

REFUGEE

C H U R C H

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Introduction to Fasting

Fasting is abstaining from food, or not eating food over a period of time. Biblical fasting is a form of self-denial for the sake of pursuing our relationship. It is a deliberate abstinence from something for a spiritual purpose. When we fast, we choose to break with our routine in order to draw closer to God. As such, fasting demands a deep level of commitment and sacrifice. Fasting isn't a spiritual requirement; it doesn't make us better than anyone else, nor more spiritual. Fasting is a choice to seek the Lord's face and His presence in a deeper way for a short season.

When we fast, we are following Jesus' example (Matt. 4:2). As we fast, we humble ourselves before the Lord, being very prayerful and meditating in the Word. This is a time to really devote ourselves to constant, consistent praying (1 Thess. 4:17). Ultimately, fasting is waiting on God. Fasting allows us to embrace emptiness and our need for God. Fasting is a way to press in, to break away from the "norm," quiet ourselves before God, and use our time to wait upon the Lord with greater intensity (Gal. 5:24).

Fasting isn't just about what we put in our stomachs, but what we feed our souls and spirits as well. Two powers are at work when we fast: our human will, and the supernatural power of God. Fasting grinds on the flesh (Rom. 8:13) because the flesh fights against the Spirit (Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 5:17). Realize that our flesh will fight back: grumpiness, headaches, stomach growling, thoughts drifting to food, getting cold, being tired from the toxins being released from your body. It takes work to get our flesh under submission! As the flesh weakens, we become more and more sensitive to the Spirit and the things of God.

Additionally, fasting has several benefits. It helps to root and ground us in faith to the promises of God (Eph. 3:17; Col. 2:7). It can sharpen and hone our spiritual sensitivity to the things of God. Fasting is beneficial for spiritual cleansing as well, as times of prayer and fasting can sever the spiritual bonds of addictions. Fasting also has medical and physical benefits that the medical community has recognized for centuries: fasting allows the digestive system to rest and allows the body to cleanse itself from toxins.

Fasting brings about miraculous results (Gal. 6:8)! As we fast, we empty ourselves and weaken our flesh, that the power of God may be available to us in greater amounts. It is through fasting that God tends to reveal and release His supernatural power: God-inspired creativity (new ideas, God-given plans), His wisdom made available in certain situations, spiritual resources to endure and overcome, and even birth revival and unique outpourings of the Spirit's power!

Fasting and prayer brings us closer to God and also yields some long-term rewards. During this fast, we are expecting God to speak through His written Word, dreams, visions, Spirit-directed impressions, and God-inspired ideas.

Some of the things that God is going to speak are going to be crucial and critical to our walk with the Lord, or instructions for closing the gaps in our lives this year, and even personal healing and deliverance.

An effective time of spiritual fasting and prayer requires determining in advance:

- Why am I fasting?

Determine the reason for your fast, what is your focus/reason for seeking the Lord?

Some Examples:

- *Freedom from addictions or besetting sins*
- *Provision/stewardship wisdom with financial troubles*
- *Victory over negative emotional feelings & habits*
- *Wisdom/to know God's will for major life decisions*
- *Physical healing*
- *Favor in a major Kingdom-/work-related venture*
- *Protection and victory in spiritual warfare*

As the Lord confirms in your heart and mind what this fast is for, write it down!

- How long should I fast?
- Decide that you WILL succeed!

How we will do this

This fast will be a 21-day, restrictive-diet fast, beginning the morning of the 8th, and ending at midnight on the 28th.

During these 21 days, and whenever our bodies let us know they desire food, or whenever we seek distraction through media, we are committing ourselves to prayer, worship, and study of the Word. A growling stomach is nothing more than a call to prayer!

In addition to restricting what we eat, we are also fasting from MEDIA that is not work-related or essential. We will seek to not watch TV, spend time on Facebook & other social media platforms, excessive and superfluous texting, movies, and engaging in web-surfing, etc.

Finally, use this fasting guide for prayer topics, daily Scripture and devotionals to study, food lists, resources, and tips.

Tips for Fasting

- Pray as often as you can throughout the day or seek to increase the frequency of daily prayer time. Fasting does not work if you do not pray!
- Fast with a cause; never fast casually (hit-or-miss attitude).
- Unless it's a prayer partner, a spouse, or somebody who is supporting you during your fast, do not share that you are fasting with others. By talking about our fast to others, we risk losing any spiritual benefits that come from fasting (Matt. 6:16-18, NLT). Keep your fast to yourself, rather than seeking to use it as a way to impress others or get compassion for your struggle.
- If you don't already have an established daily quiet time with the Lord, then this is an excellent opportunity to do so. Starting your day with God is a habit that will support your faith and growing intimacy with the Lord.
- Integrate listening to praise and worship music before your Bible study time, after it, or as a part of your prayer time.
- Get away from the normal distractions as much as possible and keep your heart and mind set on seeking God's face. Avoiding distractions of media will allow you to focus on your relationship with God.
- Reserve time in your daily schedule for Bible study.
- Do not push to extremes physically or spiritually.

An Introduction to the Daniel Fast

We are embarking on is a biblically-based systematic fast known as the Daniel Fast. This fast, based upon Daniel 1, is for dedicating one's self to the Lord anew. However, each person should determine what area or need the Lord desires your renewed consecration/dedication in your life. Again, some biblical examples would be:

- *Spiritual warfare, victory over demonic oppression (Mark 9:29)*
- *Direction and protection (Ezra 8:21-23)*
- *Social justice and righteousness (Isa. 58)*
- *Guidance, protection, to hear God's voice (2 Chron. 20:3)*
- *Revelation/illumination (Acts 10:30)*
- *Courage, obedience, and wisdom (Esther 4:16)*
- *Confirmation of ministry direction (Acts 13:2-3)*
- *Physical healing (Psalm 35:13; 2 Sam 12:16)*

- *Emotional healing, deliverance from negative emotions/habits (Ps. 139:23-24)*
- *Deliverance from addictive behaviors and cycles (Heb. 12:1)*
- *Financial breakthrough or provision (Deut. 28:1-2)*
- *Revival, salvation for the lost (1 Sam 7:13; 2 Chron. 7:14; Joel 2:12-17)*
- *Favor in a major Kingdom-/work-related venture (Neh 1:4-2:8)*
- *Wisdom/to know God's will for major life decisions (Est 4:16; Acts 9:9)*

The Daniel Fast is a method of fasting that limits the food intake to what is pure/natural/healthier, while still focusing on consecrating one's self to the Lord through the spiritual discipline of prayer. There are two anchoring scriptures for the Daniel Fast.

