



DAYS OF PRAYER

WELCOME TO THE 21 DAYS OF PRAYER FOR REACH CHURCH

Dear Reach Church,

I am so excited for our church to enter a New Level of Good! While COVID-19 has turned our world upside down, we know that God is sovereign and has a beautiful plan for Reach Church. As I have said many times, we do not want to come out of this and “get back to normal.” We are looking ahead at reaching a New Level of Good!

As we anticipate coming back together in Sunday morning worship in just a few weeks, I am excited to invite YOU to be part of our 21 Days of Prayer. My hope is that we will come together each day in prayer, growing stronger and stronger as a church body leading up to the resuming of in-person worship and our congregational meeting on August 9th, where we will elect new elders to our Session. I could not be more excited about these men who will come before you for your endorsement into the leadership of our church. If you do not already know them personally, I encourage you to read their stories as they are made available and get to know them if you do not already.

It would be an understatement to say that I cannot wait to be with you all again in worship. I have missed being together on Sunday mornings, but am grateful that we have had opportunities like the outdoor services. Still, there is something different about coming together in our sanctuary and praising together. I look forward to praying with you all through these 21 Days of Prayer and taking things to a New Level of Good together as the body of Reach Church!

In Christ Alone,
Pastor Chuck



HOW TO USE

THESE DAILY RESOURCES

Each day, you will have a number of resources available to you for your participation in the 21 Days of Prayer of Reach Church. We pray that you will use these resources to God's glory as we strive for a New Level of Good in every area of life, both in and out of the church.

**So, should I do this alone?
Should I prayer with a friend?**

One of the most beautiful things about the 21 Days of Prayer is that you can participate in so many different ways! Maybe you want to add this devotional to your early morning personal devotion time. Maybe you are looking for a way to connect with a friend or for you and your spouse to go on this journey together. You might even be looking for a way to introduce family worship to your home! These are all great ways to utilize the resources available for the 21 Days of Prayer. The only thing we ask of you is to join us in prayer as we look ahead at a *New Level of Good* in our church and our world!

THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES WILL BE AVAILABLE EACH DAY:

- A short prayer for you to pray along with the rest of our church. You are able to receive these prayers via text message, too! Don't forget to sign up to receive these reminders!
- A daily devotional that goes along with each day's prayer, allowing you to go deeper as we strive for a *New Level of Good* in the area that you prayed for that day.
- A suggestion of a worship song that relates to the daily topic to help you connect with and enrich your devotional time.

**WE WILL ALSO RELEASE
ARTICLES AND VIDEOS
ABOUT RELATED TOPICS TO
GIVE YOU A DEEPER
UNDERSTANDING ON
THINGS LIKE PRAYER AND
SOME OF THE AREAS IN
WHICH WE ARE PRAYING
FOR A NEW LEVEL OF
GOOD!**

THE 21 DAYS OF PRAYER IS DESIGNED
TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SIMPLE WAYS
TO PRAY TOGETHER AS A CHURCH
BODY.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

"One of the ways God allows His creation to stay involved with Him is through prayer. Prayer, which is personal communication from us to God, not only helps us know about God but also helps us truly know God. Through prayer we can communicate our requests to God, confess our sins to God, and give adoration, praise, and thanksgiving to God."

-Wayne Grudem (from Christian Beliefs)

God will never be surprised by what you bring to Him in prayer. He is the all-knowing, all-powerful God of the universe, who created and continues to sustain our lives. You might be asking, "Well, if God already knows all that, why do we pray?" We pray for a few reasons. First, God tells us to pray to Him and shows time and time again in Scripture that He hears our prayers. Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." Another reason we pray is for the sake of aligning our hearts to the will of God. When Jesus was coming to the end of His time on earth, He prayed and said, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but Yours, be done." (Luke 22:42) That last phrase is so powerful in bringing our will in line with that of our Lord; "Not my will, but Yours, be done." This passage also brings up another reason we pray... We pray because Jesus prayed! This is one of the many ways that Jesus gave us an example of how we come to God. In fact, Jesus even gave His disciples and us a model and details about prayer in The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6.

Our hope is that this time of focused prayer will draw each of us closer to the Lord and draw us closer together as Reach Church as we look ahead at a New Level of Good in bringing the message of **Nothing But Jesus** to our community and the world!



