

THIRST

REVIVAL CONFERENCE

November 5th-8th | FBC Suffolk

30 Day Prayer Guide

October 8 - November 6, 2017

INTRODUCTION

I want to personally encourage you to use the **Awaken** prayer guide we are providing. It will help you as you pray for the **Thirst Conference** over the next month. It contains short and inspiring examples of revival, and will prompt you to pray about the principles of revival.

May God use it to help prepare our hearts!

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Senior Pastor

PRAYER GUIDE INDEX

October 8, 2017 - Day 1
What time is it?

October 9, 2017 - Day 2
Do it again Lord!

October 10, 2017 - Day 3
Are you depending on God?

October 11, 2017 - Day 4
Are you asking?

October 12, 2017 - Day 5
He is able

October 13, 2017 - Day 6
Character matters

October 14, 2017 - Day 7
Drawing near

October 15, 2017 - Day 8
Do you really care?

October 16, 2017 - Day 9
Faithful to the Word

October 17, 2017 - Day 10
Finish strong

October 18, 2017 - Day 11
Ruffled feathers

October 19, 2017 - Day 12
College students on fire

October 20, 2017 - Day 13
Surrender through prayer

October 21, 2017 - Day 14
Making Jesus known

October 22, 2017 - Day 15
Sacrifice

October 23, 2017 - Day 16
God's gracious intervention

October 24, 2017 - Day 17
Are you praying big?

October 25, 2017 - Day 18
Jesus is all we need!

October 26, 2017 - Day 19
Misplaced priorities?

October 27, 2017 - Day 20
Killing the giant

October 28, 2017 - Day 21
Choose life!

October 29, 2017 - Day 22
Passionate prayer

October 30, 2017 - Day 23
Intimacy with God

October 31, 2017 - Day 24
Lay aside your sin

November 1, 2017 - Day 25
The east, the west & our sin

November 2, 2017 - Day 26
Devoted to a revived life

November 3, 2017 - Day 27
Awaken to the harvest!

November 4, 2017 - Day 28
Glorification through death

November 5, 2017 - Day 29
Perspective

November 6, 2017 - Day 30
Awaken me O Lord!

DAY 1: What time is it?

Romans 13:11 “And do this, knowing the time...”

A few weeks ago the phone awakened us from a deep sleep at 3:45 a.m. Those calls can literally change your life. This one did. It was my daughter – her water had broken and she was headed to the hospital to deliver our first grandchild. We were startled by her words because she was four weeks early. We headed to the hospital as soon as we could.

As I reflect on that morning I cannot help but think about Paul’s words to the Roman believers. Paul cautioned the believers to understand that God’s “kairos” or opportune time to return to Him was upon them. This was a call to awaken from an apathetic and immoral life. It was actually a call to repentance and a holy life in Christ. The reason – God’s “kairos” time is nearer than when we first believed. The completion of His salvation in our lives is upon us; it is closer than we thought. Daybreak is approaching fast. What time is it in your life? Do you need to awaken and return to Christ?

Prayer Points

- Pray that the Holy Spirit would give you a greater sensitivity to God’s “kairos” time
- Pray that your heart would be renewed in Christ as you awaken, repent and return to Christ before it is too late

DAY 2: Do it again Lord!

Psalms 85:6 “Will you not revive us again...”

In 1904, the country of Wales was experiencing an incredibly low spiritual ebb. Morals were collapsing, crime rates were rising, and churches were weak and declining. But God was at work calling His remnant back to the three things that always precede Great Awakenings: fervent prayer, deep repentance and evangelistic passion. As prayer and repentance increased, God poured out His Spirit like a sweeping flood. Evan Roberts, a former coal miner and a major instrument whom God used in the revival, challenged people as he preached to put away unconfessed sin and doubtful habits, obey the Holy Spirit immediately and confess Christ publically.

In six months, 100,000 people were converted and Wales experienced moral and spiritual revitalization. Today, America is in desperate need of revival and awakening. Could it happen again? Will God mercifully work in a similar way in America? Cry out to God and ask Him to start a revival in you, your family and your church.

Prayer Points

- Confess any known sin and set aside any actions that do not represent Christ
- Ask the Lord to use you as an instrument for revival

DAY3: Are you depending on God?

John 15:5 “He who abides in Me, and I in Him, he bears much fruit; for apart from me you can do nothing.”