In Daniel 1, Daniel and his friends ate only vegetables (that would have included fruits) and drank only water for ten days. This passage provides two guidelines for the fast:

- Only fruits and vegetables (they avoided foods that were processed or enriched)
- Only water for a beverage

Then, in Daniel 10 we read that Daniel ate no meat nor any rich foods (NLT) or meat, and he drank no wine for 21 days. So from this scripture, we get a third guideline:

- No sweeteners and no breads, no meat

Another important guideline is drawn from Jewish fasting principles, where no leaven is used during fasting. So that's why yeast, baking powder and the like are not allowed on the Daniel Fast.

Finally, with all the above puzzle pieces, we conclude that artificial or processed foods nor any chemicals are to be abstained from while on the Daniel Fast.

One of the great things about the Daniel Fast is that you are not limited to any specific *amount* of food, but rather to the *kinds* of food you can eat. The Daniel Fast is limited to vegetables (includes fruits) and water.

Be sure to read the ingredients on labels of prepared foods to make sure they only include Daniel Fast-friendly ingredients.

How to Prepare for the Daniel Fast

HOW TO PREPARE PHYSICALLY

Make your meals somewhat lighter for a few days leading up to your fast. Look at the list of recommended foods below and make plans on what to buy and how to grocery shop over the next few weeks.

Make some decisions about your time/daily schedule before starting the fast and figure out how to alter your routine in order to prioritize time for prayer and study of the Word. This is going to have to involve some sacrifices in order to prioritize time for God!

HOW TO PREPARE SPIRITUALLY

Prepare spiritually by confessing your sins to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of weakness. Forgive all who have offended you and ask forgiveness of those you may have offended (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3-4). Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ and reject the worldly desires that hinder you (Romans 12:1-2).

Start with a clear personal goal in addition to our corporate goals. Be specific. Why are you fasting? Do you need direction, healing, restoration of marriage or family issues? Are you facing financial difficulties? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and clarity to your purpose for your fast.

Make up in your mind that you **WILL** succeed, you **WILL** hear from the Lord, that you **WILL** experience breakthrough, revelation, and depth in your relationship with the Lord Jesus!

What to Expect during a Fast:

PHYSICALLY

When you fast, your body detoxifies, or eliminates toxins, from your system. This can cause mild discomfort such as headaches and irritability during withdrawal from caffeine and sugars. And naturally, you will have hunger pains.

Limit your activity and exercise moderately.

Expect your sleep patterns to be thrown off, so take time to rest, or even nap when/if you can. Don't be too hard on yourself if your productivity comes only in spurts!

SPIRITUALLY

Expect to experience resistance from your own body, as well as the enemy, but expect to get to know the Lord better, and for His power to increase in your life.

Be ready for the Lord to speak to you! Purchase a little journal or notebook, or use your notes app on your phone to write down what the Spirit of God has spoken to you. Put the journal or notebook close to your bed to record the things He speaks to you during the night or during your prayer times. Take it with you to work or school so that you can capture whatever He wants to communicate to you during this time of consecration!

RECOMMENDED FOODS AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Foods to include in your diet during the Daniel Fast

Please make sure to READ THE LABEL when purchasing packaged, canned or bottled foods. They should be sugar-free and chemical-free. Keep this in mind as you review this list of acceptable foods.

ALL FRUITS (These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned (watch for added sugar))

Apples	Melons
Apricots	Limes
Avocados	Mangoes
Bananas	Melons
Berries	Mulberry
Blackberries	Nectarines
Blueberries	Oats
Boysenberries	Olives
Breadfruit	Oranges
Cantaloupe	Papayas
Cherries	Peaches
Coconuts	Pears
Cranberries	Pineapples
Dates	Plums
Figs	Prunes
Grapefruit	Raisins
Grapes	Raspberries
Grenadine	Strawberries
Guava	Tangelos

Honeydew melons
Kiwi
Lemons

Tangerines
Watermelon

ALL VEGETABLES (These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned (watch salt content))

Artichokes
Asparagus
Beets
Broccoli
Brussels sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Chili peppers
Collard greens
Corn
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Garlic
Ginger root
Kale
Leeks
Lettuce

Mushrooms
Mustard greens
Okra
Onions
Parsley
Peppers
Potatoes
Radishes
Rutabagas
Scallions
Spinach
Sprouts
Squashes
Sweet potatoes
Tomatoes
Turnips
Watercress
Yams
Zucchini

LEGUMES

Dried beans
Black beans
Cannellini
Pinto beans
Split peas
Lentils
Black eyed peas
White peas

Green beans
Green peas
Kidney beans
Peanuts
Beans
Lupines
Peas

SEEDS

All nuts (raw, unsalted)
Sprouts
Ground flax
Cashews
Walnuts

Sunflower
Sesame
Almonds
Natural Almond Butter

WHOLE GRAINS

Whole wheat
Millet

Brown rice
Barley

Quinoa
Oats
Rolled Oats
Plain Oatmeal- not instant
Popcorn (homemade)

Grits (no butter)
Whole wheat pasta
Whole wheat tortillas
Plain Rice cakes

LIQUIDS

Water (spring, distilled, filtered)
Unsweetened Soy Milk
Herbal (caffeine free) Tea
100% Fruit/Vegetable Juice (no added sugar)

OTHER

Tofu
Soy products
Herbs
Small amounts of Honey, Guava, or stevia
Small amounts of Sea Salt
Small amounts of Ezekiel Bread
Small amounts of Olive Oil
All quality oils including but not limited to olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.
Spices (read the label to be sure there are no preservatives)

Resources for recipes:

www.ultimatedanielfast.com
www.daniel-fast.com

www.danielfast.wordpress.com
www.caringcarrot.com

Foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast

During this fast, we are going to be abstaining from certain kinds of food. We want to eat right and avoid certain foods. This will produce dual purposes. The first is spiritual. It helps to produce a clear mind causing us to be light in the spirit and to be focused. The second is physical. It will help you to maintain a healthy life style.

All animal products including all meat, poultry, fish...
White bread
White rice
All deep fried foods
Caffeine
Carbonated beverages
Coffee (including decaf b/c contains small amount of caffeine)
Energy drinks

Foods containing preservatives, additives
Refined foods
Processed foods
Food additives
Refined sugar
Sugar substitutes
Raw sugar
Syrups
Molasses
Cane juice
White flour
Margarine
Shortening
High fat products
Butter
All leavened breads
Baked goods
All dairy
Milk
Cheese
Yogurt
Cream
Eggs
Alcohol
Mayonnaise

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

SPECIAL NOTE

If you have health issues, please be sure to contact your health professional for advice before committing to any fast including the Daniel Fast. If you would like a list of the foods included and excluded in the Daniel Fast to show your doctor, just copy the contents of the previous pages.

