

NAVIGATOR  
TWENTY-THIRD EDITION

# 35 Day Prayer Guide

## New Life Christian Fellowship

[www.NewLifePetaluma.org](http://www.NewLifePetaluma.org)

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New Life exists to connect people to God & others,  
develop them as followers of Christ  
& move them into lifestyles of service.

 New Life Christian Fellowship

**May God bless you and direct you as you consider taking what could be one of the greatest adventures of your life...A Spiritual Adventure.**

We are inviting the members and friends of New Life to take a 35 day adventure together...one that will be encouraging, challenging, stretching, and hopefully faith-building. Last week, Pastor Ron challenged all of us to begin praying a very adventurous prayer, a prayer that goes like this, **“God, what do you want to do through me to accomplish Your will in this church and in our community?”** In fact, he challenged us to start praying it *daily*.

There is no greater adventure in life than an adventure that is taken with God! One thing is certain; He'll make sure it's not boring. In fact, it will more than likely be full of surprises and wonderful discoveries: Discoveries about yourself, discoveries about God and His heart for the community in which we live, and discoveries about the meaning and purpose of life. Here is God's promise from Lamentations 3:25, *“The LORD is wonderfully good to those who wait for him and seek him.”* And from Jeremiah 29:12-14, *“In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me in earnest, you will find me when you seek me. I will be found by you,” says the LORD.*

When Moses encountered God, not only did it lead to an historical adventure, it even changed the way Moses looked.

*“When Moses came down the mountain...he wasn't aware that his face glowed because he had spoken to the LORD face to face.”* (Exodus 34:29-30).

How do you think you may look, think, live, and love differently after going on a 35 day prayer journey with God? God tells us in Hosea 10:12 that *“... now is the time to seek the LORD, that he may come and shower righteousness upon you.”*

You see, God loves to give good gifts to his children. In Matthew 7:11 he says, *“If you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him?”* What is God's best and most valuable gift? It's His presence. It's Him...close to us, loving us, encouraging us, transforming us. How does he do this? By responding to us when we seek Him by drawing near to him. Here's the promise from James 4:8, *“Come near to God and he will come near to you.”* Do you have the time over the next thirty-five days to draw near? To spend time with God so that He can work in and through you? One thing is for sure, if you do, you will never be the same...

*“Seek the LORD while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near.”* (Isaiah 55:6)

At the conclusion of this journey, may we all be able to exclaim with David, *“Taste and see that the LORD is good.”* (Psalm 34:8)

***“... If you want to have an encounter with God you have to learn how to get alone, by yourself with God ... to have God manifest Himself to you and move supernaturally in your life you have to have scheduled time where it's just you and the Lord ... .”***

**Day One May 4, 2006**

**Why Pray?**

*“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”*  
James 5:16

Can prayer really make a difference? Can my prayers actually change things? Is it possible for the will of God to be thwarted because I don't pray? These are legitimate questions. The answers we give them reflect the very foundation of our relationship with the Lord. On the one hand, if God is Sovereign, He's going to do everything the way He wants, so why pray? But on the other, if He chooses to wait on my prayers to execute



His will, then I had better get very serious about praying right now. How do His Sovereignty and my prayers go together?

God uses prayer to make the impossible, possible and the ordinary, extraordinary. Prayers make our efforts effective and help us discern God's will more clearly. C.H. Spurgeon once noted, "Whenever God determines to do a great work, He first sets His people to pray." Faithful praying empowers the Holy Spirit to work in our lives and enables us to experience God first-hand.

Someone once said, "God does things when we pray that He does not do when we do not pray." Today's devotional is a call...a challenge...and an inspiration for us to seek the Lord in prayer. As we consider the following verses, let's allow them to deepen our understanding of how vital prayer is...and how much we should love and appreciate the privilege of speaking with our heavenly Father.

*"The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers."* (1 Peter 3:12)

*"God delights in the prayers of the upright."* (Proverbs 15:8)

*"My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."* (Mark 11:17)

*"The Lord is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth. He grants the desires of those who reverence him."* (Psalm 145:18-19)

**Prayer Focus:** Let's thank God for hearing all the prayers that we prayed on our church's behalf, thanking Him for answering them. And let's pray that all of us at New Life will be growing in prayer so that everything we do will be directed by God and have His blessing.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

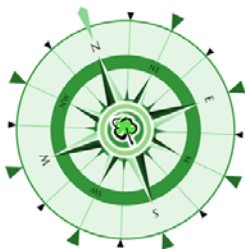
\* Remember:

When you see the compass, "Pray for God's Direction"

**Day Two May 5, 2009**

**The Power of Prayer**

*"After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly."*



**Acts 4:31**

Prayer is an extremely important and necessary part of the Christian's walk. Prayer is our means of communication with God. He has given us this vehicle of communication because He longs for relationship with us. Our relationship and level of intimacy with God is strengthened and enhanced as we spend quality time in prayer. Prayer brings us into the presence of God and in His presence, relationship becomes friendship. Just as we cultivate earthly relationships by spending time together, we must also cultivate our heavenly friendship with the Lord by spending time in His presence visiting with Him in prayer. Time spent in prayer is time spent with our Father and Friend.

What affect will our "35 Days of Prayer" have? In the verse above, we can see that when the Christians in the Bible prayed, God physically shook the ground. As a result, they became empowered to share the message of Jesus with great enthusiasm and confidence. The theme verse for yesterday's devotional taught us that *"the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."*

Let's pray that God would work through us to accomplish His will as we come to Him in prayer over these next 34 days.

**Prayer focus:** Let's thank God for making us righteous through His forgiveness and for his desire to share a friendship with us. Let's ask him for strength and guidance as we journey together over the rest of this adventure.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Three May 6, 2009**

**Experiencing Power**

*"I pray that you will begin to understand the incredible greatness of his power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms."*

*Ephesians 1:19-20*

One of the greatest needs in all churches today is power...not political power, not manipulative power, not fleshly power...but heaven-sent, godly power to do His work. The good news of God's forgiveness made possible by Jesus' sacrificial death is what powers the church. The Bible tells us in Romans 1:16 *"I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the*

*power of God at work, saving everyone who believes.” Again the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 1:18 “I know very well how foolish the message of the cross sounds to those who are on the road to destruction. But we who are being saved recognize this message as the very power of God.”*

If the message of the Bible contains the source of all power, and there are lots of copies out there, then why are there not more changed lives? How is it possible to read the Bible and yet be unaffected by it? The root of the issue is what we define as truth. For the Christian, power and truth are inseparably linked together. Paul says in Ephesians 6:17-18 *“Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit.”* God gives us His power and truth through his Spirit. Let’s consider today’s devotional an opportunity and challenge to memorize this verse.

*“Pray at all times and on every occasion on the power of the Holy Spirit.”* (Ephesians 6:18)

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s pray that all of us at New Life will be “powerhouses” for God because we daily put on His armor. This armor includes the belt of truth, the body armor of God’s righteousness, the shoes of peace that come from the Good News, the shield of faith in God, the helmet of His salvation for us, the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, and that we will be a people who pray at all times. Let’s pray that we will have a genuine love for God and His truth and that we will live in its life changing power.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

**Day Four May 7, 2009**

### **Trusting God**

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths.”*

Proverbs 3:5-6

There are two ways people live their lives as they pass through this world – either remembering God or forgetting Him. They either acknowledge His presence and live their lives in dependence on Him, or they pay little to no attention to His claims on them and live a life on the basis of their own understanding and abilities. The worst tragedy and cruelest deception is the man who says with his lips, “I trust God,” but an examination of his life shows no difference between him and the man who does not even make that claim. The question we can ask ourselves today is, “Do I really trust God?”