Charles Spurgeon knew that he was nothing apart from Christ. For nearly 30 years God filled the Metropolitan Tabernacle with souls hungry for the bread of life as Spurgeon, the “Prince of Preachers,” preached the truth of God. Countless souls were ushered into God’s Kingdom through his life and pulpit ministry. Spurgeon was always quick to say that prayer was the secret to the success of his ministry. He not only believed that corporate prayer unleashed God’s power, but Spurgeon knew he personally had to be a man of prayer in order to be God’s instrument. He often commented, “Nothing can so gloriously fit you to preach as descending fresh from the mount of communion with God to speak with men.”

Today, the spiritual life of the church is so predictable and it seldom shows the results of God’s work in our lives. Without the power of Christ in our lives we can do nothing. It is not that we can do some things, but we can do nothing. Do we dare pray that God would surprise us by His presence and power in our lives? Can we really accept that our efforts are futile without Him?

Prayer Points

- Pray for the Lord to search your heart for spiritual pride
- Pray toward an unwavering desire to abide in and depend on the Lord for everything

DAY4: Are you asking?

James 4:2-3 “You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”

Have you ever wondered why some prayers go unanswered? Sometimes the timing of our prayers is not right. At other times our prayers may be focused on wrong issues, or our motives or intent in asking may be off track. And, as hard as it is to admit, there may be those times when we do not see answered prayer because we simply have not prayed about a matter. Andrew Murray, South African pastor and theologian, once said, “God must give, we must ask.” His statement reminds us that as followers of Christ our role in prayer is not to tell God how to answer our prayers, or when to answer our prayers. We are to be faithful in our task of asking.

In today’s text, James challenges believers to evaluate their faithfulness in asking and to be sure that they pray with proper motives. If the church is going to be faithful to take the gospel to the world, we must be faithful first to ask, and then to trust God to do the answering! Paul reminds us in Ephesians 3:20 that when God answers prayer it is usually, “exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Will we ask? And will we ask with the right motives?

Prayer Points

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to search you for wrong motives in prayer
- Pray for faithfulness and discipline in your personal prayer life

DAY 5: He is able

2 Timothy 1:12 "I know whom I have believed...that He is able..."

Life for Patrick of Ireland looked pretty dim. Patrick was born in Scotland in A.D. 389 to godly Christian parents who taught him Scripture, prayers and hymns. At age 16 Patrick was kidnapped, taken captive by Irish pirates and sold into slavery. After six long years, Patrick escaped and returned home. After being home for a brief period God began to give him a deep longing to return to Ireland and share Christ. This he eventually did and Patrick was used by God to reach Ireland with the gospel.

After returning to Ireland as a missionary, and following numerous encounters with druid priests where the Lord proved Himself victorious, Patrick began to see the fruit of His labors. He organized churches, implemented training programs for Christians, instituted schools for students and clergy, and wrote hymns. God truly used Patrick for His glory to see the Irish people awakened to the truth of Christ. Thus, because of the awakening and work of God's Spirit, Patrick established a Christian witness in Ireland, planted 365 churches and won 120,000 converts to Christ. God truly is able! Do you believe?

Prayer Points

- Pray for Christ to set your heart through faith on His ability to renew and revive His church
- Pray for the church in America to unite in prayer toward awakening

DAY 6: Character matters

John 17:11 "Keep them in Your name..."

The year was 1949. As seven young men were praying in a barn outside the city one man stood and read from Psalm 24:3-5, "Who can ascend the hill of the Lord? ..." When he finished reading the verses he asked the six men who were praying with him if it was not senseless to be praying for revival if they themselves were not right with God! Almost immediately God's presence overcame the group and they found themselves laying face down weeping, confessing their sins and seeking forgiveness. God answered their prayers and the Hebrides Islands, a group of small islands just off the coast of Scotland, soon came alive with revival.

Jesus' prayer in John 17:11 is a plea to the Father on behalf of the character of His followers. He asked that they would be protected, even guarded, in His name and character. He was praying for intimacy and nearness – that their walk would match their talk – that their witness would be clean and pure as His was. He was praying for their lives to be a witness to His name and character. What can be learned from this prayer? One simple truth – we can't separate our prayers from who we are in Christ. Our character in Christ will have a direct impact on the prayers we pray. How are you doing?