PREGNANT WOMEN AND PEOPLE ON MEDICATIONS

Pregnant women, persons on medication, with ulcers, and those under a physician's care for diagnosed medical conditions, should consult their necessary doctor for recommended foods and drinks. You can still participate in the fast by eating and drinking very lightly or choosing something else to fast from.

PARENTS

Parents, please make sure you feed your children. Change their diet and eating habits to something light and nutritious. Include them in your family prayer and Bible reading time. Explain to them why we are fasting. If they are old enough, allow them to express what they also would like God to do regarding their own prayer requests on this fast.

BREAKING THE FAST

When the fast is over, you may want to consider beginning with very light foods, like vegetables. Start by drinking some fluids to relax your intestines before having eating. Drink fluids such as light juices, warm water or warm soup. Overdoing and over-indulging will do more harm than you think.

Common FAQ's

What about prepared foods?

Read the labels of all prepared foods. Remember the Daniel Fast is sugar-free and chemical-free. So, if you use any canned fruits, vegetables, packaged foods, or prepared sauces you must read the label to be aware about just what is in there.

What about pasta?

Make sure the label says whole grain pasta with no additives (watch for sugar). Whole grain pasta offers 7 grams of protein per serving (3/4 cup of dried pasta).

I know it says raw, unsalted nuts, but what about roasted nuts?

The goal would be to stick to raw, unsalted nuts. But these are harder to find so in a pinch just make sure you get plain roasted, unsalted nuts with no preservatives.

How do I get enough protein in my diet while on the fast?

The following are protein-rich foods that are allowed on the Daniel Fast... almonds, sunflower seeds, lentils, quinoa, brown rice, split peas, whole grains, and tofu.

What kind of peanut butter is allowed?

A natural peanut butter with no additives...watch for sugars including molasses. Smucker's creamy natural peanut butter has nothing but peanuts in it.

How can I identify whole grain foods?

Typically, if the ingredient lists "whole wheat", "rolled oats", or "whole corn" as the first ingredient, the product is a whole grain food item. Another way to identify whole grains in the foods you eat is to look in the nutritional facts information and check if the food item

contains dietary fiber. If it contains a significant amount, it most likely contains whole grains. "Wheat flour" is not a whole grain and therefore does not indicate a whole grain product.

What about salad dressing?

Olive oil and lemon or lime are an option.

Do I need to eat organic foods while on the fast?

No, but it is suggested because organic foods are produced without the use of feed or fertilizer of plant or animal origin and without employment of chemically formulated fertilizers, growth stimulants, antibiotics, or pesticides.

What about bread?

The bread should be prepared without yeast.

How much can I eat?

As long as they are the appropriate foods, we are recommending eating until satisfied with no limits.

PRAYER AND STUDY GUIDE

As we prepare for our Corporate Fast, we must recognize that we can all use this time of consecration to focus on the areas and issues where we need to "Close the Gaps" this year.

Each day of this fast, there is a short daily devotional and some Scripture to study along the topics "Closing the Gaps" in our behavior, our relationships, our faith, our understanding, and in our commitment. Most of these daily devotionals have been taken from three Kingdom-oriented devotionals that continue to have a huge impact on my growth: Vertical Reality: A Daily Devotional with a Kingdom Perspective (Christ Church Publishing, 1997), by Pastor Norm Willis; Called to Conquer: A Daily Devotional to Energize and Encourage You in Word and Spirit (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000), by Bishop Eddie Long; and Living with Purpose: Devotions for Discovering Your God-Given Potential (Destiny Image Publishing, 2016) by Dr. Myles Munroe. I pray that these men's perspectives will help us all grow closer to the heart of God during this fast.

Use the topical information and the Scripture references to guide your study time, but also consider using a concordance to help you do further study on the ideas and words

involved. Use the Scriptures to help frame how and what you pray for during your prayer time.

Starting on Sunday the 13th, the devotionals and Scriptures are designed to help us focus in on the task and responsibility of prayer. Consequently, the prayer lists for Sundays and the MLK holiday are longer, since most of us will have more time outside of work responsibilities to pray.

The final week of the devotionals will focus us back on “Closing the Gaps” in our lives.

Remember, a fast ought to involve as much listening to the Lord as praying! Let the Holy Spirit guide you and lead you into deeper understandings of what He wants to reveal to you during this time of consecration.

DAY 1: “The Gap Between Belief and Behavior”

Matthew 15:8; Romans 7:14-20; Romans 8:31-39

During this fast, and throughout this year, we desire to become increasingly aware of the gaps/tensions between our cognitive theology and our operational theology. In other words, we all possess gaps between what we BELIEVE (or agree with in our thinking) & how we BEHAVE (what we actually do in our every-day actions).

Our operational theology comes from a mix of flawed teaching and/or misunderstood biblical truth, ingrained habits, & unrecognized errors that we were taught or picked up from somewhere along our journeys. The danger is that this gap between what we KNOW we should do and what we ACTUALLY do eats away at our integrity.

The only way to shorten the gap between our beliefs and our behavior is to make a decision about who we are, Whose we are, in EVERY situation that life may bring. Staying consistently committed to our values helps us to maintain our integrity. Paul’s rehearsal of his understanding of who we are in Christ (Romans 8:31-39) helped him to stick to his value system, regardless of life’s trials and struggles.

Today, take notice of the times that you operate differently from the values your faith has ingrained in you. Why did you swerve from your beliefs? What were the circumstances that caused you to behave in a way that was not Christlike?

Pray:

**For the Lord to help you identify the gaps in your behavior*

**For victory over habitual sin, unholy practices in your life*

**Intercede for your church family*

DAY 2: “Forgiveness”

Mark 11:25-26

Learning how to forgive is the hardest part of being in a relationship with another human. Betrayal, broken trust, and heartbreak are some of the hardest things emotionally for any human to deal with, much less to overcome.

When another person has used or abused us for their own selfish purposes, healing is a hard, but it is also necessary if we are going to close the gaps in our lives.

Only the Lord can help us release those who have offended us. None of us can move forward with God’s Kingdom assignments if we are carrying the baggage of emotional pain, bitterness, or anger toward others.

Forgiveness is not one of the things that can just be skipped over. It’s not a suggestion from the Lord; it’s an absolute requirement! It is so important to the Kingdom of God, that it’s a “Kingdom Key.” It’s so important to our ability to move forward in the will of God that Jesus is clear: He said that if we hold anger or unforgiveness toward anyone when we pray, He will simply not listen to us!

When I read through Mark 11, I notice that God did not give any caveats or disclaimers in those verses. It may not seem fair to forgive someone who has hurt us deeply, but forgiveness is not about fairness. The divine requirement to forgive is about our health and well-being, and it is about the well-being of God’s family.