The very nature of this question poses two other questions: First – “Is God trustworthy?” That is, will He really come through if I rely fully on Him? Can He handle the decisions and the problems in my life? Secondly – “Am I willing to trust God?” That is, will I make the choice in my life to trust God and follow His directives throughout my life?

Our theme verses for this day reveal some important truths about trusting God:

The matter of trust is an all or nothing thing.  
Notice how many times the word “all” is used.

The command to trust precedes the promise.  
Blessing comes after trust is expressed.

The promise is conditional.  
Unlike many of the unconditional promises in the Bible, this promise of direction is given only to those who exercise trust in God.

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s pray that our church’s faith and trust in God will grow. Let’s pray that we will allow God to be in control, and that we will completely depend on Him, seeking His will more than our own. And let’s pray that our deepened trust in Him will result in guidance from Him. On a very practical note, let’s ask God to identify an area of life that we need to yield to Him, and then let’s turn it over to Him as we pray.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

**Day Five May 8, 2009**

### **A God You Can Trust**

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths.”*

Proverbs 3:5-6

No, it’s not a mistake. We’re going to look at those same two verses again today, but from a different perspective.

God expects His people to trust Him, and He is a trustworthy God! We were created to live our lives in dependence upon Him. Our knowledge is incomplete, our wisdom is inadequate, our power is ineffective...thus, we need our Creator. Sin, in its very essence, is failing to trust God.

These verses in Proverbs tell us how we are to trust Him.

**We are to trust Him entirely.** (verse 5) God wants us to trust Him “with all of our heart.” That means everything from our salvation to physical, mental, and social needs. That includes trusting Him with our families, marriages, jobs, relationships, finances, abilities, weaknesses, health, accomplishments, and failures.

**We are to trust Him exclusively.** (verse 5) God commands us not to depend on our own understanding. Why? Because it is fundamentally flawed. God is truly omniscient. He knows it all from beginning to end. He even knows the number of hairs on your head. So we should follow His leading...gathered from His Word, prayer, and Godly counsel. He is on our side, so we should trust Him!

**We are to trust Him universally.** (verse 6) In all we do, in every decision we make, we are to trust His wisdom, not just with big things, but also with the little things.

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s pray that we will be fully convinced of His trustworthiness. Taking time to praise Him today for who He is and what He does will help us become more aware of His trustworthiness. Let’s also thank Him today for His direction for New Life...and for our lives as well.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

**Day Six May 9, 2009**

### Learning to Trust Him

*“Trust in the Lord...Fear the Lord...Honor the Lord”  
Proverbs 3:5-9*

In order to receive the blessing of God, we must trust Him. Trusting God is not some token confession we make from time to time. Trusting God is complete, total, daily reliance upon the promises of God. Every day we all face the choice of relying upon our own understanding or trusting Him.

Life brings to us many opportunities to choose to trust God. When we come to those places in life where the line is drawn and the question is “Will I trust God?” your answer determines whether you’ll grow or shrivel spiritually. The issue is, “Which am I going to choose?” When God told Noah to build the ark, it had never rained. Noah chose to trust God. Abraham left his homeland because God asked him to leave, and he chose to trust God. Joshua challenged the people of his day, “Choose today whom

you will serve...but as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.” Do you desire this kind of trust in the Lord?

Similarly, the choice is ours today. As we take The Great Adventure with God, He will place before each of us the opportunity to either get in partnership with Him and experience His presence and power first-hand in our lives...or to turn down His offer of partnership, choosing rather to play it safe and make our own choices. This is our opportunity to increase our faith and trust in God.

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s pray the following Scripture today and personalize it for ourselves: Hebrews 10:35-38, *“Do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord, no matter what happens. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so you will continue to do God’s will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And a righteous person will live by faith.”*

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

**Day Seven May 10, 2009**

### A Prayer for Direction

*“Guide my steps by your word, so I will not be overcome by any evil.”  
Psalm 119:133*

Two essentials are required to experience a Spirit-led life – prayer and the Word of God. As the old song says, “They go together; you can’t have one without the other.” Prayer finds its very foundation in the Scripture. Praying with purpose, conviction, or direction is difficult unless we come to know the God we find in the Bible. This is why reading and studying the Bible is good for every Christian.

Almost every one of the 176 verses of Psalm 119 refers in some way to the Scriptures. In our theme verse for this day the Psalmist requests guidance from the Word of God.

How often do we consider that God desires to guide every step we take? He desires to guide not only the big steps in our lives, but even the mundane steps we take every day in the kitchen or your workplace. He wants to guide us to a friend who needs encouragement...the neighbor who needs hug...or the co-worker who needs a witness of God’s love.

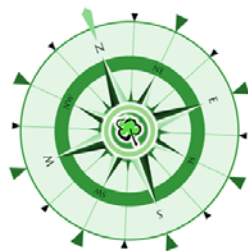
**Prayer Focus:** Let's thank God for guiding New Life three years ago through Scripture and prayer to find and acquire our new facility that has enabled us to more effectively reach out to our community. Let's ask Him to continue to give Pastor Ron and the staff the wisdom and discernment needed to accomplish everything He has placed before us. Let's thank Him for His guidance in our lives. And let's ask Him to continue to lead us by making the Scripture we read come alive and be personal to us.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

### Day Eight May 11, 2009

#### Discovering Our Destiny...Like Abraham

*"Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything."  
Genesis 14:20b*



Chapter fourteen of Genesis records for us a significant event in the pilgrimage of Abraham. This godly man becomes a warrior as he joins in defeating four kings who have united against five kings of the valley. War would not have interested Abraham, except for the fact that Lot, his nephew, was captured and taken into captivity. Today's text picks up with Abraham returning as a conquering hero. His high esteem, already in the eyes of others, has gone higher. He is now known throughout the land.

At this point in his prosperity, he is faced with a significant choice. In fact, his future destiny hangs in the balance of this choice. This choice is a spiritual battle, and it is a greater battle than the physical one he just fought. Will he become selfish with all these material possessions, or will he become rich in God's eyes because he chose to become a giver?

Life is all about making the right choices. Abraham made a wise choice by giving back to God a tenth of what God had given him. God is our provider, and that means everything we have comes in some way from Him. A foundational teaching of Scripture is that God develops an unselfish and generous spirit in us by asking us to give back to Him a portion of what He has blessed us with. Bottom-line: Spiritual growth is fostered by worshiping the Lord through giving. And conversely, spiritual growth is thwarted when we become stingy toward God. Whether we believe it or not, it's really that simple.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's pray that we will be a giving church. Let's pray that with our talents, time, and treasures we will reach beyond the walls of our campus to touch the larger community with God's love. Let's ask God to

reveal ways that we can grow in our giving. And let's pray about our personal giving and how we can become more generous.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

### Day Nine May 12, 2009

#### Snatching Victory from the Jaws of Defeat

*"I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Everywhere you go, you will be on land I have given you — No one will be able to stand their ground against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you.'"*

*Joshua 1:3 & 5*

Abraham Lincoln is widely recognized as one of the greatest presidents in the history of our country. He stood tall and strong in a very critical and decisive time in our history. We certainly would regard him as a successful man. But this man also experienced many failures throughout his life.

When Abraham Lincoln went off to the Black Hawk War he was a captain.



Through no fault of his own, he returned a private. That brought an end to his military career.

His little country village shop “winked out” as he used to say. So he failed as a businessman.

As a lawyer in Springfield, Illinois, he was too impractical, too unpolished, and too temperamental to be successful.

Turning to politics, he was defeated in his campaign for the legislature.

He was defeated in his first attempt to be nominated for Congress and in his application to be Commissioner of the General Land Office.