HOW CAN I GO DEEPER?

BIBLE READING

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Each day there is a Scripture passage and devotional reading related to the prayer. Focus on the verses presented each day and maybe even read the whole chapter! If you don't have a Bible, send us a message and we will gift one to you! There are also many apps that are free to download on any smart device, many of which have Bible-reading plans included. We recommend the YouVersion Bible App, which can be found in any app store. Scripture has never been more accessible!

FASTING

Fasting is the practice of denying oneself a regularly enjoyed good gift of God, often food, for the sake of focused spiritual growth and the deepening of our relationship with God. Throughout Scripture, we read of many examples of the people of God fasting, both regularly and for special occasions. It was a custom to fast regularly both in the Jewish traditions of the Old Testament as well as in the establishment of the Church in the New Testament. (Zechariah 8:19; Matthew 6:16) Additionally, we can see that God's people would fast in trying times as they discerned God's will, whether it be in pleading for safety during exile or in hoping for grace in dealing with ungodly powers. (Ezra 8:21-23; Esther 4:16)

When we deny our bodies of something good from above, whether food or something else, it allows us to focus our desires back to the One who truly sustains us. If you feel led, practice refraining from food for a specific part of the day to set aside for prayer or perhaps take a fast from social media and replace that time with reading the Bible.

MEDITATION

Meditation is not a strange or satirical act! In fact, it is a powerful tool to take your life in Christ to a New Level of Good! Meditation is simply the act of finding time and space to free your mind from the distractions of the day and be with God.

This can be a time to think about God's Word or even just a time to listen. You may not hear the audible voice of God, but this time can bring a peace that you rarely find in our hyper-busy world.



WEEK 1

A NEW LEVEL OF GOOD IN: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

- Galatians 5:22-23

These nine words found in Galatians 5:22-23 are coined by the Apostle Paul as “the fruit of the Spirit.” On the whole, this group of words signal the virtue by which we are to display as followers of Jesus. When taken individually, we are given the opportunity to examine how each is shown in our own lives.

When reading these verses, a question is raised about Paul’s word choice. Verse 22 says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is...”, and Paul goes on to list each virtue. So, why is the word “fruit” used instead of “fruits”? Did Paul just make a mistake? Clearly not, especially when we see that he used the word “is” instead of “are”. The two words in Greek are *karpos* (fruit) and *estin*(is), both of which are singular phrases. If Paul intended to write “fruits” and “are” the words would be *karpoi* and *eisin*, the plural forms respectively. This is no mistake on Paul’s part, he has a divine intention in his grammatical choice. In choosing to say the *fruit* of the Spirit, he is connecting each virtue back to one singular source, he is saying that there is one fruit that is to be produced on the “tree” of a believer: **Jesus!** Where else do we find all of these virtues wrapped into one place? What other person or entity displays all of these virtues simultaneously? No one but God incarnate! This is consistent with Paul’s teaching in Colossians 2:2, “*For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.*” Every perfect aspect of God’s character is found in Him, and thus the singular fruit that is produced by the Spirit *is Jesus*. This means for us to truly understand each one of the virtues listed, we must understand their source and sum.

This week as we set our minds of the fruit of the Spirit, let us not analyze each one as if it is isolated from the others, but rather observe them together and see how they point us to Jesus. Instead of trying to observe each one as its own virtue, see them each as just another color on a beautiful piece of fruit that is the essence of virtue itself, namely Jesus.

LOVE

WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US. - 1 JOHN 4:19

Recently, a friend of mine was in the hospital. My wife and I immediately asked ourselves, "What can we do?" We quickly realized that due to the global pandemic happening right now, all of our "usual" ways of showing love to a friend in the hospital weren't valid options for us. We could not visit, make a meal, or help with their children because of the need to limit exposure. We found ourselves out of ideas, and it was a brief reminder of how limited our love can be as people. Even without the extraneous circumstances brought on by a pandemic, we do not have perfect love. We don't always say the right things, and we don't always know what to do.

We don't always have a heart that wants to love others in all circumstances.

There's only One whose love is perfect, limitless, and great enough to overcome the greatest hurdles. That's Jesus. His love is great enough to conquer our broken relationship with God the Father, and His love is why Jesus intercedes for us before the Father even when we don't have the words to say. In every situation where human love falls short, the love of Jesus is greater. Because of His great love for us, we can love others -- and where our imperfect love falls short, His perfect love covers every need that we have.