The Lord wants us to forgive others so that WE can get off the hook, NOT the one who harmed, misused, abused, or offended us. As long as we harbor unforgiveness, we are, in essence, handing the offender the chain that is wrapped around our hearts. When we forgive, we snap every link that gives that person (or the memories of what happened) the power to harm us. It also releases God’s forgiveness to flood our own lives.

Unforgiveness is one of the deadliest gaps that the devil can exploit in our lives. It provides a legal foothold into our lives for Satan and his imps to harass, oppress, and control us (Eph. 4:26-27; Heb. 12:15; James 5:9). Unforgiveness shortens our lives and robs us of untold blessings. The person who hurt us probably hasn’t lost any sleep over what they did to us, so who is really being hurt by our unforgiveness? The cost is too high for us to cling to our bitterness or hold our grudges even one more day. Forgive, so that God can forgive you!

Pray:

**For God’s help to forgive those that have hurt you*

**Intercede for family, covenant-relationships, and friends*

DAY 3: “The Power of Anticipation”

Isaiah 49:23

Have you ever stopped to think of the latent power in anticipating God? The power of anticipation can be a driving force. When a people’s anticipation is high, faith is released and the entire outcome can be altered. I have often wondered when a special speaker comes to town or a special service or conference is held, why is the worship so much better? Why are the people more eager and ready to immediately enter into the presence of God? The reason is simple: it is the power of anticipation.

Anticipation is defined as prior action that takes into account later action, the act of looking forward to, the visualization of a future event. There is power in anticipation because anticipation is a seed that directly influences a future response. The lack of anticipation provides for nothing, but the presence of anticipation is like a burst of faith that lifts us to a high level and opens doors of opportunity that would otherwise be left closed. When the enemy is able to rob our anticipation, he has cut off a supply line of faith.

Faith is the result of something. It is the result of hearing the Word of God. It is also the result of growing anticipation. For anticipation is nothing more than good, old-fashioned hope. Hope is the anchor of our soul. It is from hope that faith proceeds. You cannot have faith without first having hope because faith deals with the future and hope deals with the now.

Let us allow anticipation to build. Anticipation builds through positive confession and positive expectation. It builds through active confidence in what Father desires to do.

Can you feel the power?

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, p. 404

Pray:

**For the growth of your faith*

**For the removal of doubt, anxiety, and worry*

**Intercede for people on your job*

DAY 4: “Knock the Limits Off Your Life”

Matthew 19:26; Mark 11:22-24

The concept of Mark 11 is that if you ask anything – if you can believe what you desire hard enough – God says it will be done. Somehow God gives us a little glimpse into our potential. He comes into our situation as if He’s disturbed. God is disappointed in the human race. It’s almost as though God looks at the ideas He stored in us and says with a voice of disappointment, “If you only knew what you can do.” That’s the attitude of God toward you and me. God is totally disappointed in us because He knows what we can do. But we don’t. And so He says to us: “All things are possible if you’d just believe, dummy.” He’s always knocking the limits off our lives.

Too often we are not willing to *believe* like God defines believe. God does not say, “Everything is possible if you get the idea.” Things don’t become reality because we have an idea. We have to believe in the idea. We have to believe we can do it by committing ourselves to it – abandoning ourselves to it – even if it costs us our lives. That’s what it takes to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ – to lose our lives...to abandon ourselves. We must say, “I’m going to go into eternity believing in Jesus. I’m not sure what’s out there, but I’m going to ride on in that Name and that atonement.”

God isn’t impressed by your dreams. Most of us never wake up long enough to do anything with our dreams. You may have great dreams for your life, but you prefer to stay asleep because when you wake up reality says, “OK, let’s get to work.” It’s easier to dream an idea than to work it out. Everything is possible if you will abandon yourself to an idea enough that you are willing to lose your life for it. Thinking is great. But all things are possible when we *believe*. Jesus said in Mark 11, “Whatever you *desire* when you pray, believe you’ll receive it, and you will have it.” The word *desire* is the key. Being interested in or attracted to something is not desiring it. To *desire* means “to crave for something at the expense of losing everything.”

God’s work in creation began with a plan. God conceived in His mind what He wanted before speaking His creations into visible form. By the time God was ready to speak, it was just a matter of taking what was in the plan and putting it on the site.

Dr. Myles Munroe

Living with Purpose, pp.26-27

Pray:

**For the Lord to give you the desire to bring about His will for your life*

**Intercede for your pastor, church leaders, and church family*

DAY 5: “The Power to Become”

Acts 1:8

God’s eternal purpose is not just to take us to heaven, but to empower us to live victoriously and Christlike here on earth. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to infuse us with the dynamic power of God in order that we might become the Kingdom participants, and the glorious Bride of Christ that Jesus is coming for one day.

The power to become is in the Holy Spirit. As we learn to yield to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and come into right relationship with Him, we discover the life-changing power He offers. It is a power that transforms us from the fallen image of Adam in to the glorious image of Jesus Christ. As we learn to know the Holy Spirit, He forms in us the very character and likeness of Jesus.

This power to become is often void in our lives due to the lack of relationship with the Holy Spirit. The Father we have known, and the Son we have known because we can relate to a father and a son, but how do we relate to a spirit? How do we relate to Him? The answer to that question is quite simple: we just do it! We press past our rational limitations and take the time and effort to know the Holy Spirit just as we would get to know someone else. We read about Him, we talk to Him, we spend time in His presence, we learn to yield to His leadership, we ask Him to reveal Himself to us, etc. As a person, we learn to know Him just as we would any other person.

If we depend on our own ability to face life’s circumstances, we will never tap into the power to become. The power to become all God intends us to be is found in the Holy Spirit. Give yourself wholly to Him. Learn to know Him as a person.

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, p. 322

Pray:

**For the Spirit’s power in transforming you*

**For an increased sensitivity to the Spirit and clarity of His leading in your life*

**For revelation of new details of God’s directives for your life*

DAY 6: “The Prayers of Desperation”

Acts 1:14; James 5:16

I am sure this was not a prayer meeting full of faith and great expectation. In fact, they were probably a bit dejected. After three years with the Lord, now they were alone. The responsibility of all the training and preparation weighed heavily on their shoulders. It was now their move. The destiny of eternity was weighed in the balance. Would they follow through or would they retreat in fear and apprehension?

Sometimes you just pray. At other times, you are driven to pray. This was one of those times. These were not simple prayers. They were “constantly in prayer.” This was true intercession. Deep calling unto deep, and it ushered in one of the greatest revivals history has ever known. Could we ever expect that kind of visitation again? Did Father do what He did at Pentecost just to get things started, or was it representative of how desperately He desires to visit this Earth?