He was defeated in the Senatorial election of 1854 and in his aspirations for the Vice Presidency in 1856.

Finally, in 1860 he was elected President of the United States where he fulfilled his personal destiny and guided the destiny of our nation. Although maybe not as dramatic, Lincoln’s experience is the experience of many of God’s people. The enemy of our soul comes to us after repeated defeats and whispers in our ears, “You’re a failure!” He tells us we will never win... that we are trapped forever where we are, and will never fulfill our God-given destiny.

The first chapter of Joshua tells the story of God’s people who escaped the cycle of defeat and moved into the new day of victory. In the same way, God will honor our prayers for victory if we learn to walk in partnership with Him as Joshua did.

**Prayer Focus:** let’s pray that we will accomplish all that God intends for us and that we will lovingly touch many lives in the Petaluma Area with God’s love and care. Let’s pray Galatians 6:9, “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Let’s ask the Lord to encourage us in our walk with Him. And in our prayer time, let’s ask for God’s victory over sin in our church and in our lives.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

**Day Ten May 13, 2009**

### **Keeping Our Eyes on Jesus**

*“The end of all things is near. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers.”*

*1 Peter 4:7*

Have you heard the story about the man who woke up early in the morning, looked at the clock, and the time was 3:33? He looked over at the calendar and noticed that it was also the third day of the third month. As he arose from bed, he remembered that he lived on Third Street and that his house was the third house. When he read the morning paper he became even more excited because at the horse races that day there was a horse named Trio in the third race. So he rushed to the bank, withdrew all of his life’s savings, and then rushed to the racetrack. He went to the third gate and sat on the third row. He bet it all on Trio to win the third race. Guess what happened. Trio placed third. Sometimes things do not work out the exact way we think that they will or want them to.

The recipients of Peter’s letter were in the same situation. They had bet it all on Jesus and believed they had a winner. But they were being severely persecuted for placing their faith in Him. They must have wondered if being taunted and persecuted by unbelievers every day was worth it. Since they knew the difference that Jesus had made in their lives, they figured, “yes, it was worth it”. This affirmative answer still begs another question, however: “How we can endure until the end?”

Hebrews 12:1-4 tells us, *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterward. Now he is seated in the place of highest honor beside God’s throne in heaven. Think about all he endured when people did such terrible things to him, so that you don’t become weary and give up.”*

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s pray that our church is a Christ-focused church. And let’s ask God to help us live each day with our eyes on Jesus, remembering that one day our life here will be over, and only what we have done for Him will last for eternity.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

## Day Eleven May 14, 2009

### You Make the Call

*"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do."*

*II Timothy 3:16-17*

Baseball umpire Durwood Merrill tells of his rookie year of umpiring in the major leagues. It was the first time he had called balls and strikes for the famous pitcher, Nolan Ryan. The second pitch of the game was so fast, Merrill never saw it. He froze, unable to make the call. Finally he yelled somewhat tentatively, "Strike!" The batter backed out of the box and said, "Ump, don't feel so bad, I didn't see it either!"

This story is a good illustration of what is happening in the world today. Change is occurring so fast that none of us can see it clearly. Yet we have to make vital calls and daily decisions about very important things, all the time wondering if we are making the right ones.

There has never been a time when we have more needed a standard in our lives than we do today. We need a fixed point, a true north, an unchanging standard on which we can base our decisions and not have to worry about changing them. God has given us such a standard. It is the Word of God, the Bible. It contains the rock-solid, never-changing, always relevant truth of God.

Some mistakenly say the Bible is irrelevant and outdated, but believers know that *"...the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are."* (Hebrews 4:12) You make the call.

*"Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.'" (John 14:23-24)*

**Prayer Focus:** Let's pray that we will read from the Bible each day... asking God to let His wisdom sink into our hearts and minds. And then let's pray that we will purpose to reflect it in our character and actions.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

## Day Twelve May 15, 2009

### Be Humble in Prayer

*"Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. My eyes will be open and my ears attentive to every prayer."*

*2 Chronicles 7:14*

Isn't it amazing that as God grants us the very things that we pray for we can lose our focus on God and begin to focus on what He's done in, through, or for us? Even in the best of times...or perhaps we should say especially in the best of times...we need to be careful not to drift away from God. Every time God answers one of our prayers, He doesn't answer it because we are worthy, but rather because He has chosen to be gracious to us.

When we forget this, we can find ourselves even wrestling with God...trying to get the upper hand or position of power in our dealing with Him. It is our human nature to try to manipulate God to get what we want instead of yielding ourselves to what He knows would be best for everyone.

One of the primary aspects of The Great Adventure with God is our surrender to Him. To surrender to the Lord means to willingly and freely relinquish control and direction over our lives to the Lord. It involves the yielding and submitting of our rights to Him and the acceptance of His will for our life. Surrender involves giving up the wrestling match with God and allowing Him to have the superior position in our life.

God does not force Himself on anyone; He desires a willing surrender. A willing surrender makes way for His will to prevail. Many times, because of the wrestling match between our will and God's will, we allow only the disappointments of life to bring us to that point of surrender.

**Prayer Focus:** Today, let's willingly surrender to the Lord, praying humbly for His forgiveness and grace...knowing that he will give them to us generously! Let's ask God for the faith and trust to allow Him to take the "superior position" in our lives and then anxiously await the marvelous things He will do through us. *"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

## Day Thirteen May 16, 2009

### The Absurdity of Going Back

*“Have you lost your senses? After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?”*  
Galatians 3:3

On Thursday, August 1, 1985, a room full of America’s top intelligence officials was gathered outside the office of the director of the CIA for a farewell reception of a retiring colleague. However, the topic was not about the retiree. Whispers were flying around the room that the highest ranking KGB agent, Vitaly Sergeyevich Yurchenko, had defected. He was most important because he was in charge of all KGB operations in the United States and Canada. Now, he would be able to provide extremely important information about Soviet spies in America.

After presenting himself to the American Embassy in Rome, he was quickly flown to the United States in a military plane. Once in the U.S., he was taken to a “safe house” in northern Virginia where he was interrogated for hours and provided very sensitive information.

The most startling and amazing part of this story took place three months later on November 2nd. Yurchenko had been spurned by a girlfriend in Canada and was growing increasingly impatient with his situation. During the evening he persuaded the CIA agent assigned to him to take him to Georgetown for dinner and a movie. During dinner Yurchenko asked the agent, “What would you do if I got up and walked off? Would you shoot me?” The CIA agent replied, “We don’t shoot defectors.” Yurchenko countered, “I will be back in 15 to 20 minutes, if I am not, it is not your fault.” With that he walked out of the restaurant and presented himself to the Russian Embassy where he un-defected.

The world watched in amazement a few days later as this man boarded a Russian Aeroflot jet, stopping briefly on the boarding steps to wave goodbye to freedom. He then returned to the confines of communism. Why would anybody who had enjoyed freedom return to communism?

Yet that which amazes us in the political arena is met with less wonder in the spiritual arena. Why would anyone who has tasted the freedom of an adventure with God return to the bondage of self-guidance? Having begun this Great Adventure with God, let’s purpose to see it through to its God-given and wonderful conclusion.

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s pray what we will continue to live our Christian lives in harmony with God’s spirit and direction...never returning to our former lives

of self-indulgence and self-reliance. And let’s pray that we will embrace His work in us to the point that we give Him permission to accomplish anything through us He might desire.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

## Day Fourteen May 17, 2009

### A Contribution or a Sacrifice?

*“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice — the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.”* Romans 12:1-2

Did you hear the story of the chicken and the pig that were walking together down the road? They came upon a beggar who was nearly starved to death. He had not eaten in days. The chicken and the pig decided to help him. The chicken said, “I have an idea. Let’s fix him some breakfast - some ham and eggs!” The pig thought about that a moment and then said, “I don’t like that idea very much because it only requires you to make a contribution, but for me it is a complete sacrifice!”