Are you relying on your own human strength and imperfect love to meet the needs of those around you, or have you given that burden to Jesus, whose perfect love has already overcome the circumstances of this world?

LORD, PLEASE OPEN MY HEART SO THAT I CAN LOVE LIKE YOU LOVE ME. WHETHER IT BE MY FAMILY, FRIENDS, OR ENEMIES, LET YOUR LOVE BE SEEN THROUGH ME TODAY AND EVERY DAY. LET LOVE BE THE FOUNDATION OF ALL I DO. AMEN.

ALL ABOUT LOVE - STEVEN CURTIS CHAPMAN

JOY

REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS; AGAIN I WILL SAY, REJOICE. - PHILIPPIANS 4:4

True joy is found in the knowledge and understanding of the incredible gift we have been given Jesus Christ. Simply put, joy is found in NOTHING BUT JESUS. How often do we forget about this incredible gift when the unexpected interrupts our day or we face situations that are less than ideal? It's easy to feel joy when blessings abound and when everything appears to be going our way -- but what about when things are not going our way, and when difficulties arise? The Apostle Paul brings emphasis to this important instruction by repeating it ("again I will say, rejoice.").

Joy goes beyond any momentary feeling of happiness or peace. Joy is the state of knowing that God is sovereign over all, loves His children, and knows how to give us exactly what we need. This is why we can experience joy even in difficulties -- because the source of our joy, Jesus, never changes. He is always sovereign and He always loves us. He is always faithful when we are not, and He is always in control when life feels out of control. So, in the words of Paul, be reminded to "rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!!!" In which areas of life do you struggle to find joy?

What are some ways you could remind yourself through the day to rejoice in the Lord always?

GOD, AS I GO THROUGH MY DAY, MAY I KNOW AND EXPERIENCE THE JOY THAT COMES FROM KNOWING YOU. LET EVERY MOMENT SERVE AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REJOICE IN YOUR INCREDIBLE GIFT OF GRACE THROUGH NOTHING BUT JESUS. AMEN.

AGAIN I SAY REJOICE - ISRAEL HOUGHTON

PEACE

AND BEHOLD, THERE AROSE A GREAT STORM ON THE SEA, SO THAT THE BOAT WAS BEING SWAMPED BY THE WAVES; BUT HE WAS ASLEEP. AND THEY WENT AND WOKE HIM, SAYING, "SAVE US, LORD; WE ARE PERISHING." AND HE SAID TO THEM, "WHY ARE YOU AFRAID, O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH?" THEN HE ROSE AND REBUKED THE WINDS AND THE SEA, AND THERE WAS A GREAT CALM.

- MATTHEW 8:24-26

When we think of the word peace and connect it to Jesus, our minds almost automatically jump to this story from Scripture. Jesus is in the boat with His disciples, a deadly storm rises up, and what does Jesus do? He takes a nap. When we see this in Scripture, we think this is the epitome of peace, being able to sleep in a storm without fear, or worry, or dread of death. We apply this to our lives, making the storm out to be the problems we are facing today, and we ask for Jesus to come and teach

us how to have that peace.

Now, this isn't wrong, in fact it is noble and right for us to seek that peace, however, there is a deeper peace, a peace that isn't taught to us, but bought for us. Paul says that He has "made peace through the blood of His cross" and so now we rebellious, sinful humans have peace with a holy and righteous God only through the blood of Jesus.

What an incredible gift!

How can our understanding of peace with God through Jesus impact our view of peace in everyday life when the storms come our way?

FATHER, PLANT IN OUR HEARTS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THAT PEACE WHICH WAS BOUGHT BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS AND LET IT GUARD OUR HEARTS AND MINDS WHEN THE STORMS OF LIFE COME OUR WAY. AMEN.

SLEEP IN THE STORM - UNSPOKEN

PATIENCE

AND LET US NOT GROW WEARY OF DOING GOOD, FOR IN DUE SEASON WE WILL REAP, IF WE DO NOT GIVE UP. - GALATIANS 6:9

Patience -- in the times we are living in, there are two ways to look at it: there's the patience that we need to go through our day to day life and the various situations that arise. But there's also a broader patience that all of us have to practice right now -- many of us are asking, "when will all of this craziness be over? When will COVID-19 be over? When will I be returning to normal life? How much longer do we have to stay home and social distance?" "How long, O Lord" is a sentence we can find many times in the book of Psalms.

