21DAYSOR PRAYER

RASING
JAN18-RB7

Welcome to our 21 days of prayer and fasting! We are excited to see what God will do in our lives, our church and our community as we bring our requests to him over the next 3 weeks. There is great power in prayer and fasting. Fasting is a way of increasing our focus on God as we pray. It sharpens our minds and attunes our hearts to hearing God more clearly. And it creates humility in us as we deny our comforts and desires and replace them with prayer and God's word. I believe that God is waiting to do great things for us at Pathway. And he has called us to partner with him in accomplishing his will in our lives and the world around us. How we pray reveals what we believe about God. So over the next 3 weeks:

Pray boldly

Don't be afraid to make bold, audacious prayers. God is fully able to do more than we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20—21). Don't limit his power and his work over your life by praying small prayers. Make big, lifealtering requests because God is a great God!

Pray expectantly

What do you expect to happen when you pray? Sometimes our faith (or the lack thereof) can hinder God's answers to our prayers. So pray like you expect God to answer. We have this amazing promise in scripture: "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." (Mark 11:24).

Each week, you will receive a prayer guide focusing on a particular area of prayer:

Week 1: Our personal relationship with God

Week 2: Our families and friends

Week 3: Our church, community and the world.

I hope you can join us on this exciting journey of seeking God together.



A PURE HEART

Who may ascend the mountain of Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol, or swear by a false god. Psalm 24: 3-4

Sin separates us from God and makes it impossible for us to experience his presence. Jesus said that blessed are the pure in heart because they will see God (Matthew 5:8). If we hope to see God, to see his hand at work in our lives as we pray, we must approach him with a clean heart. As we start our prayer time today, take some time to ask God to search your heart and reveal any sin. Take note of what he reveals to you and confess it. Whatever is in our hearts determines what we focus on with our minds and what we say. This is especially important during this time of prayer and fasting because the state of our hearts will determine the focus of our prayers. So start each day by asking God to search you and remove anything in your heart that goes against his desires. Ask him to give you a new heart that pleases him so that your whole life will reflect your faith in God.

Prayer: Dear God, give me a pure heart so that I can please you in everything that I do today. Reveal to me any sins that I need to confess and give me the power to turn away from anything that does not please you. Amen.

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A RENEWED MIND

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2)

Does your mind ever feel like a battleground, torn between the cares and worries of life? We find ourselves still in the midst of a pandemic that has had great impact on our lives. In difficult situations, it is easy to get swept along by the flow of the world. It can be easy to succumb to fear and anxiety. The world around us can cloud our judgment and make it difficult to discern God's will or see him at work in our lives. The scripture today tells us that the way to know God's will is by having our minds renewed. And we get our minds renewed by feeding on God's word and getting a spiritual perspective on life, rather than a worldly one. Commit to study and internalize God's word during this fast. Pray that God will give you a spiritual mindset as you pray so that you can pray according to God's will and not your own.

Prayer: Dear God, I pray that you would reveal any sinful patterns and strongholds in my mind. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and give me the same mind as Christ so that my life can be pleasing to you. Speak to me through your word and help me to obey all that you reveal to me. Amen.

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A RIGHT SPIRIT

Those who live according to the flesh, have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance to the Spirit, have their minds focused on what the Spirit desires (Romans 8:5).

What drives you? What informs your goals, desires, or even your prayers? When we are focused on just pursuing our personal desires and comfort, we find ourselves out of step with the Holy Spirit. We must continually surrender our desires to God and ask him to give us his desires instead. To effectively pray for ourselves and the world around us, we need to see ourselves and the world the way God does. When we focus and pray only about our own personal desires, then we live very small lives and miss out on all the amazing ways that God is at work around us.. Ask yourself this: who would benefit the most if God were to answer all your prayers today? How would your life and community be different? In the coming weeks, we will be praying for our church, our community and the world. God is ready to give us the Holy Spirit when we ask (Matthew 7:11). The Holy Spirit is our helper, interceding for us when we don't have the right words to pray. Ask God to fill your heart with the Spirit continually as you seek him through prayer during this fast.

Prayer: Thank you God for sending your Holy Spirit to be my helper. Fill my heart and pour out your power on my life. Holy Spirit, I welcome you into my life today and ask that you would lead me and teach me how to pray according to what you desire. Amen.

