



First Baptist Church of Mableton

40 DAYS OF  
PRAYER  
AND  
REFLECTION

(Day 21-25)

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# Day 21 - Strengthen Your Faith in the God Who Revives

Read Ezekiel 37:1-14

[“This is what the Lord God says to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you will live.” Ezekiel 37:5 \(HCSB\)](#)

Parched and bleached by the sun, the brittle bones scattered across the valley presented a vision that summoned two words to the prophet’s mind—death and discouragement. The only thing more discouraging than the vision itself was the fact that God’s own people were “represented” by these abandoned bones. They had died, and their revitalization required significant intervention by God.

This vision challenged Ezekiel’s faith. God asked him an unthinkable question, “Son of man, can these bones live?” He replied, “Lord God, only You know.” Ezekiel’s response revealed his thought, “If these dried bones live again, it will require a miracle from You, God.”

In the vision, God did what only He could do. As Ezekiel preached, the bones came together, were wrapped by muscle and skin, and those corpses were resuscitated. The dry bones lived! Likewise, Israel was revived and restored.

There is a lesson we need to learn. God delights Himself in revitalizing that which seems to be dry and lifeless. Do you believe by faith that what God did in Ezekiel’s vision and for Israel, He can do for your church?

Ask God to increase your faith as you continue to pray for revitalization in your church.

As for you, make a commitment to be in His Word and pray daily. Encourage others in your church to do the same, then see how your church responds. You will see a great power from God envelop your church toward revitalization.

# Day 22 - Discern God's Plan

Read Matthew 6:9-15

*"Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* Matthew 6:10 (NASB)

In this passage Jesus teaches us how to pray. Each portion of His teaching gives us an important aspect of prayer.

Verse 10 reminds us that God has a plan for our church. Our church is a part of God's kingdom. His desire is that His kingdom penetrates neighborhoods, communities, cities, and ultimately the world with the gospel. When we pray, "Your kingdom come," we are praying for God to work in and through our church to extend His kingdom.

When God views our church, He sees its potential. In the mind of God, He envisions what it can and should become in the future. We call that "God's preferred future." He loves our church so much He doesn't want it to remain where it is today. He has in mind a "preferred future."

When we pray, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" we are asking God to reveal to us what He envisions for us. Through prayer we discern "next steps."

When entering into a church revitalization process, the voice we need to hear above all others is the voice of God through prayer.

Pray today asking God to reveal to you and to other church members what God envisions for the future of our church. Share your willingness to yield to what He wants.

Prayerfully consider this question: How do you want our church to carry out the Great Commission in our context?

# Day 23 - Choose Your Side

Read Joshua 5:13-15

“Neither,” He replied. “I have now come as commander of the Lord’s army.” Then Joshua bowed with his face to the ground in worship and asked Him, “What does my Lord want to say to His servant?” Joshua 5:14 (HCSB)

When Joshua, preparing for the heat of battle, saw a human figure with sword drawn, he naturally went to the man and asked if he was for them or against them. The man, who Joshua soon discovered to be an earthly appearance of God, answered that he was not “for” them or “against” them, but instead the Captain of the Lord’s army. Joshua appropriately bowed down and worshipped him.

During a revitalization effort it is possible for us to begin to choose sides in the church. We distinguish between those who are “for” a renewed vision and those who are against it. A better route is to make sure we, personally, are lined up with the Lord.

We will know we are with God when our desires for His church match His desires as seen in Scripture, when we are submissive to God-ordained leadership, and when our actions and attitudes reflect Christ-like character.

So based on the above listed criteria, are you for God and His vision for the church?

Consider praying today that God will help you align yourself with His vision for your church. Pray that His desires for the church, in the community where He has placed it, would be reflected through its words, actions, and attitudes.

# Day 24 - Pursue the Keys to Healing

Read II Chronicles 7:12-14

“(If) My people who are called by My name humble themselves, pray and seek My face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.”

II Chronicles 7:14 (HCSB)

Excitement and optimism ruled the day. After seven years of construction, the Temple was built and dedicated. God’s presence was manifested in an unusual way. Fire fell from heaven to consume the sacrifice and God’s glory filled the Temple.

Later, God appeared to Solomon at night and told him that not every day would be like the day of dedication. There would be days when, in an effort to draw His errant people back to Himself, God would send drought and pestilence.

At such a time, God told Solomon His people were to pursue four keys to healing: humility, prayer, seeking of God’s face, and repentance.

Today God’s people are His church. In many churches, indicators mark the need for revitalization. If this true of your church, are you pursuing revival with the keys of humility, prayer, seeking God’s face, and repentance?

Ask God to help you and others in your church to humbly walk with Him, prayerfully depend upon Him, diligently seek His face, and honestly repent of sin that hinders fellowship with Him.

# Day 25 - Love Jesus above All

Read Revelation 2:1-7

“... But I have this against you: you have abandoned the love you had at first.” Revelation 2:4 (HCSB)

The final line of the refrain from my favorite childhood hymn is, “Oh, how I love Jesus, because He first loved me.” When sung from a true heart, it is a beautiful offering of worship to our Lord. Our love for Jesus should not only be hailed in our worship, it should be the motivating factor for everything we claim to do for Him.

The church at Ephesus outwardly appeared to be a wonderful congregation. Jesus Himself pointed out their hard work, faithful endurance, worthy walk, and doctrinal integrity. The problem was that these works were performed out of “duty”, rather than out of love for the Savior. Though they did not know it, the Ephesian Christians needed revival. They were running the risk of losing their light for the Lord.

Many believers are wearing themselves out with a manic schedule of church programming while seeing few results. In their harried lifestyle of “Christian” activities they do not spend time cultivating their love for Jesus. They need a revival of the heart. They need to heed the words of Christ, “Remember then how far you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first” (Rev. 2:5a).

Is your love for Jesus the motivation for your work for Him?

Tell Jesus how much you love Him. If needed, repent for allowing your love for Him to grow cold.