It is a question that God always knows the answer to, but He doesn't always reveal it to us. God uses seasons of waiting to refine us and to cause us to fix our eyes all the more firmly on Jesus. God uses seasons of waiting not just so that we can return to normal, but so that we can enter into a new season of good. Are you weary of waiting today? Fix your eyes on Jesus -- He is doing something here that we can not see. He has not let go of us, and as we continue to press on in our waiting, we can be sure that a harvest season is coming.

How is God refining you through the season of waiting that you are in right now, and what new level of good are you looking forward to as a result?

GOD, YOUR GRACE GOES BEYOND MY UNDERSTANDING. PLEASE ALIGN MY HEART MORE WITH YOURS SO THAT I CAN HAVE MORE PATIENCE AS I WAIT ON YOUR TIMING IN ALL ASPECTS OF MY LIFE. AMEN.

I SURRENDER - HILLSONG

GOODNESS/KINDNESS

BUT WHEN THE KINDNESS AND LOVE OF GOD OUR SAVIOR APPEARED, HE SAVED US, NOT BECAUSE OF RIGHTEOUS THINGS WE HAD DONE, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS MERCY. HE SAVED US THROUGH THE WASHING OF REBIRTH AND RENEWAL BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM HE POURED OUT ON US GENEROUSLY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR.

- TITUS 3:4-6

The word "kindness" used in these verses to describe God's character is the same word Paul uses in Galatians to describe the fruit of the Spirit. By understanding God's goodness and kindness, we can more clearly see how to live by the Spirit. God's kindness towards us flows directly out of His mercy, not because of anything we did to deserve it. Better yet, we are not talking about a leaky faucet dripping with kindness, goodness, and mercy.

We are receiving the Niagara Falls of mercy being poured out on us! What joy, what blessing! This supernatural goodness and kindness will spillover from us to others. This is the fruit people will see. They will see the overflow of God's goodness as we love those around us, even those we struggle to love. We all have people in our lives who we feel are undeserving of our kindness, but then again, are we not much more undeserving of the kindness of our savior, Jesus?

Who is God putting on your heart that you should show greater kindness to?

JESUS, PLEASE HELP ME TO MEDITATE ON YOUR GOODNESS AND SHOW KINDNESS TO THOSE AROUND ME. HELP OTHERS COME TO KNOW YOU THROUGH THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT YOU GIVE ME. AMEN.

YOU ARE GOOD - ISRAEL HOUGHTON

FAITHFULNESS

AFTER THIS, JESUS, KNOWING THAT ALL WAS NOW FINISHED, SAID (TO FULFILL THE SCRIPTURE), "I THIRST." A JAR FULL OF SOUR WINE STOOD THERE, SO THEY PUT A SPONGE FULL OF THE SOUR WINE ON A HYSSOP BRANCH AND HELD IT TO HIS MOUTH. WHEN JESUS HAD RECEIVED THE SOUR WINE, HE SAID, 'IT IS FINISHED,' AND HE BOWED HIS HEAD AND GAVE UP HIS SPIRIT.

- JOHN 19:28-30

Here we have our Lord in His dying moments. The Son of God hanging in agony; though He had drunk fully the cup of God's wrath, He thirsted. But notice, what is His motivation for making this statement? John tells us, "to fulfill the Scripture". This was a consistent theme of Jesus' life; in His conversation

with John the Baptist before His baptism, in His sermon on the mount, all throughout His ministry, even unto His dying breath, His desire was fidelity to the Word of God. Jesus was faithful in life, and in death, and His faithfulness is counted to us who utterly lack it when we put our trust in Him.

How does the faithfulness of Jesus on our behalf bring about more faithfulness in us?