History bears witness to the latter. Pentecost was but a representation of what happens when people will give themselves constantly to the prayer of revival.

The prophet Joel prophesied and the apostle Peter repeated this: “In the last days, God says, ‘I will pour out My Spirit on all people.’” Though this prophecy was fulfilled in part at Pentecost, it was not fulfilled in its entirety. Joel promised God’s Spirit would be poured out on all people. Pentecost gave the Spirit to just the Jew. There is another outpouring yet to come – and outpouring reserved for the last days that, I am sure, will be preceded as it was with the first, with those “joining together constantly in prayer.”

Revival tarries because of the prayerlessness of the church. The prayer of revival is a prayer that makes the kingdom of darkness shudder in fear. Let us give ourselves constantly to such a prayer.

Norm Willis
Vertical Reality, p. 6

Pray:

- *For the outpouring and moving of the Spirit in the earth*
- *Revival in the Earth, in the Church*
- *Intercede for the members of your church*
- *For your pastor and your church’s leaders*
- *Intercede for the vision of your church and a manifestation of that vision*
- *Missionaries and Christian workers around the world*
- *Intercede wisdom and compassion for political leaders in your city, state, country*
- *Intercede for the unsaved in your city*

DAY 7: “He Works on Behalf of Those Who Wait”

Isaiah 64:4

Our focus has been the battle we’ve been commissioned to wage. Our opponent is not flesh and blood, but principalities and powers. The victory is assured, for it has already been won. Our responsibility is to enforce that victory over rebellious spirits who have failed to bow their knee to the Lord of lords and King of kings.

Every inch of ground we win is contested. Every battle won is done so in worship and prayer. We are gaining ground. Though it seems limited in the physical realm, it is much more widespread in the Spirit-realm. Every prayer offered, every confession spoken, assures the victory. Though the apparent victory may not be immediately realized, wait.

“They that wait upon the Lord shall...” The operative words are *wait* and *shall*. When we wait, we shall, for the Lord works on the behalf of those who wait.

Those who desire to war must learn to wait. Waiting is of strategic importance because it is here in the season of waiting that we are purged from all that which is displeasing to God. Impatience, ambition, carnality, presumption, pride and the rest, all must go. Waiting is the means by which the Commander-in-Chief squeezes these attributes of the world out of us and conforms us into His image.

Spiritual authority is proportional to humility and dependence on God. Apart from Him, we are and have nothing. The Bible warns us about the sin of presumption, which is the attempt to extend God’s Kingdom without His specific direction. After the great victory of Jericho, Joshua was deceived by the Gibeonites, because he did not inquire of the Lord. (Joshua 9:14)

We are destined to win. That victory is assured as we learn to wait on the Lord. Now is the time to increase your posture of waiting and depending on the Lord.

Norm Willis
Vertical Reality, p. 68

Pray:

**Against the forces of the enemy around your life*

**Rebuke the plans and the plants of the enemy in and around your loved ones*

**For victory in the spirit-realm over all of the tricks of the enemy*

DAY 8: “Binding the Strongman”
Matthew 12:29

The Bible clearly reveals God as the owner and ruler of planet Earth. “The Earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.” (Psalm 24:1). But Satan, as a thief in Father’s territory, usurps that which is not his and, as a squatter, must be evicted by the legal owner.

Long before we arrived, they were here: powers and principalities that rule the air; strongholds of discouragement and failed starts that rob us of faith and perpetuate the snare of unbelief.

These are the strong men we must bind before we can impact our city as we desire. Jesus gave us the keys of the Kingdom and told us whatsoever we bind on Earth will be bound in Heaven. We have been called to war. You are being called to war specifically over this stronghold of discouragement. Would you battle with me on this?

My suggestion is to begin in repentance. Discouragement robs us of faith, and without faith, it is impossible to please God. So, let us begin by repenting from not being pleasing to the One who is most dear. Then, let us attack the gates of hell. Not once or every now and then, but repeatedly. As we attack the strongholds of darkness, the walls are being torn down brick by brick, but as soon as we let up we face the risk of the enemy replacing each brick. The only answer for this is to pray without ceasing, so there is no opportunity given to the devil to rebuild the wall.

Calvary assures us the victory. Our God has promise us the land. Let us be faithful warriors and tie up the strongman who holds that which belongs to our God.

Norm Willis
Vertical Reality, p. 69

Pray:

- *Repent of discouragement from previous times in your life*
- *That the Lord would restore your passion for His victory in your life*
- *Bind the strongman in your life and in your generations*
- *For victory over generational issues in your life*

DAY 9: "Sufficient Prayer Cover"

Colossians 4:2

Have you ever gone into a situation with the dreadful realization that you were not adequately prepared and it was too late to do anything about it? If so, you will remember the sense of helplessness and despair. Preparation is the key to success. It is the difference between hitting the mark and missing it altogether.

Are we in the Body of Christ adequately prepared for the next move of God? Have we laid adequate foundation in order for us to sustain the Lord's desires? I am afraid that we are not! We do not have adequate prayer preparation in order for us to receive what the Lord desires to send to us.

Yesterday's prayer base will not carry tomorrow's visitation. If we desire to keep up with what the Holy Spirit is saying, our foundation of prayer will have to increase accordingly. If it does not, the visitation of God will become shallow and short-cycled before it accomplishes what it was intended to do.

Prayer that will prepare us adequately is prayer that is waged from two fronts:

1. **PERSONAL PRAYER.** This is prayer done in your own prayer closet. Just you and the Holy Spirit laboring together, interceding on behalf of those issues and people He brings to mind. It is daily prayer, hourly prayer, prayer that is done without ceasing.
2. **CORPORATE PRAYER.** This is prayer done with your spiritual family. It is "turbo" prayer, for there is a power that is limited to only those times when the corporate body joins together to pray. Without a strong corporate prayer, there will not be sufficient preparation to inherit the next move of God.

I appeal to you to increase your prayer base, your prayer cover. Pray every day for the favor and blessing of God. Take every opportunity over everything the enemy would attempt to do in order to hinder God's moving. If you have not already, join with a group of intercessors in order that we might unleash that power that is reserved for when two or three gather together in His name.

Norm Willis
Vertical Reality, p. 71

Pray:

- *That the Lord would adequately prepare your mind and spirit for His move*
- *That the Lord would help you to increase your prayer base and prayer cover*
- *For the Lord to identify the right prayer partners to join yourself to*

DAY 10: “The Praying Church”
Matthew 16:19

If the Church will not pray, God will not act. He will not go over the head of the Church to enforce His decisions. If the Church does not pray, God will not act because that action would abort God’s purpose to bring His Church to full maturity.