Prayer Points

- Pray that the Lord would reveal inconsistencies with your walk and your talk
- Ask the Lord to renew and empower your prayer life through cleansing, repentance and holiness

DAY 7: Drawing near

Revelation 2:4-5 “Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works.”

James Burns, in his classic work, *The Laws of Revival*, points to a declining spiritual fervor and authenticity that always precedes a spiritual awakening. He comments, “We find preceding each revival, a spiritual desert.” This spiritual desert is the result of individual Christians who have departed or defected from their walk with Christ in such a way that they find themselves in a wasteland of moral and spiritual decline. Because they have slowly become more like the world and less in love with Christ, believers discover that there is little or no spiritual power available to accomplish God’s work. The result, if this condition is left unresolved? Spiritual famine in God’s house and in their land.

Are you praying but have not dealt with your sin? Today, write down a game plan for repenting of at least one sin you’ve had for a while. As you repent one step toward God, you will see God take one step toward you. You will see fresh power appear in your prayers and service to God.

Prayer Points

- Pray for a cleansed heart and life as you give your sin to the Lord
- Pray for an unwavering devotion to return and walk in obedience to Jesus, your first love

DAY 8: Do you really care?

Matthew 6:9-10 “Pray... Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Today, the numbers of churches that are declining and/or maintaining the status quo regarding church growth are ever increasing. Yet, many congregations and leaders continue with business as usual. Such was not the case with Jonathan Edwards.

Jonathan Edwards is well known for his important role in North America’s First Great Awakening. Edwards, a Congregationalist pastor/theologian, is the central figure associated with this awakening that swept the New England colonies in the early 1700s. As a pastor in 1734, Edwards was concerned with the spiritual decadence present in his congregation and in the overall community. What was his remedy? God’s Word and prayer. As Edwards preached and prayed, God visited the congregation with an awakening. People from nearby towns were soon worshipping with his congregation. As they experienced renewal, they carried the revival fires back to their churches. Some 27 towns experienced revival as the result of what God did in Northampton, Massachusetts. Edwards is an example of someone who desired to see God’s Kingdom come in people’s lives. Do you?

Prayer Points

- Pray for spiritual leaders to recognize the great need for spiritual awakening
- Pray diligently for believers everywhere to awaken to God’s call to return to Him and pray toward His Kingdom coming and His will being done on earth as it is in heaven

DAY 9: Faithful to the Word

John 17:6 “And they have kept Your word...”

Margaree Valley Baptist Church needed a pastor. Rev. Foster was tired and according to his wife, in no shape to preach or pastor. However, Foster sensed the call to invite himself to preach for the deacons at Margaree Valley Baptist Church, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. The uninvited preacher took the next train to the valley and arrived at noon on a Monday. The deacons agreed to have the church open that evening for services. After arriving, Foster ascended to a nearby hillside for prayer. As he wept and prayed over the valley God granted him a confident peace concerning His desire to do a work in the valley.

Later that evening he stepped into the pulpit with great confidence the Lord had given him. After the service, people left knowing that God’s man, and His Word, had arrived. What ensued has been called the “Foster Revival.” The revival went on for weeks, resulting in many new converts. The Margaree Valley Baptist Church called Foster as pastor and one writer called that season of ministry the “most prosperous period” in the life of the church. Despite great emotional challenges Foster kept the Lord’s Word to go to the valley and preach faithfully. God’s Kingdom moved forward in a great way. Are we keeping Christ’s Word?

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to give you a radical faith to obey and keep His Word no matter the cost
- Pray for a sincere burden and passion to see God’s work move forward through your life and ministry

DAY 10: Finish strong

John 17:5 “And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself...”

One of the first major battles fought in the American Civil War was the First Battle of Bull Run (First Manassas). The Union army, though inexperienced, was confident that their southern foes would soon be retreating to Richmond and the war would be over in a few weeks. This was not the case, as the Union armies were eventually routed and in full (chaotic) retreat back toward Washington, D.C. Because of the chaos, inexperience and disorganization associated with this first battle, the Confederate troops missed an opportunity to pursue the retreating Union army and lay siege to Washington, D.C. Could the war have ended soon after it started with a Confederate victory?

In John 17:5 Jesus is praying toward the completion of His mission. His desire – to finish strong and obey His Father as He ascends to heaven where He ever lives to make intercession for the saints (see Hebrews 7:25). Because of this answered prayer, Jesus’ mission was completed and salvation was secured for lost humanity. This challenges the church and believers alike to do the same – finish strong. How are you doing?