**FATHER, GIVE TO US A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS' FAITHFULNESS
SO THAT WE MAY STAND FIRMLY ON HIS FOUNDATION,
AND NOT ON OUR OWN ABILITY. AMEN.**

WEEP NO MORE (FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH) - URBANA WORSHIP

GENTLENESS/SELF-CONTROL

FOR THIS VERY REASON, MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ADD TO YOUR FAITH
GOODNESS; AND TO GOODNESS, KNOWLEDGE; AND TO KNOWLEDGE, SELF-
CONTROL; AND TO SELF-CONTROL, PERSEVERANCE; AND TO PERSEVERANCE,
GODLINESS; AND TO GODLINESS, MUTUAL AFFECTION; AND TO MUTUAL
AFFECTION, LOVE.

- 2 PETER 1:5-7

Self-control is the bridge between just having a knowledge of God and His Word, and actually persevering in this life. Do you see the progression in 2 Peter? The knowledge of Christ gives us the clearest example of self-control and the power to exercise it. There is a power required to slow down, think in wisdom, and act in gentleness. When we approach life with gentle self-control, we are better equipped to handle and persevere through conflict, temptation, and hardship.

Imagine if we had self-control the next time we wanted to yell angrily at someone frustrating us. Imagine a self-control where we fight hard against sin.

Imagine a self-control where we build others up with our words. This whole progression leads to love. That's the goal! The ultimate display of this self-control was shown by Jesus. He chose to stay on the cross to rescue us from sin and death, the greatest act of love in history. Let's pray for a new level of gentle self-control in our lives!

What area in life is it hardest to show self-control and how can Jesus's gentle self-control change your view of it?

LORD, HELP ME TO GROW IN GENTLENESS AND SELF-CONTROL. GIVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY, EVEN TODAY, TO GROW IN THIS AREA BECAUSE I WANT TO BE MORE LIKE JESUS. AMEN.

HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US - KINGS KALEIDOSCOPE



WEEK 2

A NEW LEVEL OF GOOD IN: THE BODY OF CHRIST

I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- Matthew 16:18

What a promise! The Church, also known as the body of Christ, is made up of all believers: past, present, and future. When comparing marriage to Christ and His Church, Paul says in Ephesians 5:25 that Jesus “loved the church and gave Himself up for her.” With this phrase, Paul makes it clear that the Church is made up of all for whom Jesus gave His life. So, we are not just in communion with all other believers in the present age, but also the future and even God’s people in the Old Testament whose hope and faith were found in the coming Messiah!

God uses smaller communities (or local churches) to grow His global Church, as we can see clearly by the many local churches planted by Paul and other apostles in the New Testament. In the local church, we gather to worship, grow in our faith as we hear the Word of God preached and taught, and discern the ways that we can reach our surrounding community with the life-giving news of grace through ***Nothing But Jesus!***

As we look ahead at coming together again in-person next week, we can use this time to excitedly pray for different aspects of Reach Church and our drive to come out of this time of exclusively meeting virtual and in alternative ways into an era of a New Level of Good! This time of COVID-19 has done a number on most churches, so please lift up Reach Church as well as other local churches as we partner in the Gospel to bring the good news to this hurting world!

WORSHIP

OH SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG; SING TO THE LORD, ALL THE EARTH!
SING TO THE LORD, BLESS HIS NAME; TELL OF HIS SALVATION FROM DAY TO DAY.
DECLARE HIS GLORY AMONG THE NATIONS, HIS MARVELOUS WORKS AMONG ALL
THE PEOPLES! - PSALM 96:1-3

We are called throughout Scripture to worship our Lord through music. We are instructed to lift our voices in praise. We are blessed at Reach Church to have many folks who are gifted in leading us in worship, who are passionate in doing so week after week. We are also blessed to have a brilliant production team -- these are the people who have allowed us to experience Reach Worship online every week! They're also the people that tirelessly set up for our Outdoor Worship nights.

It can be easy, when we are singing familiar songs, to end up just going through the motions. It can be especially easy to simply go through the motions when we're not in our usual place inside our beautiful church on Sunday mornings.

Somehow, it can feel harder to worship in the same way from our couches at home.

The Lord is always doing a new thing. As we sing together -- either from the couch or together during Outdoor Worship, or as we re-enter the physical building of Reach Church -- may He bring to mind all of the ways in which He is using this season of life to bring about a new level of good in our lives and in our church. Wherever we're singing from, may the words we sing become a new song of praise to the Lord for the new things He is doing. May we not settle for simply going through the motions. My prayer is that the songs we sing would be the true cry of our hearts to a God who has not left us or let us down, even for a moment!