It is amazing how easy the purpose and focus of prayer get distorted. Could the reason we do not see more prayers answered be that God does not recognize them when He hears them? Jesus states it like this: “You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have because you don’t ask. When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.” (James 4:2-3)

We have made prayer something primarily for us. Prayer has become the means by which we get God to give us what we want. This is a far cry from what prayer is intended to be. When Jesus taught the disciples to pray, the praying for personal needs was part of the instruction, but only after they had prayed for the coming of the Kingdom and the doing of God’s will. Only in the coming of His Kingdom and the doing of His will are personal needs met in a lasting way.

As we review our commitment to intercession, let us do so upon a foundation that will support us for years to come. Our focus is the Lord and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, all personal needs will be met beyond expectation. As we seek first the Kingdom through prayer and intercession, everything else will be added to us.

Norm Willis
Vertical Reality, p. 67

Pray:

- *A renewal and restoration of the right purpose and focus of your prayer life*
- *For God’s Kingdom purposes and will to be manifested and achieved in you*
- *For a renewed commitment to intercession and prayer in your daily life*

DAY 11: “The Arena of Battle”

2 Corinthians 10:4

It began in the heavenlies; a cosmic rebellion of astronomical proportions. One-third of the angelic host was snared by an insidious deception. It was a rebellion that pitted itself against the Kingdom of God. It is into this rebellion we were born and commissioned to battle together with Christ in order to bring that rebellion to an end.

But, how do we fight this battle? Where is this war fought? What are the weapons at our disposal and where are we trained in their use? Psalms 149 gives us insight into these questions:

“May the praise of God in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands. To inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all His saints (vv.6-9).”

Who would have ever imagined that in singing, “Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so,” we are actually engaging in war and binding spiritual principalities and powers?

This war began in the heavenlies, and it is in the heavenlies that it continues. Our commander-in-chief has ordained that this war is not fought with guns and bullets, but through prayer, praise, and worship. As we come before the throne of God in worship and prayer, not only are we glorifying the majesty of His wonder, but we are pulling down demonic strongholds and binding satanic princes and kings. This is war, and prayer is our arena of battle.

So, let me encourage you to prepare for battle. Let us get aggressive as we enter into worship and prayer. If prayer is our opportunity to inflict vengeance, let us do as much damage as possible. We have been created to labor together with Christ in conquering this cosmic rebellion. Let us war faithfully!

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, p. 297

Pray:

**The words along with your favorite worship song(s)*

**With a renewed sense of faith in God’s victory over the enemy*

DAY 12: “Let It Rain, Let It Pour”

Zechariah 10:1

“You do not have because you do not ask,” declares the book of James (James 4:2d). Our receiving runs in direct proportion to our asking. If we expect to receive the spring rain, we will have to ask for it.

For most parts of the country, spring is a tangible reality. Seeing new life, after months of dormancy, provides evidence of a shifting. It is not just a subjective emotional feeling; spring has sprung!

In the same way, the evidence of spiritual spring is also evident. The dormancy of our winter is past, the swelling of fruitfulness is all among us and the evidence of increase is seen by all. While we rejoice and take great courage in this fact, we stand the risk of short-circuiting the visitation of God if we do not follow His instruction.

In Zechariah, the Lord says, “Ask for rain in the springtime.” Rain in the Scripture is symbolic of spiritual blessing. It is not enough to just enjoy the spring; we must ask God for the outpouring of His blessing in the spring in order that His divine visitation would be sustained for its appointed time.

For some time, the Holy Spirit has been laying a foundation of prayer and intercession. Our churches will be houses of prayer. We need to ask the Lord for rain in our time of spring. Let us ask the Father for the blessings that will sustain this current visitation. Our desire is not for the blessing that we would consume upon ourselves, but rather the blessings that would further the work of the Kingdom in our churches, in our city and in our world.

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, p. 101

Pray:

**For the “rain” of God’s favor and blessing in your life*

**For a renewal of focus on His Kingdom assignment for you*

**For an outpouring on your pastor, your church’s leaders, you church family*

DAY 13: “Spending Time Alone with Jesus”

Luke 12:32-34; Psalm 46:10

I have some potentially devastating news for you: this five-minute devotion you are doing right now will not make you spiritually “deep.”

What is needed is to spend some serious time with Jesus. No substitute for it exists. You may even have to take time off from work and sit with Him. It takes desire and devotion to put Him above all other things that clamor for your time.

Jesus said, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” A modern adaptation might say, “Where you spend your time is where you invest your heart.” God wants to give us His Kingdom, but we have to make a life-investment first.

Do you want to hear from God? Then you must quiet yourself. Get to a place where you can quiet your spirit, a place with minimal distractions – no phones, no social media, no children, no spouse, no whatever. Then force yourself to sit down and quiet your spirit before God. Truly, the ability to hear from God is the single greatest asset any saint can have!

We race a lot in this society. Even when we sit down, our thoughts are still zooming at high speed! Our spirits are still running; we are not sitting down on the inside. Hearing from the Lord requires being still enough to hear His still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12b).

It is amazing how many books, manuals, videos, and teaching series there are that were designed to help us hear God’s voice. Yet none of us had any problems discerning the voice of the one(s) who raised us. We did not need to check out any books from the library, or go to some special school or seminar, to teach us how to recognize our human parents’ voice. Because we knew *them*, we knew their voices!

If we want to know God’s voice, we need to strive to spend time with Him to know Him. And in knowing Him, we will know when He is speaking to us. His Word says that we must quiet ourselves to hear His voice. SLOW DOWN!

If you want to be deep, spend time with Him.

Bishop Eddie Long
Called to Conquer, p. 164-165

Pray:

**For a clarity in hearing the Spirit’s voice*

**Intercede for the vision of your church and a manifestation of that vision*

**Intercede wisdom and compassion for political leaders in your city, state, country*

**Intercede for the unsaved in your city*

DAY 14: “Seek Me More than Any Other”

Matthew 6:24-34

To “seek” means to search for and go after. Most of us read the words “seek first” and start thinking about first, second, and third in terms of priorities. We say, “Put God first, family second, and job third,” and we try to do all those things. However, we are missing the point. Jesus is saying that He is first in the sense of “above all else.”

The author of Proverbs wrote, “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths (Proverbs 3:6 NKJV). When He says, “seek first,” that means our relationship with Him should be so close that we check with Him before we move to the next place.

If we would do that, we would begin to experience the most wonderful relationships in our lives, and it will be with the Holy Spirit. After a while, we would not even have to ask! We will be able to sense whether or not a particular direction is right. Our spirits would automatically acknowledge Him, and we would not have to check our priorities as often.

When God is our guide, He will tell us when to invest time in family and when to focus on the job. He will tell us when we are spending too much time at work and need to be home. He will warn us if we have not done enough with our children. He will even let us know when we need to get off the sofa and go exercise!