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to show you unfinished steps of obedience
- Pray that Christ will forgive and cleanse your heart and help you finish strong your mission

DAY 11: Ruffled feathers

Philippians 4:6 "Be anxious for nothing..."

One day a bird landed near and I noticed that its feathers were really ruffled. The expression, which my grandpa used frequently, immediately came to life: "Don't get your feathers all ruffled." That is, do not worry or be anxious about the matter at hand. Jeremiah Lanphier probably needed to hear those words on September 23, 1857, as he knelt alone in prayer. He was the only participant in a newly established prayer meeting that he had started. Lanphier had handed out hundreds of handbills entitled "How often shall we pray?" to try and recruit people to be a part of the prayer meetings. He was addressing a major problem in the church of his day – prayerlessness.

History records that God eventually did bring people to pray that day – six the first week, 20 the second week and in six months, 50,000 people were praying in New York City. Because of Lanphier's courage and determination to call God's people to prayer, the Layman's Prayer Revival of 1857-1858 was used mightily of God to revive the church, convert millions and foster world missions during the middle of the 19th century. So, whenever something seems hopeless or you are discouraged, don't let your feathers get ruffled. Pray!

Prayer Points

- Pray for the Lord to raise up a faithful group of passionate prayer mobilizers in churches across North America
- Pray toward personal faithfulness in prayer

DAY 12: College students on fire

Isaiah 64:1 "OH, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down!..."

In 1787, Hampton-Sydney College experienced an extraordinary move of God in revival and awakening as four young men gathered to pray, study God's Word and worship. They first met in a nearby forest, then a dorm room. Because of their piety and passion they were ridiculed by fellow students and labeled as fanatics. The president, John Brown Smith, was broken that the young men were being persecuted because of their piety and passion for revival and awakening. He reprimanded the persecutors and invited William Hill, Cary Allen, James Blythe and Clement Read to join him in his parlor for prayer the following Saturday.

Revival soon broke out on campus with many students being converted to Christ. The awakening, due to testimonies being shared by students in various church settings, eventually spread to surrounding counties. The campus itself was visited by unusual moves of God periodically over the next few decades. These four young men were greatly used during the Second Great Awakening to impact many lives for Christ because of their faith and passion to see God transform the lives of fellow classmates.

Prayer Points

- Pray for God to use your passion for prayer, His Word and worship to ignite a revival
- Pray for college students to have a passion for awakening

DAY 13: Surrender through prayer

John 17:4 “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work...”

Most of us do not like to die to our desires, agendas and personal preferences. It is often a very difficult thing because selfless living is not something that comes naturally to us as humans. It's like the little girl who kept reaching for the ornament on the tree. Her dad kept warning her and finally asked her why she kept reaching for the ornament. She responded, “Daddy, it is so hard!”

In John 17:4 Jesus prays toward His finished work on the earth even though He has yet to experience the cross, grave, resurrection or ascension. How can He pray in past tense in John 17:4 concerning the things He has yet to experience? The answer is because He has already been to the garden and surrendered to these things in prayer. This is clearly seen in John 12:28 where Jesus prays, “Father glorify your name.” He is thus surrendering to the Father's Kingdom desires, purposes and plans. He is saying to the Father – “Let's do it, I will die to myself for Your Kingdom to come and Your will to be done in and through my life.” The result of that kind of praying was redemption for a lost humanity. What could happen if we surrendered or died to self in prayer?

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to show you things you need to die to so that His Kingdom may come through your life
- Pray for the Father to be glorified as you surrender to His will in your daily life

DAY 14: Making Jesus known

John 17:26 “And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it...”

Charles Graddison Finney was gloriously converted to Christ October 10, 1821. Following his conversion, Finney was used by God to fan the flames of revival throughout the first half of the 1800s during the Second Great Awakening. Finney first began preaching in western New York and ultimately had great success preaching in large urban areas such as New York, Philadelphia and Boston. His most noted revival meeting was held in 1830–31 in Rochester, New York. Riding upon the wave of the Second Great Awakening, the campaign lasted six months with one tenth of the city's population being converted.

Charles Finney was faithful to make Jesus known to as many people as possible. His methodologies and commitment to prayer have had a lasting influence upon the church. In John 17:26, Jesus prays toward making the Father known. He, too, was always about that task. Are we about the task of making Jesus known to the nations?