What are your favorite songs to sing in worship? Make a list and use it as a playlist in your commute to allow you to worship every day!

LORD, LET OUR WORSHIP GLORIFY YOU TODAY. WE LIFT UP THE WORSHIP AND PRODUCTION TEAMS AND THANK YOU FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP IN THE BODY OF REACH CHURCH. PLEASE CONTINUE TO ALLOW THEM TO LEAD US WITH THEIR GIFTS. AMEN.

SHOUT TO THE LORD/WHAT A BEAUTIFUL NAME
- MELODY NOEL & MICHAEL KETTERER

DIVERSITY

AFTER THIS I LOOKED, AND BEHOLD, A GREAT MULTITUDE THAT NO ONE COULD NUMBER, FROM EVERY NATION, FROM ALL TRIBES AND PEOPLES AND LANGUAGES, STANDING BEFORE THE THRONE AND BEFORE THE LAMB, CLOTHED IN WHITE ROBES, WITH PALM BRANCHES IN THEIR HANDS, AND CRYING OUT WITH A LOUD VOICE, "SALVATION BELONGS TO OUR GOD WHO SITS ON THE THRONE, AND TO THE LAMB!" - REVELATION 7:9-10

In Revelation 7, we see a glimpse of what Heaven will look like after Christ has returned to take us home. John writes of a great multitude, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages. As a church, we strive to serve a congregation that looks like what is to come in Heaven. Our world is so broken. Our country is so broken. Our churches are so broken. We are in a time of renewal of our mission to reach ALL people with Nothing but Jesus. We are all weary of seeing so much animosity between people of different backgrounds, races, and cultures.

Because of Jesus, we can boldly stand against this. Because of Jesus, we can run towards love and compassion for our brothers and sisters -- setting aside all of the things that don't matter and all of the reasons why it may be uncomfortable. We pray that Reach Church can be a place for all people and are committed to making that more of a reality with every passing day. We continue to pray for the brokenness of our country and our world as it relates to race relations and invite you to do the same.

How can you help in the renewal of reaching all people with *Nothing but Jesus*? Where might there be a blind spot in your life where you could be more apt to reach out to someone who might have a different story than you?

LORD, PLEASE LET REACH CHURCH GROW TO LOOK MORE AND MORE LIKE YOUR KINGDOM, WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS FROM EVERY NATION AND RACE. LET OUR DIVERSITY BE A PICTURE OF HEAVEN. AMEN.

HEALTH/CARE

DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERY SITUATION, BY PRAYER AND PETITION, WITH THANKSGIVING, PRESENT YOUR REQUESTS TO GOD. AND THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH TRANSCENDS ALL UNDERSTANDING, WILL GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS. - PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

COVID-19 has caused a lot of struggles and a lot of anxiety, to say the least. Our friends are out of jobs and we are worried for our family's health. If you could have even just a little more peace today, would you want it? Notice Paul does not say "the peace of God might guard" or "the peace of God may get around to it" or "the peace of God will guard your heart if He's feelin' it today" or "Don't be anxious, now figure it out!" No, the peace of God WILL guard your hearts and minds in Christ.

When we slow down and pray, we start to think of what we can thank God for. Even this simple act of choosing a few good things starts to calm our minds and our hearts can rest in Jesus's goodness and peace. Then we can present our requests to God. He actually wants to hear what we want! Then God, in his perfect wisdom and timing, will answer our prayers in some fashion. In the uncertainty of this pandemic, let's train our hearts to talk to God and rest in His peace.

What are a few things you can be thankful for during this pandemic?

LORD, OUR REQUEST IS THAT YOU WOULD PROVIDE A CURE QUICKLY. AS WE WAIT, PLEASE HELP US TO TRUST IN YOUR GOODNESS AND SOVEREIGNTY. PLEASE HEAL SICK ONES, GUARD OUR HEALTH, AND COMFORT THOSE WHO MOURN. AMEN.