As the Apostle Paul writes our Scripture passage, he is making a turning point in his letter to the believers in Rome. He is giving them a practical application of the truths that he has been telling about in previous chapters. He indicates how we should respond to the knowledge that God has secured our salvation and through Christ has saved us from the consequences of our sin. He’s telling us to lay it all on the altar for God; surrender completely. His challenge to them...and also to us... is don’t simply make a contribution like the chicken, but sacrifice it all like the pig.

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s pray that we become a community of faith that is willing to totally surrender to the love and purposes of God. And let’s pray that God chooses to do something through us that will amaze and astound all of us, and provide a powerful witness to the unchurched people of our culture. *“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

## Day Fifteen May 18, 2009

### Conversion = Changed Life

*"How thankful I am to Christ Jesus our Lord for considering me trustworthy and appointing me to serve him, even though I used to scoff at the name of Christ."*

1 Timothy 1:12

After Watergate, there was an abundance of books that were published by the various personalities involved. One of the most famous was Chuck Colson's book "Born Again." This book detailed his conversion to Christ. Today Chuck is best known as a great man who has had such an impact on the world through his prison ministries...so much so that we often forget that before his conversion he was known as "the hatchet man." It was a common saying in Washington that Colson would walk over his own mother for Nixon! Another player in the Watergate scandal was the very boisterous G. Gordon Liddy. One of the great quotes from his book tells of a time when a certain court date came around. Everyone had been discussing Colson's conversion to Christianity. As Colson walked into the courtroom, Liddy was overheard to say, "Oh, no, if Colson would walk over his own mother for Nixon, just think what he will do for Jesus!"

Time has proven Colson's conversion is genuine. He certainly is one more example of how God can change a life. In 1 Timothy, the Apostle Paul is encouraging Timothy to cherish, protect, and preach the Good News of Christ. The reason was that the Gospel's message changes lives. Indeed at New Life, the Good News of Jesus is taught so that we can accomplish the mission God has given us – connecting people to God and others, developing them as followers of Christ, and moving them towards lifestyles of service.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's pray that our church will always be a place that impacts the world for Jesus. And let's pray that each of us will walk in partnership with God and with each other to expand Christ's great kingdom that changes all of our lives.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

## Day Sixteen May 19, 2009

### Sowing the Seeds of Faith

*"This place is desolate...send them away...' But He answered them, 'You give them something to eat!'...He blessed the food and broke the loaves..."*

*They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish." Mark 6:35-42*

Crowds had followed Jesus, eager to see miracles and hear Him teach. Feeling compassion, He taught them "many things." As the crowds lingered, hour after hour, it became clear that something had to be done to meet their physical needs. They were hungry and needed food.

The disciples could imagine only one solution: Go to the surrounding area and buy food. But Jesus had something else in mind, saying: "You give them something to eat!"

To them, this made no sense. They had seen Jesus perform many miracles, yet never considered a supernatural solution to this practical problem. They didn't take into account that the Man who opened the eyes of the blind could actually provide their daily bread.

Jesus was ready to perform a miracle, but a seed needed to be sown. An offering had to be made, so He would have something to work with. After taking an inventory, the disciples found just five loaves and two fish. It wasn't much, but it was all Jesus required.

He prayed and blessed this food—this "seed." Miraculously, as this food was distributed, there was enough to feed everyone, with baskets left over! Everyone was satisfied. They had seen how Jesus could provide their daily bread and perform miracles to meet their practical needs.

Today, this same miracle-working power is available to us. Let's not limit ourselves by the resources we see in the natural world. Let's look to God as our source, even in these tough economic times. If we plant the seeds He has supplied, He will multiply them to meet not only our needs, but also the needs of those around us. It's really a matter of trust and faith. God will supply...if we give Him something to work with. All things are possible if we believe and are faithful to obey as He leads.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's ask God to supply all of the needs of our church, the surrounding community, and our family. Let's ask Him for the faith and obedience to make the time, talent and treasure that He has given us fully available to Him. And let's pray that we will completely follow His direction as He takes each of us on The Great Adventure.

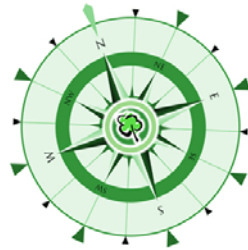
*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

### Day Seventeen May 20, 2009

#### Watermelons

*“It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.”*

Mathew 13:31



The watermelon is an amazing fruit. The first known watermelon harvest was recorded nearly 5,000 years ago in Egypt, and watermelons eventually became popular throughout the world. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that 4 billion pounds of watermelon are grown in the U.S. alone each year.

There are more than 1,200 varieties of watermelon, with the smallest weighing just a few pounds. On the other hand, the *Guinness Book of World Records* reports that a man in Tennessee grew a watermelon that weighed 262 pounds!

These melons, even the very largest, grow from just a tiny seed. Those who plant watermelon patches, with the right soil and climate, can find themselves overrun with vines and an abundant harvest.

The Bible frequently refers to seeds to illustrate the principles that operate in God's Kingdom. For example, Jesus talked about the mustard seed—a seed so small that it's barely visible in the palm of a hand. If thrown into the ground, one little seed can grow into a large bush or tree.

Jesus used the mustard seed to describe the kind of faith that produces results. It only takes “faith the size of a mustard seed” to be able to speak to a mountain and say, “‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move.” Those with “mustard seed” faith can know that “nothing will be impossible” (Matthew 17:20). But to produce faith and generate overwhelming blessings, we can't keep our seeds in our hands: They *must* be planted.

What seeds have we been given? God can generate an abundant harvest from even the smallest seed. But in order to receive a great harvest, we must plant our seeds...not in selfish endeavors, but in the work of Christ which will last for eternity. As we faithfully plant into God's Kingdom, we can expect His blessings!

**Prayer Focus:** Let's thank God for all the tremendous seed that He has blessed our church with and for all the people who so faithfully give their seeds to build His church. Now, let's ask that the overflow of the crop that is produced will greatly bless our community and that we will be faithful with it. Let's pray for our faith to be firmly rooted in the Lord.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

### Day Eighteen May 21, 2009

#### Discover Your Destiny...Like Jacob

*“Then Jacob woke up and said, ‘Surely the LORD is in this place, and I wasn't even aware of it...This memorial pillar will become a place for worshipping God, and I will give God a tenth of everything he gives me.’”*  
*Genesis 28:16, 22*

Today's passage finds Jacob running from the consequences of his own sinful actions and falling asleep at a place called Bethel. While he was asleep, God revealed Himself to him in a personal way. It was then that the God of his fathers became his personal God too.

Before we see how this destiny moment changed his perspective about giving, let's look at the point where God showed up in Jacob's life.

God reveals Himself when we are at the end of ourselves. Jacob had thought that the only way he could experience success in this life was through his own scheming and trickery. However, this path eventually forced him to flee for his life, leaving behind the only family he had ever known. Jacob's plans had brought him nothing but failure and rejection. When he stopped running and fell asleep at Bethel, he had nothing. And that's when he was ready to listen to God. And often, it is not until we are at the end of our rope that we are ready to listen to God.

Jacob was forever changed at Bethel. When God became personal to him, he immediately vowed to give God a tenth of everything. This personal encounter with God changed Jacob from a taker in life to a giver.