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to give you a greater desire and burden to see people saved
- Pray for the Lord to send witnesses into His harvest fields in America

DAY 15: Sacrifice

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...”

The 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry was one of the first African-American units to fight against the Confederacy during the American Civil War. The regiment was led by a white colonel named Robert Gould Shaw. On July 18, 1863, Colonel Shaw led his men in an almost impossible assault against Ft. Wagner, a highly fortified point that guarded the southern entrance to the harbor in Charleston, S.C. Colonel Shaw was killed as he led his men in the assault, and the Union soldiers were eventually turned away after hours of hand to hand fighting. However, they had no regrets. These volunteers considered it a gift to fight for their country and their freedom. For more than half of the regiment, the cost would be great (more than half were killed), yet they still treasured the honor to fight!

Today, the church is in a battle for the soul of America. Moral and spiritual decay grows steadily year after year. God has demonstrated His love toward us in that He sent Jesus as a sacrifice for our sins to save us from certain judgment and eternal damnation. Do we care that millions are perishing and will perish if awakening does not come to America? It's an honor to pray and sacrifice for the lost to know Christ – don't you think?

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to give you His love for the lost
- Pray that the Father will awaken your church to lostness in your community

DAY 16: God's gracious intervention

Matthew 14:30b “Lord, save me!”

On a stormy night Lee Roy Culley climbed out from under the pool table a changed man. The storm, lightening and terrible wind had finally subsided. The turmoil in his heart had also been arrested by God. Lee Roy had cried out to God in fear and conviction – “Lord, save me!” and Jesus Christ came into this pool shooting, drunken welder's life. Lee Roy was a new creature in Jesus. He and his precious wife Nancy served Christ faithfully for 30 plus years as lay leaders and Sunday School teachers. Countless lives are now a part of the Kingdom because of his witness and life of service to the Christ who saved him that night under a pool table as he cried out a simple, yet profound prayer – “Lord save me!”

Peter's prayer, “Lord, save me,” may be the shortest prayer in the Bible. Even so, it also remains an eternal, far-reaching prayer. It reminds us that any transformed life is always the product of God's gracious intervention. God's gracious intervention is what we are praying toward as we ask the Lord to send a spiritual awakening to our land.

Prayer Points

- Pray for one lost person to experience God's gracious intervention through faith in Christ
- Ask the Lord to have mercy on His church because of our apathy toward lostness in America

DAY 17: Are you praying big?

2 Kings 19:16 “Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear; open Your eyes, O Lord, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God.”

Hezekiah knew how to pray big! The king of Assyria had destroyed 46 cities and now he was after Jerusalem. So Hezekiah got right to the heart of the matter and cried out in a very bold and almost “brazen” way to God. In essence, he prayed for God to listen and look and to see that His honor was at stake. God heard his desperate cry, answered his prayer, saved the people and demonstrated His power for all to see. Do you know God well enough to pray that boldly?

In 1906 John “Praying” Hyde, a Presbyterian missionary to the Punjab region in India, “prayed big.” He asked the Lord, with great sobs and flowing tears, to give him one soul a day for the first year, two for the second and then four souls a day for the third year. Following that three-year period he had personally won about 2,600 Asian Indians to Christ. Now that is praying big! Are you praying big for your church, your nation and your world? If not, when will you start?

Prayer Points

- Pray for the Lord to break your heart because of the moral and spiritual decline in the American church
- Ask Jesus to give you a heart to pray big toward revival and awakening in North America

DAY 18: Jesus is all we need!

John 3:30 “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead said, “Look for truth, and you will run straight into Jesus Christ.” The majority of our problems as Christians come because we allow ourselves to be distracted by petty, insignificant matters and fail to focus on Jesus. Jesus should be the person after whom we model our lives – not some rock or movie star, not some athlete and not even our pastor. We must be transformed in His image, saturated with His words and promises, and reflect His goodness, mercy, love, forgiveness, kindness, compassion and patience.

Until we realize that Jesus is all we need, we will continue to look for truth in all the wrong places. This happens too often in believer’s lives and in the church in America. Only when we submit ourselves to His will and His standards will we become less and less, and will He become greater and greater. That has to happen if revival and awakening is to ever come to America.