SPEECH/BEING A WITNESS

LET NO CORRUPTING TALK COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTHS, BUT ONLY SUCH AS IS GOOD FOR BUILDING UP, AS FITS THE OCCASION, THAT IT MAY GIVE GRACE TO THOSE WHO HEAR. - EPHESIANS 4:29

WALK IN WISDOM TOWARD OUTSIDERS, MAKING THE BEST USE OF THE TIME. LET YOUR SPEECH ALWAYS BE GRACIOUS, SEASONED WITH SALT, SO THAT YOU MAY KNOW HOW YOU OUGHT TO ANSWER EACH PERSON. - COLOSSIANS 4:5-6

We as humans are communicative by divine design. Our ability to talk to each other is a powerful thing that allows us to connect to one another, flourish, and grow. However, our speech can be dangerous as well, tearing each other down, gossiping, or lying. This is why Paul instructs how we are to carry ourselves in matters of speech, and his point is quite clear. Ultimately, Paul is instructing us to have *Nothing But Jesus* speech patterns both inside and outside

the body of Christ.

We are to have gracious language that edifies our brothers and sisters (the goal of all edification is to be conformed to the image of Christ), and we are to have gracious language that points outsiders to Jesus, both in word and mannerism. Our language should be explicitly expressing Jesus in content and implicitly modeling Jesus in character.

How might your life be transformed by *Nothing But Jesus* speech patterns?

FATHER, INSTILL IN US *NOTHING BUT JESUS* SPEECH PATTERNS SO THAT WE MAY EDIFY OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, AND BRING THE OUTSIDERS INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST. JESUS, BE THE CONTENT AND CHARACTER OF OUR SPEECH. AMEN.

LET THEM SEE YOU - J.J. WEEKS BAND

PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWAL OF YOUR MIND, THAT BY TESTING YOU MAY DISCERN WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD, WHAT IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT. - ROMANS 12:2

Information overload is a real thing that we have all experienced in the last several months, and it can be exhausting. I'm sure that many of us have ended up going on an online rabbit trail researching various things, especially relating to the Coronavirus -- and before you know it, hours have gone by, and you're stressed and anxious to the max. Jesus invites us to rest in what He has to say. His Word gives us the peace that sustains us through every circumstance. We often talk about fixing our eyes on Nothing but Jesus, and sometimes you might wonder -- "what does that look like practically?"

How can I keep my eyes fixed on Jesus?"

Jesus has given us the gift of His Word, and when we are overwhelmed by the information that the world is throwing at us, He invites us to find rest, peace, and understanding in what He has for us in Scripture. It's not a chore or something to check off of a daily list -- it's an invitation to know Jesus, know who He is, and to be transformed into a new level of good. You won't find this hope in the world and in the information that the world has to offer. You will only find this hope in Nothing but Jesus, and His Word.

What are you filling your mind with? Are you tired of living a life of over-consumption of worldly information? Are you ready to find rest in *Nothing But Jesus* and in His promises?

LORD, GIVE ME A HUNGER FOR YOUR WORD. I WANT TO BE IN TUNE WITH WHAT YOU ARE SAYING TO ME THROUGH SCRIPTURE. THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE REVEALED TO US THROUGH THE BIBLE. AMEN.

UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS

AND HE SAID TO THEM, "O FOOLISH ONES, AND SLOW OF HEART TO BELIEVE ALL THAT THE PROPHETS HAVE SPOKEN! WAS IT NOT NECESSARY THAT THE CHRIST SHOULD SUFFER THESE THINGS AND ENTER INTO HIS GLORY?" AND BEGINNING WITH MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS, HE INTERPRETED TO THEM IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES THE THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF. - LUKE 24:25-27

This is such a beautiful passage. Post-resurrection, Jesus draws near to some of His disciples walking to a village called Emmaus, yet keeps them from recognizing Him. He strikes up a conversation, and it becomes clear that their belief in Jesus had died with Him; but, little did they know their faith was about to be resurrected in the presence of The Resurrection. Jesus responds by opening up the Scriptures to them, showing them how all those divine words pointed to Him, the Word made flesh (in short, the Bible is about *Nothing But Jesus*). In a moment, their faith was rekindled,

so much so that they say "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?" This story should encourage us, because it is a glimpse of what we get to do each day. Ultimately, God is incomprehensible, yet through Jesus we are able to relate with Him. When we realize that all the Scriptures point to Jesus, we are placed on our own "Emmaus road". Our life becomes a road we walk alongside Jesus as He teaches us day after day all the things concerning Himself from every page of His inspired Word.

How might this truth encourage you on your own faith walk with Jesus?