When we search for and prize our time with Him more than any other, He will show us how to live. In the process, He will also keep us healthy and thinking and experiencing wholesome things that enrich our lives. This is the life of a lamb under the guidance of the Good Shepherd!

Bishop Eddie Long

Called to Conquer, p. 180

Pray:

**For the Lord to reveal Himself to you in new and transformative ways*

**For sensitivity to His leading you*

**For the outpouring and moving of the Spirit in the earth*

**Revival in the Earth, in the Church*

**Intercede for the vision of your church and a manifestation of that vision*

**Missionaries and Christian workers around the world*

DAY 15: “Fixing and Setting”

Hebrews 12:2

Success can be defined as the ability to make wise and purposeful decisions. Few people mistake their way into success. Few people drift into success. Those who succeed in life do so because they learned the secret of fixing and setting.

Jesus understood this principle. His ability to endure the cross was not due to some ransom inspiration, but because He set His course and fixed His will to do the will of His Father. The overwhelming joy of anticipating our salvation enabled Him to set His will regardless of the temptation to take an easier course. His travail in the garden reveals His desire to escape the pain that was before Him, but because His heart was set, He was able to resist the temptation with the resignation of “Nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done.”

The carefree, take-it-as-it-comes philosophy of our current time will never bring us into the fullness of God’s desire. To walk in the fullness of God’s desire will require the purposeful fixing of our eyes on Jesus and the setting of our wills to the will of our heavenly Father.

Fixing and setting are purposeful and deliberate decisions. They are predetermined choices that have been made before the crossroad of decision. Fixing involves the mind and setting involves the will. Fixing is the act of defining our course, determining our goals and discerning God’s purpose for our lives. Setting is the establishing of our wills in unity with our course, then following that course, regardless of the temptation to wander. Many have come to believe that the fixing of goals is giving in to carnal living. They think to fix goals is to factor out the leading and spontaneity of the Holy Spirit. Though the possibility of this exists, the fact is the fixing of goals can and should be a function of the Holy Spirit. Goal fixing is not something we do apart from the Holy Spirit, but rather a very integral part of the Holy Spirit’s ministry in our lives. Once the Holy Spirit establishes the goal, our wills must be set behind them in order for them to be realized.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus and set our wills to follow the course that He determines for our lives.

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, p. 284

Pray:

**For the focus to fix and set your mind and will on God’s goals for your life*

**For His strength to stay committed to the goals you have fixed*

**For revelation of new details of God’s directives for your life*

DAY 16: "The Taking of Offense"

Matthew 13:57; Matthew 18:57; Acts 24:16; 1 Corinthians 10:32

Offenses are always taken, never given. No one can give you an offended heart. You alone are the guardian of your heart and you alone determine whether or not your heart will be protected. Others may give causes for offenses, but whether or not the offense is taken is purely up to us. In the face of the cause, we alone are the rulers of our hearts. What we do with the offense will determine whether our hearts remain soft and yielding or whether they become hard and unyielding.

There is a progression of offense. An offended heart begins with a cause. Someone says something, does something or does not do something that creates a cause for offense. At this point, you have a choice to either take offense or take the cross. A choice to take the cross is a choice to yield our perceived rights for offenses to Jesus in order to maintain an unoffended heart. A choice to take offense is a choice that hardens our hearts and hinder our ability to hear God and remain one with His Body. Following the choice of offense is separation. Separation from those we took offense with begins in the heart. It begins with attitudes and feelings.

Once the heart separation has taken place, excuses begin to flow. "He who separates himself, looks for an excuse." The excuse that is presented is usually not the real issue; it is only a diversion to take the focus off the offended heart. Once the excuse is offered, it must be justified. Since the mind will justify what the heart desires, the person makes further choices to convince themselves that their excuses are justified. Once the excuse for heart separation is justified, physical separation follows. By the time physical separation happens, the person is usually unwilling to acknowledge that it can all be traced back to a personal offense.

The cross of Jesus Christ is God's answer to an offended heart. Taking up our cross daily involves the choice to yield our perceived right to be offended over to Christ. Instead of taking offense, we must take the cross and allow the cross to turn our hearts in the direction of Christlikeness. Consequently, our hearts remain soft and yielding. As long as our hearts are soft, faith is fresh. Once our hearts become hard, faith is held captive.

Have you taken offense? It is not yours, so give it back. Give it to God. Yield your perceived right to be offended to Him. In so doing, you will remain yielded, and God will be free to pour blessing upon you.

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, pp. 199-200

Pray:

**Against the spirit of offense in your life and in the lives of your family members*

**For a soft and submissive heart that responds to Jesus past any offenses*

**Against the spirit of offense in your church family*

DAY 17: “The Two Sides of Faith”
Romans 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:13-15

The Scriptures refer to faith, both as a noun and as a verb. Some verses refer to faith as a thing we possess and other verses refer to faith as an action that possesses us. Faith that we possess has been given to us as a gift. “To each has been given a measure of faith (Romans 12:3).” But, the faith that possesses us is learned faith. It is faith that comes to us as we embrace the One who is faithful.

Faith that possesses us is a faith of action. It is a faith that demands demonstration and an area to prove the power of God. The Amplified Bible describes the action in words like “prompted by faith, actuated by faith, urged on by faith, aroused by faith and motivated by faith.” It is faith that comes to us and forces a response from us. There is nothing complacent or passive by faith.

Because of faith, Sarah received physical power to conceive a child. This was a faith beyond her original measure. It was an action faith given in proportion to the calling she was given. Sarah’s original measure of faith was not enough for her to overcome the natural laws of childbirth. She needed a supernatural supply. In the face of need, the Scriptures say, “By faith, Sarah received...”. She did not earn it, she did not do anything to qualify herself for it, she simply received it. The impartation of faith was God’s doing. The calling to conceive a child was God’s doing and the enablement to give birth was God’s doing. All Sarah had to do was posture herself before God to receive the miracle and then act in obedience.

Entering into the faith realm is entering into the faith that possesses us and then thrusts us into action and demonstration. It is not our doing, but entirely of His.

Norm Willis,
Vertical Reality, p. 138

Pray:

**For the growth of your faith-action*

**To receive the Lord’s enablement in your life for you to act in obedient faith*

**Intercede for the vision of your church and a manifestation of that vision*

**For a renewal of focus on His Kingdom assignment for you*

**For a renewed sense of faith in God’s victory over the enemy*

DAY 18: “You Can Influence Things on Earth and in Heaven”

Matthew 28:18; Matthew 16:17-19

Man’s tremendous potential includes the capacity to influence both physical and spiritual things. This capacity is a colossal power that we seldom use. Jesus pointed to this power after Peter confessed, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16).