Prayer Points

- As you pray, concentrate on the character of Jesus Christ, and ask the Father to make you more like Him
- Pray that the church in America will become like Jesus

DAY 19: Misplaced priorities?

Matthew 6:33 “Seek first the Kingdom of God...”

In 1988, retired NASA engineer Edgar Whisenant wrote a book giving 88 reasons why he believed Jesus would return in September 1988. Millions were sold or distributed and the impact on evangelical Christianity was great. Believers began selling property, booking flights to the holy land and heading to hilltops to await the rapture. Some even put pets to sleep. All of this despite the clear teachings on Christ's return in Matthew 25:13.

Sadly, the response demonstrated that the church in America had misplaced its priorities while forgetting its mission to reach a lost world with the gospel. The focus of their activity was on self, rather than on the need to tell others of Jesus and His love. In Matthew 6:33 the Lord speaks a sobering reminder to believers to not lay up treasures on earth but to seek first His Kingdom. May we live our lives daily with Christ's Kingdom at the forefront – thus making His mission primary. How are you doing?

Prayer Points

- Pray that your priorities in life will reflect Christ's priorities
- Ask the Father to allow you to be a vessel through which His Kingdom can come in people's lives

DAY 20: Killing the giant

1 Samuel 17:47 “The battle is the Lord's...”

As David approached his gigantic opponent it appeared to be a mismatch. Goliath was truly an intimidating foe and most contestants were defeated before the conflict even began due to the giant's arrogant boasts and his daunting physique – but not David. He had a confidence that defied the circumstances. David won this battle because he recognized that it wasn't his. David knew the battle was the Lord's.

The challenge of revival and awakening in America is huge. The continuous increase in attitudes of apathy and complacency coupled with a lack of godliness and holiness among professing believers can be discouraging to all who desire to see the church revitalized and renewed. But, as Christians labor to see the tide turn, they must acknowledge that our enemy, Satan, will not be conquered by puny human mechanisms. It's only as we surrender in prayer to the Great Giant Killer, Jesus Christ, that we will see Him winning the battle for revival and awakening (see Psalm 108:12-13). Awakening can come and the Great Commission accomplished only because the Great Commissioner has promised to be with us “always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

Prayer Points

- Pray for believers to not grow weary in asking for revival and awakening
- Ask the Lord for a great dependence on His ability to revitalize the church in America

DAY 21: Choose life!

John 11:25 "I am the resurrection and the life..."

As Reuben A. Torrey knelt by his bed the night he contemplated taking his life, he was greatly confused about life, faith and God's purposes. He had become enamored with enlightenment thinking and had drifted into skepticism. That same night miles away Torrey's mother also knelt beside her bed. She was not distraught and confused. She was praying for her son, that God would take his life and use it for His Kingdom purposes. And that's exactly what happened. Instead of taking his life that night, Torrey surrendered his life to Jesus Christ. Thanks to a praying mother, Torrey choose life instead of darkness.

The result of a revived and awakened church is always the conversion of lost people. Has God laid someone on your heart who needs to choose life over darkness? Why not pray for them as Torrey's mother prayed, that faith would come and new life would be found in Christ? That is what awakening is all about.

Prayer Points

- Pray specifically for one lost person to be delivered from Satan's kingdom
- Ask the Lord to forgive your sin of prayerlessness toward lostness

DAY 22: Passionate prayer

James 5:16 "The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

Jerome of Savanorola's experience in Florence, Italy, was significant. Revival had come and the entire city was experiencing the benefits of a righteous environment "where the will of God was done on earth as it was in heaven." The revival environment lasted almost two years, but unfortunately was halted in 1495 as the Pope forbade Savanorola to preach. This eventually led to his excommunication and martyrdom. He was only 47, yet his influence lasted for centuries.

Savanorola's legacy lasted because of his prayerful investment into the next generation of leaders. He was often found weeping on the steps of the cathedral over the need for revival and awakening in Florence. Some 15,000 teenagers who formed a "new Christian militia" were led to Christ through Jerome's passionate prayers, proclamation and leadership. Many of these new believers were converted out of youth gangs and were committed to sharing their story with others who had similar lifestyles. That kind of passionate prayer leads to changed communities, cities and nations – one heart at a time. Shall we pray?

Prayer Points

- Ask the Lord to give you tears in prayer over your sin and the condition of the church in your community
- Pray for the Lord to raise up fervent, righteous prayer leaders in North America

DAY 23: Intimacy with God

Luke 2:36-37 “Anna...did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.”