Personal encounters with God today bring the same result. They transform self-indulgent and self-absorbed consumers into willing volunteers who generously give their time, work, and resources to God's eternal cause.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's pray that everyone touched by New Life will experience a personal relationship with God, through Jesus Christ. Let's ask our Father how the giving of the time, abilities, and financial resources He has blessed us with can grow your personal faith in Him and advance His eternal cause.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Nineteen May 22, 2009**

### **Giving Freely**

*Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?  
Romans 8:32*

Giving is important to God. This became clear in the very first chapter of the Bible, for the entire act of creation demonstrated His desire to share His riches. He wanted to have a people who could experience the bounty of His blessings. No one forced Him to share His abundance, yet He created the world and then gave us "dominion" over it (Genesis 1:26-28).

When sin entered the world, God could have abandoned us. Instead, He gave of Himself. He sent His only Son to die for our sins. It was His free gift, something we could never earn or deserve.

And God continues to give to us. Our lives overflow with His gifts—things we don't deserve, but simply have been given: the breath we breathe, our minds and bodies, wisdom and knowledge, direction and guidance, His Word and His Spirit, talents, abilities, time, energy, and life itself.

As God gives us these things, He's establishing a pattern He wants us to follow—a pattern of giving and a love of giving. Paul could write that "God loves a cheerful giver" because God Himself loves to give (2 Corinthians 9:7). And He delights when we understand this truth and enter into the spirit of giving.

Today, let's take a look at our lives, and recognize all the things He has given us. Thinking about His example of generosity, let's realize that He has blessed us freely, not so that we can be selfish with our blessing but so that we can bless others.

Let's look for ways to bless others from the bounty with which God has blessed us. Remember that He wants to bless us so that we can be a blessing to others.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's thank God for all He has given us. Let's dedicate everything we hold dear to Him. And let's ask Him to open our eyes to the needs around us and show us how we can bless others. Let's pray that we will become a generous people who love to pass along to others the blessings He has so freely given to us.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**35 Day  
Prayer Guide**



## Day Twenty May 23, 2009

### Becoming a Blessing

*“Among the other nations, Judah and Israel became symbols of a cursed nation. But no longer! Now I will rescue you and make you both a symbol and a source of blessing. So don't be afraid. Be strong, and get on with rebuilding the Temple!”*

*Zechariah 8:13*

God's people had been unfaithful. Instead of obeying Him, they had defied His laws and disregarded His principles. Instead of worshiping Him, they had given themselves to idols. As a result, He removed His blessings, and they became “a curse among the nations.”

Yet God continued to care about them. He loved them and wanted the best for them. In fact, He promised to restore, save, and bless them.

But God also reminded them that He had a *purpose* for His blessings. Yes, He delighted to meet their needs, allowing them to prosper and enjoy the fullness of life. But He also wanted them to realize the importance of *being* a blessing to others with the resources He was giving them. He wanted them to share the lessons they had learned, to teach, to pray, to give from their financial resources, and to help lift people's burdens.

This same pattern is true today. God is eager to bless us, but He wants us to realize we are not to hoard His blessings or think just about ourselves. Instead, we are to be eager to share with others, to meet needs, and to make a difference in our community and the world.

God could easily provide for His kingdom miraculously, but if He did that, we would miss out on the joy of giving. So in His great wisdom, God chose to supply for His kingdom by blessing His people with more than they needed, and then calling them to give the “extra” to advance His kingdom on the earth. It's an ingenious plan that demonstrates His own generosity, and builds a generous spirit in His children, as well.

Through The Great Adventure God is calling each of us to walk with Him in faith...to believe that he will do what He has said and done through the ages of history...to believe that He will supply what his kingdom needs

through us, giving to us more than we need so we can experience the great joy of giving it sacrificially back to Him.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's pray that we will be a faithful people whom God can trust with “extra” blessings, knowing we will invest them in His great kingdom. And let's pray that we will hear His voice clearly, receiving from Him the directions about how to follow Him in The Great Adventure. And let's thank God for the blessings He's already given us and ask Him to help us be good stewards of them.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

## Day Twenty-one May 24, 2009

### Even Now

*“That is why the Lord says, ‘Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead.’ Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish.”*

*Joel 2:12-13*

Joel warned of an imminent danger. God's people needed to “*wake up*” and recognize the ravaging impact of disobeying God and His instruction. These were serious times, and Joel called for a serious reaction. Everyone needed to repent, to turn towards God, to change—old and young, men and women, masters and servants. He called on them to humble themselves, confess their sins, fast and pray, seek God's face, and be so moved that their hearts would burst with emotion.

Joel also delivered a message of hope: No matter how bad things looked, God still could change the course of events. But the burden was on God's people rather than unbelievers. The believers needed to return to Him with all their hearts. They needed to recognize their disobedience and feel sorrow for what they had done...to show that they were serious...to repent and make real change...and to pray with conviction.

It's not difficult to see the devastating impact on our nation from years of wandering away from God. His love has been disregarded as irrelevant,

and His laws have been rejected as archaic. His name is mocked and often used as a swear word. It's no surprise, then, that our nation is in trouble.

But the answer doesn't really lie with those who reject Him; it lies with those who claim to follow Him. If we will humble ourselves and surrender to Him...if we will be salt and light in our community...if we will be fully obedient to Him...He will use us to redeem the world around us. He will do a work in and through us that will literally change our world. This is The Great Adventure!

There is hope for this most unchurched area of our country...and we are that hope! God is counting on us. Are we willing to take the journey with Him?

**Prayer Focus:** Let's be grateful that God has chosen to use New Life in such a powerful way already in this community. And let's pray that what we have experienced is only the beginning of what He has planned for us. Let's humble ourselves in prayer, confessing our own sins, and getting our hearts ready to hear Him speak to us. And let's pray that whatever He asks, we will be willing to do so that God can change this community through us.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Twenty-two May 25, 2009**

### **God is on His Throne**

*"God reigns above the nations, sitting on his holy throne."  
Psalm 47:8*

At times the world can seem like a ping-pong ball—bouncing from side to side, never still. It can feel like a yo-yo—constantly going up and down.

Just think about events in the past few years. We marvel at the breadth of the changes we've seen. Trends have developed, but then reversed. Heroes have emerged, and then fallen. People have embraced politicians and parties, then, when disappointed, tried something else.

Truly, the world remains in massive flux, shifting from moment to moment. The wisest of men have failed to anticipate problems, and they offer solutions that always seem to fall short. We wonder what tomorrow will bring and what else may happen.

While the world seems caught up in turmoil, God never changes. The powerbrokers think they fight over control, but "He is the great King of all the earth." Regardless of how things appear, He remains sovereign.

Through every change, God remains perfectly calm. He isn't worried or caught up in emotional traumas. He simply sits "on His holy throne," ruling, directing, and completing His plans. He was there yesterday. He is there today. He will be there tomorrow. No matter what takes place in the world, He remains on that throne!

If we focus on the events of the world, our hearts can be subject to an emotional roller coaster—up one moment, down the next...never sure how we will feel the next morning...constantly worried and uncertain...battered and shaken.

The answer? Trust in God.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's acknowledge God's sovereign rule over all the earth and rejoice that He is ultimately in control. Let's confess our belief that His will is going to prevail in the end. And let's pray a prayer that asks for that to happen soon. Let's recognize the failure of human wisdom to solve this world's problems. And let's acknowledge our own tendency to get too wrapped up in the things of this world. And finally, let's pray that God would align our priorities and values with His...that we will begin to see this world and everything in it from the same perspective that He does.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Twenty-three May 26, 2009**

**Conditions for Answered Prayer #1: You must be willing to share what you receive**

*“If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.”*

*Proverbs 21:13*

God says, if we don't pay attention to legitimate needs that other people have, then He won't pay attention to ours. That's because the Lord wants us to be compassionate and generous. He simply isn't willing to reinforce selfish behavior with blessing.

