

WEEK SEVEN

prayers OF hope

monday - PRAY FOR TEACHERS

'May the Lord bless you and protect you.
May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you.
May the Lord show you his favor and give you his peace.'

numbers 6: 24-26

Another group of heroes during this time, teachers! As school districts are officially announcing that we won't be returning to school this school year, it adds more to the disappointment that our educators are experiencing. They have been asked to change and adapt to distance learning in an incredibly short period of time. Recording videos, providing curriculum that can be done at home, and being available for their classes...all while many of them have their own children at home as well. Let's pray a special blessing of grace, creativity, and perseverance for our teachers. May God equip them and strengthen them as they are missing their students and operating out of their comfort zone. And, while we're at it, let's also lift up some prayers for parents who are also having to step into the role of teacher and fill in the gaps for their children.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for teachers on the Central Coast. If you have a child, pray specifically for their teacher(s). Send a note of encouragement...and I'm sure a gift card is always appreciated.

tuesday - PRAY FOR OPPORTUNITY

So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.

galatians 6: 9-10

We've said it before, and we'll say it again. GOD IS ON THE MOVE! So many doors are opening for the people of God. Doors that have been shut for years! During this time, people are inviting us into their living rooms, inviting conversations about faith, and the goodness of God. Let's pray to have open eyes to see the opportunities God is putting before us. While it may seem like this is a time to sit and wait for the storm to pass, it is also a time for action and a time to take advantage of the open doors and open hearts in front of us. Where has God placed an opportunity in your life to share the hope you have? Where has He given you an opportunity to be His hands and feet by serving others?

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for God to open your eyes to the opportunities He's placed before you. Take a few moments to quiet your heart and make yourself available to what God has for you. Here I am, Lord. Send me.

wednesday - PRAY WITH SURRENDER

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

galatians 2: 20

Many of our normal comforts and patterns have been stripped away, so we might be inadvertently clinging to the things and (often unhealthy) habits that we still have. However, maybe one of the ways God is working in this time is to whisper to His people that He is the one constant in the change and He is all we need.

I know that in times of chaos, holding to the illusion of control can provide some comfort to us, but let's spend some time today focusing on the UNFAILING love of Jesus. He is a good Father, and He knows what we need. In the mornings He sings over us and He delights in the details of our lives. As we focus on His goodness, may we loosen our grip on the things of this world that can't actually satisfy us, and allow God to work in our lives however He sees fit.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Ask God to search your heart and reveal to you the areas you've been holding back. Are there any unhealthy habits you've allowed to creep in during this time? If so, surrender them over to God. Spend time focusing on God's goodness and His deep love for you. Trust, once again, in the fact that He knows what is best, and that He is in control.

thursday - PRAY FOR OUR SENIOR COMMUNITY

So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.

2 corinthians 4: 16-18

Those in our community who are 65 and older have been uniquely affected by this pandemic. They're at a higher risk of having more serious complications and they've been asked to stay home as much as possible. Many are fearful and many are antsy. Many are widows or widowers and might not have the community around them to fight off loneliness. If you are a member of this group of people, hear this: You are not alone. God is not done with you. Keep dreaming. Keep moving forward. You are loved. You are valued and there is so much God wants to do in and through you! While this might go on for some time, it is only temporary and God wants to equip you and use you right where you are!

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for our 65+ community. Pray for renewal and strength and peace. If you have a friend or neighbor who can't or shouldn't leave the house, ask how you can help. Send a note of encouragement to someone who may need it. If you are a senior, ask God how He wants to transform you and use you during this season.

friday - PRAY FOR SOLIDARITY

Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude.

Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing.

1 peter 3: 8-9

As our leaders and health experts weigh the options for a path to reopening, it is clear that we all have different views and opinions on what that looks like. I think we can all agree that we want what's best for people...but we disagree on that actually IS best for people. May we have the grace and compassion to assume the best in people. Obviously these challenges of solidarity go way beyond our current circumstances. The next time we disagree with someone, on social media, or across the dinner table, may we respond with a tender heart and a humble attitude. May we focus on what unites us, and that is the shed blood of Jesus.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for believers to be of one heart, even if we disagree. Pray that the world would see how we treat each other in disagreements and may that love for each other point them to the Source of love. Reach out to someone you disagree with and express kindness.

saturday - PRAY FOR PATIENCE

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.

james 1: 19-21

Waiting is hard. In a culture where we've become accustomed to phrases like "on demand", instant gratification has become the norm. However, we find ourselves in a circumstance where we are having to wait. Wait on the Lord. Wait for restrictions to be lifted. Wait for safety. Wait for employment. Wait for school to resume. In addition, when tensions are high, patience is usually the first thing to leave us. Let's pray today that God would pour out His supernatural patience to wait on Him and endure this season. May he grant us the self-control to hold our tongue and our harsh responses toward those we are with 24/7.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for God's patience with our spouses, our children, our leaders, and our circumstances. Ask God to grant you His perspective when you grow impatient.

sunday - **PRAY IN FAITH**

"But blessed are those who trust in the Lord
and have made the Lord their hope and confidence.
They are like trees planted along a riverbank,
with roots that reach deep into the water.
Such trees are not bothered by the heat
or worried by long months of drought.
Their leaves stay green,
and they never stop producing fruit.

jeremiah 17: 7-8

What an opportunity we have right now to actively show where we place our hope and confidence. When life, normalcy, employment, and health all feel uncertain, may we find solace in the One constant: the One who holds the stars and knows our inmost, hidden thoughts. May we be like the trees in this verse, so firmly planted in the truth and love of God that we are almost unfazed by the chaos surrounding our world...even if it's just for today. Let's choose faith today over our fears. Let's choose to rest in His mercies and in the fact that HE'S GOT THIS. He's not surprised by the state of the world and He's not worried. So, for today, let's choose to not be worried either.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Spend an extended period of time today in worship, the antidote to worry. Listen to songs declaring God's power and faithfulness. A couple suggestions: "I'll Give Thanks" by Housefires, "Highlands" by Hillsong United, and "Even the Impossible" by Mack Brock. Choose faith today...and tomorrow.