God with us, Immanuel – what an event in history! Jesus, the Word of God, came to ransom fallen humanity from death and the penalty of sin. Yet, the people of God somehow missed it. With the exception of a few, many in Israel were not aware that Jesus was the Christ. Anna was different. She knew and was waiting for the Christ in prayer. When she encountered the Christ child she immediately gave thanks and began sharing Him with others.

Ever wonder why Anna was different? Like many others in her day she had been exposed to the prophetic words regarding the coming Christ. Unlike the others, Anna was expectant while watching, waiting and praying. Intimacy with God was the difference. Suddenly, God revealed Himself and came to earth. Anna got it – most did not. How sad is that? Before we are too quick to judge those who did not get it then, maybe we should ask ourselves if we would recognize the activity of Christ today. When revival comes, will we be like Anna?

Prayer Points

- Pray for the Lord to forgive any times you have not recognized His work around you
- Ask the Father for greater intimacy in your relationship with Him

DAY 24: Lay aside your sin

Hebrews 12:1 “Let us lay aside every...sin that so easily entangles us...”

I hate spider webs. You walk into them and, well, you know, they get all over you. Spider webs play a very strategic role for the spider. They entangle and slow the victim so that the spider can quickly rush in and deliver the fatal bite. That is how they survive. As believers, we need to be concerned about spiritual spider webs. The writer of Hebrews says we need to “lay aside the weights and sins that so easily entangle us” (see Hebrews 12:1). The term “entangles us” paints the picture of a web-like trap that inhibits movement. For the Christian, spiritual spider webs come as different kinds of temptations in everyday life. The ability for churches and individual Christians to overcome temptation and avoid being entangled in Satan’s web comes only through daily dependence on Christ through prayer and God’s Word.

Spiritual warfare is real! The devil’s desire is to tempt us, entangle us and ultimately deliver the fatal bite, destroying our witness to a lost world. When that happens – revival is hindered. It’s happening way too much in the church today!

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to show you the sins that so easily entangle you and then lay them aside today
- Pray for a vibrant walk with Christ and wisdom to recognize and resist Satan’s temptations

DAY 25: The east, the west & our sin

Psalm 103:12 “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

John Tauler (A.D. 1290-1361), a German evangelist, was greatly respected in his day as a deeply spiritual leader who interfaced a devoted spiritual life with preaching and ministry. Because of great success in ministry, Tauler often struggled with self conceit and arrogance. When he was 50, Nicholas of Basel confronted him and challenged him to forgo his sin and to return to Christ. Tauler subsequently stopped preaching for two years and spent that time in prayer and the study of God’s Word. Tauler emerged from that time of self-examination a changed man. His preaching was different; it was aflame with the power of God resulting in many conversions to Christ.

Our sin is a serious matter before God. He is holy and must punish sin. Yet, forgiveness and cleansing is also a serious issue with Him. So much so that He sent His son Jesus to pay the penalty for sin. The good part – we can put the past behind us with God. His forgiveness is final, and even the guilt of our sin is taken away (see Psalm 32:5). The verse of the day reminds us of that very thing – our sin will never be seen again. Tauler experienced cleansing and personal revival that resulted in a fruitful ministry because his sin was cast away. Can you say the same thing?

Prayer Points

- Pray for Jesus to search your heart revealing any spiritual pride and conceit
- Ask the Lord to forgive your sin and take away any lingering guilt you have not surrendered

DAY 26: Devoted to a revived life

Colossians 4:12 “Epaphras... always laboring fervently for you in prayers ...”

After being expelled from Yale University in 1743 the prospects of David Brainerd’s fulfilling his call to the pulpit were growing slim. Especially since a law had recently been passed that stated no minister could be installed in a church unless they were a graduate of Yale, Harvard or a European university. Brainerd was crushed when his appeal was rejected and his expulsion became final. Yet, despite this ruling, he continued to labor earnestly in prayer for God’s direction. As providence would have it, Brainerd was later licensed to preach during the Great Awakening and appointed by a group of ministers as a missionary to the American Indians.