The Apostle John says, *“If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?”* The truth is, however, we often find it easier to love a God we can't see, than to love a person that we can. However, God is unwavering in His principles. One of the conditions for answered prayer is sharing with others the blessings we have received.

James further exposes our selfish tendencies when he writes, *“When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”* In other words, even when we ask for good things, we sometimes don't receive them because our motives are selfish. We don't want blessings so we can share them. We want blessings so we can have them. Once again, James assures us that God will not reinforce this selfish behavior by supply His blessings.

God loves to bless, but all of His blessings have a purpose – drawing people into a personal friendship with Him. As we learn to receive and use His blessings in ways that draw ourselves and those around us closer to Him, He trusts us with greater blessings. This is lesson #1 in God's course of proper stewardship and management of His world. *“Those who can be trusted with little will be made ruler over much.”*

The Great Adventure gives each of us the opportunity to demonstrate to God which category we belong in. Can we be trusted with God's abundant blessings? Will we faithfully steward them in ways that bring ourselves and others closer to Him. If so, we are in for The Great Adventure of God's blessing! But sadly, if we can't be trusted, God will be forced to pour out His blessings on others who can be trusted.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's ask God to help us be a good and unselfish steward of all that he has blessed us with, to give us wisdom as to how we can use these blessings to bless our church and community. And let's pray that God will give our church's leaders wisdom to know how to support God's kingdom around the world with the tithe of all that He supplies through us.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

**Day Twenty-four May 27, 2009**

**Conditions for Answered Prayer #2: You must have a forgiving attitude toward other people**

*And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.*

*Mark 11:25*

Have you ever noticed that Jesus often links prayer with forgiveness? The truth is, nothing will kill our prayers faster than the poison of resentment. Jesus tells us to forgive, in the same way that He has forgiven us.

So whenever we refuse to forgive, we're saying that holding onto bitterness is more important to us than going on with God. We're choosing to let the actions of another rob us of the greatest treasure of all – and that's a close relationship with God. How can God answer our prayers, when we refuse to follow His plan?

As Peter is giving instructions about marriage he gives husbands this instruction: *“Live with your wives, and treat them with respect ... so that nothing will hinder your prayers.”* Peter clearly indicates that disharmony in earthly relationships damages our prayers! In other words, how we treat others directly affects what God will do in our lives. The point is to keep short accounts. We need to have a heart to forgive and be determined to work things out, so that our prayers won't be hindered.

One of the earliest detours off the path of The Great Adventure is the detour of bitterness and unforgiveness. Both block our ability to hear God's voice, and both render us unqualified to receive God's blessing.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's ask God to bring to the front of our minds any bitterness or unforgiveness hiding in the recesses of our subconscious mind. Let's commit ourselves in prayer to grant forgiveness to everyone who has wronged us, even if they did it on purpose. And let's ask God for the strength and grace to move beyond the pettiness of trying to settle the score, so that we can be qualified to receive all of the blessing He has reserved for us.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Twenty-five May 28, 2009**

### **Conditions for Answered Prayer #3: Praying in Jesus' name**

*"You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!"*

*.John 14:13-14*

Did you ever wonder why everybody seems to end their prayers, "In Jesus' name, Amen"? Ever think it was just some kind of a signal that the prayer was about to end? Like a spiritual sign off.

Some people think "In Jesus' name" is a kind of mystical password that gets you into God's presence. But that's not what the Bible teaches.

Here's a story to illustrate it. A father took his young son and about fourteen of his son's friends to the carnival for a birthday party. He bought a roll of tickets and he stood at the front of every ride and passed them out to his son and the other boys just before they got in line.

All of a sudden he looked up and realized there was a little boy with his hand out asking for a ticket that he'd never seen in his life. He stopped and said, "Son, are you with my son's party?" No. "Then why should I give you a ticket?"

The young boy turned around and pointed to the man's son and said, "Your son said you'd give me one." You see, the son knew that His father was a

generous man and so, he sent the boy to his father, and the father gave him the ticket that he asked for.

Here's the truth: we don't have any right to get any prayers answered from God. Because to be honest, God doesn't owe us a thing. But when we come to Him we can say, in all honesty, your son told me to come. I'm not coming to you in the strength of my own goodness, I'm coming to you through the goodness and grace of Jesus, your son. **He said that you'd give me a ticket.**

But praying in Jesus' name means more than just trading on His relationship with our Father. It also means that we're praying as His representative...asking for things that are closest to His heart and in alignment with His purposes. Anything less would be presumptive, selfish, and completely out of place.

So is it always necessary to say the phrase, "In Jesus' name" at the end of every prayer? Not if we say it thoughtlessly, but it's a good principle to remember every time we pray. We are there only because Jesus made a way for us, and we are there to seek His will, not our own. We're coming to God on His terms, and when we do, we can expect a God-sized answer to our prayers.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's acknowledge who we are outside of Christ and what we are becoming through His work in our lives. Let's thank God for the wonderful privilege that is ours to speak with Him, and let's devote ourselves to seeking what is best for His work in this world.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Twenty-six May 29, 2009**

### **Those Who Know God**

*"He displays his power in the whirlwind and the storm. The billowing clouds are the dust beneath his feet. At his command the oceans dry up, and the rivers disappear... In his presence the mountains quake, and the hills melt away; the earth trembles... and the mountains crumble to dust in his presence. The Lord is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes. He is close to those who trust in him.*  
*Nahum 1:3-7*

Where do we turn during the storms of life? Our natural tendency is to react with fear and/or worry. We believe in God, but sometimes struggle to believe that He will actually hear our prayers and intervene in the affairs of our lives.

But the prophet Nahum assures us that the same God who displays His power in the tornado and hurricane will be the refuge of the one who truly trusts in Him. He wants us to know that the same storms that some use to accuse God of not caring become the catalyst that helps others draw even closer to Him.

And so we find ourselves in the greatest economic storm that most of us have ever experienced. And right in the middle of it God leads us on The Great Adventure, a spiritual journey that calls for financial commitment and faith in God's provision. How will we respond?

Fear and worry come easily. No effort is required there. Faith comes harder. It's difficult to remember that God's ability to supply is not diminished in the least by the economic crisis that grips our world. He is no less capable or likely to bless those who trust Him during these times than He is when times are great. Times like this don't hinder His ability to supply; they test our ability to believe and be obedient.

The nation of Israel questioned God when they asked, "Can God spread a table in the desert?" In other words, can God supply us with a feast in this barren place? And God became angry with them because they thought His ability to supply food was limited because they were in a desert.

How fitting, then, that God would take us on The Great Adventure when the adventure of faith has the potential to be the greatest. When God pours out His blessing in the middle of scarcity, our faith and reliance in Him will grow even greater.

This is the challenge...The Great Adventure...that lies before us. Let's rise to that challenge and bolster our faith in God, daring to believe that the One who has brought us so far over the last few years will continue to pour out His blessing as we walk in obedience to Him.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's pray for all who are going through difficult times...that they would come to know God personally and draw near to Him. And let's pray that we will trust in God's desire and ability to supply all that He is going to ask from us...even during these tough economic times.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Twenty-seven May 30, 2009**

### **Healing Prayer**

*"I will bring them to my holy mountain of Jerusalem and will fill them with joy in my house of prayer. I will accept their burnt offerings and sacrifices, because my Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations."*

*Isaiah 56:7*

God has always wanted New Life is to be a house of prayer...a place where people can gather for healing. He wants us to be an outpost in the



community where people can come and receive prayer for all types of healing – spiritual, emotional, mental, or physical. We believe that God is a God of power and love, and He wants to extend His healing hand to touch people in response to our prayers.