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A NEW CREATION

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 1 Cor 5:17

Have you ever watched one of those extreme makeover shows? Our family sometimes watches the Extreme Makeover Home Edition where a family facing hardship gets their dilapidated house completely rebuilt while they're away. Our lives in Christ are a little like that: Christ comes into our hearts and turns us into completely new beings from the inside out. Our old self with its sinful desires is taken away and replaced with a new self with new desires. God doesn't just give us a facelift; we're not just an improved version of who we used to be. We become born again and start lives that are completely different from the lives we lived before. But in order to experience that newness of life, we must surrender our old ways to God. We have to hand over the keys and get out of the way so that God can rebuild us. Have you experienced a new life in Christ? Is there anything you're holding on to from your old life that you need to surrender to Christ today? Take some time to reflect. Ask God to show you areas of your life that have not experienced the newness he promised. It could be a relationship that is governed by old ways of relating. Or a view of yourself that does not fit with the way God sees you. If you have never invited Christ into your life as your Lord and leader, take the time to do so.

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to give me a new life. Help me to fully embrace that new life and live it out with boldness. Amen.

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A FRUITFUL LIFE

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5

When a baby is born, it must remain connected to a source of sustenance in order to grow. The same is true for all living things; without sustenance, they die. When we give our lives to Christ and get born again, we too must remain connected to him in order to grow and thrive in our Christian walk. Jesus made it very clear that the only way to bear fruit in our lives was to remain in him. Apart from him, we are helpless and hopeless, we have no power to accomplish what he wants us to accomplish. Jesus calls us to faithfulness and steadfastness. He wants us to remain in him through every season of our lives. Only then will we bear fruit that lasts; the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

More than that, we will also see the fruit of answered prayer that Jesus promised; "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you." (John 15:7)

Prayer: Dear God, please help me to remain connected to you so that my life can bear fruit for you and your kingdom. Use my prayers to draw me closer to you, and help me to keep your word in my heart as a guide. Help me to grow the fruit of the Spirit in my life; give me love, joy, and peace. Help me to be patient and kind. Give me goodness and make me faithful. Make me gentle and give me self-control as I go through the day. Amen.

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A BLESSED ASSURANCE

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Phil 4:6

Isn't it amazing to know that we can bring our requests to God in prayer? God is a loving Father who delights in giving his children good gifts. Even though he already knows what we need even before we ask (Matthew 6:8), he wants to grant our requests through our relationship with him. God wants you to talk to him about the things that make you happy and those that make you angry. He wants to know when you're sad and discouraged. Pray about things you want and things that you need. There is no request too big or too small for God to grant. Whatever you want God to do for you, you can pray with confidence that God hears you. Do you believe? Sometimes it can be hard to trust God especially when we've been praying about something for a long time and not seeing any answers. It can be hard to believe that God cares for us when we continue to experience suffering or pain or brokenness in our lives. Maybe the thing you want to pray about seems impossible, maybe you think that there's no way God could answer you. Doubt is a normal part of our Christian life, but we must not allow it to determine how we pray. As you continue with this prayer and fasting season, there will be times when you get weary or skeptical. Whenever you face doubt, be pray like the man in Luke 9:23—25 who said to Jesus, "I believe. Help my unbelief."

Prayer: Thank you Lord for the assurance that you hear me when I pray and that you answer our prayers according to your will. Please give me the faith I need to continue trusting you for breakthrough, and help me when I experience doubt. Help me to come to you with all of my requests, no matter how big or small they seem in my eyes. I know that you have the power to do more than I can imagine.

| MY PRAYER REQUESTS | | | | | |
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A SURE VICTORY

For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 1 John 5:4

Welcome to day 7 of our 21 day prayer and fasting experience. I hope you've been able to set aside time to pray this week. Sometimes prayer and fasting can be difficult to sustain because somewhere between our prayer goals and actual praying, life happens. We get distracted or discouraged that answers are not coming as fast as we would like. We get sidetracked by temptations and the lure of sin. Just as it is true that we have a mighty God working in our lives, it is also true that we have an enemy working against us. Spiritual warfare is real and it is important to pray with this awareness. The great news is that we already have victory over the enemy. Because we belong to God, we have victory over everything that might try to hold us back. Whenever you find yourself discouraged over the next two weeks, remember that God is still in control of your life. When temptations come, remember that you are no longer a slave to sin but to righteousness (Romans 6:18—22). Ask God to continually fill you with the Spirit so that you can continue to experience God throughout this journey. No matter what life throws at you, you have a sure victory through your faith in Christ.

Think about areas in your life that you wish to experience victory and breakthrough (sinful habits, discouragement, relationship issues, financial troubles e.t.c.). Say the prayer below and list them down in your own prayer, asking God for breakthrough.

Prayer: Thank you God for bringing me this far in the prayer and fasting experience. Continue to strengthen me through your Spirit and help me to experience your victory every day. Please take control over every area of my life and help me to know you more each day. Amen.

| AREAS I NEED GOD'S VICTORY IN | | | | | |
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