Brainerd labored night and day in prayer and on foot taking the gospel to the American Indians. He would often do so while enduring physical and weather related hardship. On one such occasion Brainerd hiked for miles through deep snow, praying for those he would visit, coughing and spitting up blood from his illness, asking God for their souls. Like Epaphras, he truly was “laboring earnestly” for the souls of men. Soon after that event Brainerd died of tuberculosis. When awakening comes, the result will be lives that are devoted to living out the revived life. Keep praying. It is worth it.

Prayer Points

- Ask forgiveness for any apathy toward prayer and the sharing of Jesus with others
- Ask the Lord to give you a heart for prayer like Epaphras and Brainerd

DAY 27: Awaken to the harvest!

Matthew 9:37-38 “The harvest truly is plentiful...Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

Ripe tomatoes are good, but over ripe or spoiled tomatoes are nasty. When harvesters neglect to judge the timing of the ripened fruit accurately crops can be lost. In this text Jesus points to a problem with the harvesting of souls for the Kingdom. The problem is with laborers and their desire to join the harvest force. It seems that He is teaching His followers that the struggle they will face in seeing the Kingdom come in people’s lives rests in the harvester’s camp.

Two issues seem to surface: timing (recognizing the readiness of the harvest) and motivation to go to the fields. Both are critical to the harvest and both are connected and influenced by the other. Both are also cured with the same remedy – prayer. Not just any kind of prayer – urgent prayer toward the raising up and sending out of the harvesters. Ever wonder why the gospel is moving forward so slowly in North America? Why are workers so few in your harvest fields? When awakening really takes place, believers will awaken to the harvest that is in their midst.

Prayer Points

- Pray for the Lord to awaken you and His workers to the harvest that is all around them
- Pray for the North American church to be devoted to prayer toward the harvest

DAY 28: Glorification through death

John 17:1 “Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify you.”

On April 20, 1999, Rachel Scott lay dying from gunshot wounds at Columbine High School when the shooters came back to taunt her. They lifted her head up by her ponytail as she lay in pain and asked her one simple question – Do you believe in God? She answered, “Yes.” The gunman then shot her again, killing her. A year earlier Rachel had written in her diary that she was willing to sacrifice everything she had for the sake of following Christ. She had no idea how prophetic her words would prove to be.

In John 17:1 Jesus is praying toward the fulfillment of His mission. He asked the Father to glorify Himself through the glorification of Jesus. What did this prayer entail? The writer of Hebrews reminds us in Hebrews 12:3, “Who (Jesus) for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” The Kingdom moves forward as we die to self in our prayers. How are you doing?

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to identify areas in your life that you need to die to
- Pray for the church in America to die to self and focus on seeing God’s will accomplished

DAY29: Perspective

Hebrews 12:2 “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...”

Evelyn Christenson was the founder of “Christian Women’s United” as well as an author, speaker and evangelical leader. She promoted the interface of prayer with evangelism and always had a way of bringing any conversation, committee meeting or gathering back to God’s perspective. She would always say, “It’s Jesus that we need. He will give us wisdom, hope and strength. Jesus is always our answer. We must look to Him!”

In this passage, the writer of Hebrews reminds us that we need to constantly look to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith. In fact, the word “looking” literally means “to fix your eyes on.” Today the American church could become quite discouraged at the moral and spiritual decline that seems to be ever increasing in and around it. But, as this text reminds us, when those times of doubt or despair come, may we look unto the Lord for His perspective. Jesus is our answer!

Prayer Points

- Ask the Lord to give you a heart focused on Jesus
- Pray that the Lord will awaken the church in America to His perspective

DAY30: Awaken me O Lord!

Matthew 3:2 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

Bertha Smith was a Baptist missionary to China and Taiwan and one of the leaders God used to fan the flames of revival in China in 1927. During an intense time of political unrest the missionaries were gathered together for prayer when the Holy Spirit stopped Smith. Within her heart she was harboring unconfessed sin toward another missionary in the room. Smith immediately confessed her sin to the other missionary and the prayer meeting continued. Heaven descended on the meeting, more hearts were broken and sins were confessed. The result is what scholars call the Great Shantung Revival of 1927.

Awakenings start with repentant hearts. Therefore, it must begin with me. Not someone else – but me. It’s time I understood the verse for today more clearly. It’s not the church in America that needs to repent – it is me. The earth is groaning; the Kingdom is at hand. What then shall we do? Repent!

Prayer Points

- Ask the Father to give you a broken heart over your sin
- Pray for the church in America to be swept with a spirit of repentance, for the Kingdom is at hand