Jesus loved to heal people. In fact, the Bible says He healed every kind of sickness and disease that was brought to Him. And Peter reminds us that by the stripes (wounds) Christ received as He was crucified we are healed (1 Peter 2:24).

Jesus still loves to heal people...only now He does it through prayer. We are His healing agents...those who have been given His name to wear... those who have been empowered to be His ambassadors in our world. Through us...and through our prayers...He ministers healing to those who struggle with physical ailments, those who struggle with addictions, those who struggle with emotional hurts and scars, and those who struggle with fears.

No fear, no addiction, no hurt, and no disease lies beyond His ability to heal. But perhaps He will not heal any of them until and unless we pray. But when we pray in faith, The Great Adventure of healing begins.

**Prayer focus:** Let's ask God to give us an opportunity today to pray for someone who needs healing. Let's ask God to bring supernatural healing through our prayers, so those we pray for can personally experience God's power in their lives. And let's pray that God will make New Life a church that is known in this community as a church where the broken are made whole through prayer. *"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Twenty-eight May 31, 2009**

### **A House of Prayer for all Nations**

*"When they arrived back in Jerusalem, Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people buying and selling animals for sacrifices. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, and he stopped everyone from using the Temple as a marketplace. He said to them, 'The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves.'" Mark 11:15-17*

Why was Jesus so upset? What could possibly turn this gentle man with love and compassion toward everyone into a personal tornado that devastated the Temple courtyard?

Believe it or not, it was the people of God: People who had been chosen by God as His nation; People who were supposed to be modeling for the whole world God's purity, love, and faithfulness. People who had been chosen to bring the Messiah into the world.

But what did Jesus find in God's house? A hoard of profiteers who swindled people out of the offerings they were bringing to God. And they were led by the highest religious leader of all, the High Priest. This nation that was supposed to be modeling God's love to the whole world...this building that was supposed to be a house of prayer for all nations...had been reduced to nothing more than a den of thieves who practiced their trade in the context of religion.

Any God reverencing man or woman would be offended just going in there, so how could it possibly contribute to a person receiving healing through prayer. How sad...how needless!

Jesus made no bones about it. His kingdom would be an international one with healing and prayer for the people of all nations. The same is still true today.

As God moves in us through The Great Adventure, He is going to be supplying financial resources that will bless and advance His kingdom all over the world. The coming months will find us setting up our first structured Missions Ministry. Missionaries and mission projects, both local and international, will be interviewed and investigated. Whole teams of people will be praying that God will guide us to the ones He has specifically chosen for New Life to partner with.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's pray that God will touch our hearts with concern for the international advancement of His kingdom. Let's pray that He will make New Life a house of prayer for all the nations. And let's pray that He will enable us to become a blessing to churches and ministry projects locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. *"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

## Day Twenty-nine June 1, 2009

### Abiding in Jesus and His Word

*“But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!”*

John 15:7

That’s an incredible promise, isn’t it? Jesus said, we can ask whatever we wish, and it will be given to us. It’s important to notice that behind this promise is a premise and, the premise is, we have to stay close to the Lord.

Jesus began this chapter by saying He was the vine and we are the branches. If we remained connected to Him we would bear much fruit, but if we became disconnected we would shrivel and die. Then He finished this thought by observing that apart from Him we could do nothing.

What does it mean to remain connected to Jesus? In the analogy of the vine and branches, it means that we recognize our life comes from Him. When we draw our nourishment from our connection with Him, His thoughts and His concerns become ours. And our old thoughts and concerns about the things of this world fade into insignificance. That’s why when we pray, God can fully answer our prayers. They’re not about things that are eternally meaningless. When we remain fully connected to Jesus, people matter most...God’s kingdom matters most...getting others to heaven matters most. These are the subjects that dominate our prayers.

This is not natural to the human spirit. We all love to live independently and selfishly. But when we do, the story never ends well. That’s why God offers a “transformation plan.” Through daily connection with Jesus we can be transformed into a new person by allowing Him to change the way we think.

This not only is a Great Adventure, it qualifies us to experience even greater adventures. During this season of prayer we are asking God to reveal to us what He wants to do through us to accomplish His will in this church and in our community. The answer to that prayer is a Great Adventure, but it’s not available to those who are not fully connected to Jesus. They cannot think with the mind of Christ, nor can they hear with the heart of Christ. God’s voice is distant and unclear to them because they are not fully connected to Jesus. But God’s voice is crystal clear to those who remain connected to Jesus. And because their hearts have been tuned to it,

they can move forward with faith and confidence, knowing they are following the direction of God.

**Prayer Focus:** Let’s take some time to just bless Jesus for the opportunity to be connected to Him, to have our minds transformed from our naturally selfish ways into His loving and unselfish perspectives. And let’s ask Him to help us take a big step on that journey today.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*

## Day Thirty June 2, 2009

### Cooperating with God

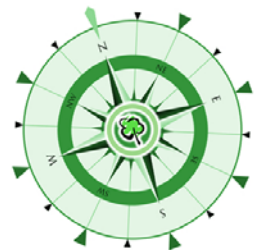
*“You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name.” John 15:16*

Notice the special calling that God has for us. Jesus says, before you ever chose me, I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit.

One of the most exciting aspects of prayer is the opportunity to cooperate with God. Prayer is joining the Lord in what He is doing. It’s an act of cooperation that activates God’s power for the accomplishment of His will. You could say that prayer is God’s program to get things done on this earth. And, when we pray for other people, we are actually teaming up with God to accomplish His work.

Dallas Theological Seminary is one of today’s most prominent seminaries, but shortly after it was founded in 1924, it nearly had to close its doors. The president of the seminary met with his faculty at his office, and they prayed fervently that God would provide.

Dr. Harry Ironside used Psalm 50:10 in his prayer. “Lord, we know that the cattle on a thousand hills are Yours. Please sell some of them and send us the money.” Meanwhile, a Texas businessman stepped into the seminary business office, saying: “I just sold two carloads of cattle in Fort Worth, and I feel compelled to give the money to the seminary.



Here's the check." The surprised secretary took the check to the president, and it turned out to be the exact amount needed. The Texas businessman cooperated with God and The Great Adventure was on!

Those who prevail in prayer understand that prayer isn't a way to get God to do what we want. It's God's way of communicating to us what He wants. Like every other conversation, it's as much about listening as it is about talking.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's ask God to reveal His will to us today through prayer. Let's ask Him to show us what ministry he wants us serving in...what commitment He wants us to make to The Great Adventure...what person He wants us to encourage...and what truth he wants us to learn today. And then let's thank Him for being so kind that He would reveal His will to ordinary people like us.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

### **Day Thirty-one June 3, 2009**

#### **From Follower to Minister**

*"Jesus called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits."*

*Mark 6:1&7*

Jesus summoned His disciples. It was time for them to begin a new phase of their training. They had been His followers, but now He also was calling them to be *ministers*—partners in bringing God's Kingdom to their community.

Sending them out in teams, Jesus assured them that he would be at work in and through them. In fact, they would be blessed with a power and a presence not their own. It would be a supernatural power that was even greater than the spirits of the demonic world. In other words, as they worked in cooperation with Him, amazing things would happen. And they did!

The same is true for us today. Jesus calls us not just to be His followers, but also to be His ministers. He wants to accomplish His work through us, and He assures us that when we cooperate with Him, amazing things will happen. And they are!

The list of miracles that took place during our >>READY! Spiritual Journey, the purchase of the Clegg Street property, and the build out of our current campus is long and impressive. And the list of miracles just continues. People who were far away from God are finding Him at New Life. People who were bound by addictions are finding healing and freedom in Jesus right here. Those who were skeptical and faithless are finding life-changing faith. The lonely are finding acceptance and friendship. The hopeless are finding hope.

