Please forgive my pride and confidence on my faith. I thought I know Your heart. And, I am obedient and matured enough to walk with the Holy Spirit and exercise my faith in the name of Jesus.

Please help me to accept every circumstance and every trial as messages from You, and make me humble and obedient.

DAY 30

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We do not know what we ought to pray for. (Romans 8:26)

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DAY 40

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40 Days of Prayer

[Quoted from “Streams in the Desert”] Day 041