Jesus is encouraging us to look beyond the physical circumstances of our lives to the spiritual dimension. If we are dealing with just the physical aspects of our lives, we are missing the real thing. Looking beyond the problems in our jobs or with our spouses or in our church to the spiritual realities that underlie them. Say in the natural what you want to happen in the spiritual. The power to affect both realms is ours! We hold this Kingdom Key to our effective participation in God’s Kingdom, because all authority in heaven AND on earth belongs to Jesus, and He has shared that power with us!

The Scriptures refer to faith, both as a noun and as a verb. Some verses refer to faith as a thing we possess and other verses refer to faith as an action that possesses us. Faith that we possess has been given to us as a gift. “To each has been given a measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). But, the faith that possesses us is learned faith. It is faith that comes to us as we embrace the One who is faithful.

Faith that has possesses us is a faith of action. It is a faith that demands demonstration an area to prove the power of God. The Amplified Bible describes the action in words like “prompted by faith / actuated by faith / urged on by faith / aroused by faith / motivated by faith.” It is faith that comes to us and forces a response from us. There is nothing complacent or passive about faith.

Because of faith, Sarah received physical power to conceive a child. This was a faith beyond her original measure. It was an action faith given in proportion to the calling she was given. Sarah’s original measure of faith was not enough for her to overcome the natural laws of childbirth. She needed a supernatural supply. In the face of need, the Scriptures say, “By faith, Sarah received...”. She did not earn it, she did not do anything to qualify herself for it, she simply received it. The impartation of faith was God’s doing. The calling to conceive a child was God’s doing and the enablement to give birth was God’s doing. All Sarah had to do was posture herself before God to receive the miracle and then act in obedience.

Entering into the faith realm is entering into the faith that possesses us and then thrusts us into action and demonstration. It is not of our doing, but entirely of His.

Dr. Myles Munroe

Living with Purpose, p. 129-130

Pray:

**For the outpouring and moving of the Spirit in the earth*

**For victory in the spirit-realm over all of the tricks of the enemy*

DAY 19: “Steadfastly Devoted”

Acts 2:42-46

No, there is nothing casual about their pursuit of God and relationships with other believers. These early believers were devoted. One translation says, “They constantly applied themselves to the apostles’ teaching.” Another one says, “They gave themselves to living out what was taught.” The King James says, “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine.”

“Steadfastly” means to be earnest toward, to be constantly diligent, to attend assiduously all the exercises. These individuals were intense. Nothing casual about their pursuit. They were fully committed and had fully given themselves over to the exercises required to become that visible community of the redeemed.

The same devotion and diligence of the early believer should be the cry of our hearts as well. The road to becoming all God desires His people to be is paved with that intense desire and devotion of pursuit. Though many would have us believe it is an easy, laid back, non-confrontive road, the biblical record would say otherwise. Though they did it with ultimate joy, they did it at personal cost. To do anything daily, diligently, steadfastly, will require an intensity of action and a passion of pursuit. Oh yes, there is a rest from our own labors (Heb. 4:9-11), but only so that we might work in the power of His might. To work under His power will require we twice as much, twice as easily!

Note Acts 2:43: “Every one was filled with awe.”

This level of devotion guarantees an awesome return!

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, p. 295

Pray:

**For the Lord to increase your devotion to pursue your Kingdom assignment*

**For God’s Kingdom purposes and will to be manifested and achieved in you*

**That the Lord would adequately prepare your mind and spirit for His move*

DAY 20: “Words Carry Both Meaning and a Spirit”

Matthew 12:33-37; Proverbs 18:21; Proverbs 16:24; Proverbs 18:4-8

Have you ever arrived somewhere in a great mood, then run into someone who opened their mouths and said something that weighed you down, robbed you of your joy, or shrunk your confidence?

That’s because words do not just carry a meaning. They also carry a spirit. Jesus said our words come from what is hidden in our hearts (Matthew 12:35). The author of Proverbs instructs that our words can either empower or destroy (Proverbs 18:21).

We must close the gaps in how our words, or the words of others, carry a spirit that can do more to the receiver than we may intend because what we say involves more than the meanings of those words; they carry a spirit. If a person has been contaminated by the unclean spiritual influences of those words, only God can go into the “hard drive” of the soul to remove that virus!

Are my words building others up (Ephesians 4:29)? Are my words releasing a spirit of grace to those that I am talking to (Colossians 4:6)?

Am I associating with people who are destroying my faith or my joy because I allow the spirits of their words to harm me? Do I need the Lord to remove the spiritual contamination of the words I have let into my life?

Pray:

**For the Lord to remove the spiritual contamination from the words of others*

**For the Spirit to make me sensitive to the spirits of my words*

**That my words would build up, empower, and give grace, not destruction, to others*

DAY 21: “Standing Firm”

Isaiah 7:9

Those who stand firm are a vanishing breed. As a people lose their adherence to absolutes, they also lose their ability to stand firm. It is one’s beliefs in absolutes that enables them to stand firm in the storm of controversy and disagreement. Our culture is rapidly becoming spineless and conviction-less. The convictions we once possessed, enabling us to risk safety and well-being for the sake of the cause, are all but gone.

Out of this mass of apathy, God is raising up a Kingdom community of believers who are capable of standing firm in a sea of compromise. He is calling forth those who have built their lives on the absolute foundation of God’s Word and are willing to stand on His Word regardless of the rejection, criticism, or misunderstanding it might bring. This Kingdom community must be a people of resolve. They are those who have resolved to stand firm for truth, whatever it takes. What are the “whatever it takes” issues in your life? Are there certain issues you stand on that you have resolved to stand firm, whatever it requires of you? It takes a “whatever it takes” attitude to produce in you the depth of foundation required to keep you standing in the storm?

Our wholehearted pursuit and devotion to Jesus Christ is a “whatever it takes” issue. We must resolve to stand firm in our pursuit of Christ, regardless of the pressures formed against us to divert us. Family is a “whatever it takes” issue. All the powers of hell are currently unleashed against the family in hopes of destroying the continuity through the ages. We must resolve to stand firm in our commitment to our family in order to see the baton passed on to the generation to come. The Church is a “whatever it takes” issue. Satan’s desire is to divide and conquer, keeping God’s people in a perpetual state of infancy. Let us stand firm as one, in order that we might see God’s desire fulfilled.

Norm Willis

Vertical Reality, p. 300

Pray:

“In 2019, I am watching the Lord Jesus close the gaps in my Practices, my Relationships, my Faith, and my Understanding.

The enemy will have NO WAY into my family, my friendships, nor my finances.

I WILL BE a Repairer of the Breach!

I WILL stand in the gap!

I WILL live victorious, in Jesus’ Name!”