The Great Adventure is a call for each of us to get up off of the bench and into the game...to become more than a follower of Jesus...to be used by Him in His great eternal cause – the redemption of people. Yes, it takes commitment. And yes, it takes sacrifice. And yes, it takes faith to get in the game with Jesus. But experience and adventure are worth the trip.

**Prayer Focus:** As Celebration Sunday nears, let's prepare our hearts through prayer to make the commitment God is calling us to. Let's pray that we can get in the game with Jesus...to dare to live in a three-year partnership with Him, trusting Him to provide for us what he wants to supply through us. Let's pray that we can see ourselves as tools in His hands, fully ready to be used by Him to supply what He knows New Life will need in order to fully follow Him between now and 2012.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

### **Day Thirty-two June 4, 2009**

#### **Jesus and Prayer**

*"But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer." Luke 5:16*

Jesus would often slip away from the crowd. He would regularly get away from the noise and the distractions so that He could have uninterrupted time with His Father. Has this thought ever occurred to you? Why would Jesus, the son of God, even need to pray?

I mean Jesus is God, in perfect union with the Father. He repeatedly demonstrates that He has the power to speak things into existence. Demons are submitted to His commands and even the wind and the waves obeyed Him!

So why did Jesus repeatedly choose to pray? Because He was also human and knew that every human needed to live totally dependent on God's Spirit and as His child. Take a look at what an important role prayer had in His life.

The Bible says that Jesus spent all night in prayer before he selected 12 men to be His disciples.

Jesus prayed when the little children were brought to Him

One time when Jesus was praying, His disciples were so impressed, they said, "Lord, teach us to pray" and that is when Jesus taught them the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus was praying right before His transfiguration, when He appeared to three of disciples in heavenly glory.

Jesus prayed a lengthy prayer for his followers in John 17.

Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemane, just before he was taken captive.

Jesus prayed, while He was hanging on a cross.

As we near the end of our 35 day journey of prayer we're already experiencing the power of prayer in our lives. We are now in daily partnership with God, seeking His will, and committing ourselves to His leading. We have taken a huge step toward living as Jesus lived. Our heavenly Father now calls us to two things:

Obedience to His leading – Through prayer God has revealed to us what He wants to do through us to accomplish His will in this church and in our community. He now calls us to be obedient in committing ourselves to His leading.

Continued partnership – Even though the 35 Days Of Prayer is ending, God has no desire to end our daily meetings with Him. We now know how to pray to God daily, and we know now to listen to Him in prayer. So God calls us to continue this practice and develop it more and more as we grow in our relationship with Him.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's bless God for the partnership we're experiencing through prayer. Let's ask God to give us obedient hearts that will make the commitment He is calling us to. And let's begin to thank Him for the ways that He is going to supply this commitment through us.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

**Day Thirty-three June 5, 2009**

### **The School of Prayer**

*"Lord, teach us to pray" Luke 11:1*

This is the simple request the Apostles made of Jesus. Anyone can say a few words to God, but they wanted to know how to connect with God through prayer. In His model prayer Jesus taught them the following two simple but profound lessons:

**1. Prayer is much more about God than it is about us.** – It begins with a desire to see God's name treated with respect as hallowed or holy. It concerns itself with the advancement of His kingdom and His will. And it ends with an expression of His eternal sovereignty and glory.

**2. Prayer is much more practical than it is polished.** – It isn't about making a speech to God. It's about asking for things like daily bread, forgiveness, the ability to forgive others, and victory over temptations that would take us away from Him.

Somehow in this simple daily activity...this daily conversation with God... where we speak and listen to God...we are transformed, we receive what we need to live in this world, and we receive guidance and direction for the choices and commitments life brings our way. It isn't as mystical as it is personal. It isn't an art form to be developed. It's taking the time to be with God every day.

In many ways, it's much like building and feeding a marriage. Telling our mates that we love them isn't an art form to be developed.

It's much simpler and more genuine than that. But it does require reserving a regular time to just be with our spouse...talking and listening...getting to know them and becoming known by them. And somehow in that process our hearts become inseparably intertwined for life.

**Prayer Focus:** Let's ask God to help us learn to enjoy and look forward to visiting with Him each day. Let's commit ourselves in prayer to a regular time of meeting with Him. And let's make sure our prayers are more about Him than they are about us.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

### **Day Thirty-four June 6, 2009**

#### **Privileged to Manage**

*"Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O Lord, and this is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things.*

*Wealth and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength. O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name! But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us! We are here for only a moment, visitors and strangers in the land as our ancestors were before us. Our days on earth are like a passing shadow, gone so soon without a trace. O Lord our God, even this material we have gathered to build a Temple to honor your holy name comes from you! It all belongs to you! I know, my God, that you examine our hearts and rejoice when you find integrity there. You know I have done all this with good motives, and I have watched your people offer their gifts willingly and joyously."* 1 Chronicles 29:11-17

Ezra spoke these words to people who had lived in slavery and bondage all of their lives. But now God has blessed them with freedom and prosperity. His prayer reminded them that everything they thought they owned really belonged to God. He had graciously entrusted it to their care, but only for a season.

What great words of wisdom for us. In this land of affluence and freedom, we can easily forget that we really own nothing. As Paul wrote, "We brought nothing into this world, and we will take nothing out of it." The truth is we are merely stewards and managers of what belongs to God.

The Great Adventure invites us into a partnership with God that highlights this truth. It reminds us that everything belongs to God and that He has brought it under our supervision so that we could manage it for the advancement of His kingdom and experience the joy of giving it back to Him.

Tomorrow we will gather for a great time of commitment and celebration. During our worship service we will be officially entering into an official partnership with God. Tomorrow we formally begin The Great Adventure. Up to now, we have been making preparations for the trip. Tomorrow we begin climbing the mountain. There will be challenges along the way...many opportunities to exit the climb and sit part way up the mountain. But those who continue on the Great Adventure will experience breath-taking vistas not available to those who never entered the climb or those who decided to set up camp on the lower parts of the mountain.

Tomorrow is a great day in God's kingdom here. Let's enter it properly "pre-prayered."

**Prayer Focus:** Let's begin and end our prayers with thanksgiving to God, acknowledging His generous provision in our lives. And in the middle let's pray that we will be faithful to God by committing to Him the full amount of what He is guiding us to commit.

*"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?"*

### **Day Thirty-five June 7, 2009**

#### **He is Faithful**

*"Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each day. I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!"* Lamentations 3:23

God has given New Life a vision for the future. As we have explored 35 days of prayer in pursuit of this dream, we have found Him to be a faithful promise keeper. Today's devotional is dedicated to praising the Lord for this aspect of His character.

**Psalm 116:1-2** – "I love the LORD because he hears and answers my prayers. Because he bends down and listens, I will pray as long as I have breath!"

**Ephesians 3:20** – “Now, glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope.”

**Philippians 4:6-7** – “Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”

**I Thessalonians 5:17-18** – “Keep on praying. No matter what happens, always be thankful, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

**Judges 4:14** – “Get ready! Today the LORD will give you victory...for the LORD is marching ahead of you.”

**Prayer Focus:** The words of a wonderful old hymn:

## Great Is Thy Faithfulness

by Thomas O. Chisholm

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;  
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

*“Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will in this church and in our community?”*



# TWO CAN'T-MISS EVENTS

## 12-Hours of Prayer

June 5 from 9a - 9p

*individual timeslots for prayer at Clegg throughout the day*

Culminating in a Group Event:

## Concert Of Prayer

7p - 9p

## Celebration Event

June 7

One Service at 10 am

*Make Plans to Stick Around for the Celebration & Lunch!*