FATHER, PLEASE WALK WITH US AND GUIDE US AS A CHURCH ON THIS ROAD CALLED LIFE, AND THOUGH WE ARE OFTEN FOOLISH AND SLOW OF HEART TO BELIEVE, WOULD YOU INSTRUCT US IN JESUS, SETTING OUR HEARTS ABLAZE FOR HIM. AMEN.

KNOW YOU MORE - CHRIS AUGUST

GIVING

BRING THE FULL TITHE INTO THE STOREHOUSE, THAT THERE MAY BE FOOD IN MY HOUSE. AND THEREBY PUT ME TO THE TEST, SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, IF I WILL NOT OPEN THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN FOR YOU AND POUR DOWN FOR YOU A BLESSING UNTIL THERE IS NO MORE NEED. - MALACHI 3:10

Of all the different acts of faith to which we are called throughout Scripture, bringing our gifts and offerings to the house of the Lord is the one area in which we are told to test God - we are told that as we give to His church, He will provide for our needs. Giving is not about the percentage or the dollar amount that we give. Giving is much deeper than a number -- it is our blessing, and a way that we can be on board with the exciting things that God is doing through His local church. It is a way that we can experience God's provision through us and for us.

2020 has brought financial hardships on many of us.

Giving has become sacrificial giving in many instances. In the Bible, we see what amazing things Jesus can do with very little. There's even a story about how Jesus fed a crowd of thousands with just a little bit of food that was given to Him by a willing child.

Giving is not just about our treasure, either. When we give of our gifts, talents, and time to the church, we are often the ones who leave feeling blessed. As we enter a new level of good together as a church, let us consider the ways in which we can be on board with what God is doing through Reach Church, in whatever ways that He calls us to.

Are you currently supporting the church financially? If not, what is holding you back?

If you are currently giving, what are other ways you serve or could serve to further the mission of *Nothing But Jesus*?

GOD, WE TEND TO HOLD SO TIGHTLY TO THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD, BUT YOU CALL US TO SET OUR SIGHTS ON THE RICHES GAINED IN ETERNITY WITH YOU. PLEASE GIVE MY HEART NEW PRIORITIES, THAT I MIGHT BE A BLESSING IN THE WORLD. ALLOW REACH CHURCH TO USE MY OFFERINGS FOR THE FURTHERING OF YOUR KINGDOM IN OUR LOCAL AREA AND BEYOND. AMEN.



WEEK 3

A NEW LEVEL OF GOOD IN: MY RELATIONSHIPS

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. - Philippians 2:3-4

What does a new level of good in our relationships look like? Jesus gave us clear instructions on how to interact with those around us. It's simple in principle, but very difficult in practice. In Matthew 22, Jesus was asked the question "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:36-40

All too often we complicate this by trying to find fancy ways to grow in relationships, trying to find tips and tricks on interacting with the people around me. We don't need to over complicate things. Even in Jesus' day, people tried to get around this commandment by questioning who exactly our "neighbor" is. "Like our next door neighbor? Maybe it's just the people I like or the people that are similar to me." We would like it to be the people that give us stuff in return, the people that make us feel good about ourselves. But Jesus is clear, it's everyone around us!

Putting others and their needs and interests before our own is hard. Philippians 2:3-5 says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus."

The mindset of Christ. We can only act selflessly because our perfect savior put all of us ahead of himself when he stayed on the cross. Jesus is not only our example, but the power we need to even attempt creating a new level of good in our relationships. Let's use the next few days to meditate on our renewed desire for community, and pray and focus on how to treat others the way we would like to be treated. Let's pray we can be more and more like our savior this week!

SUPPORTING CHURCH LEADERS

WE ASK YOU, BROTHERS, TO RESPECT THOSE WHO LABOR AMONG YOU AND ARE OVER YOU IN THE LORD AND ADMONISH YOU, AND TO ESTEEM THEM VERY HIGHLY IN LOVE BECAUSE OF THEIR WORK. BE AT PEACE AMONG YOURSELVES.

- 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-13

In this passage, Paul is calling on the church at Thessalonica to support those in leadership of the local church. Likewise, Jesus calls us to do the same! What does it look like to support the leadership within your church? It is so important that we pray regularly for the Elders (both teaching and ruling) and staff in their guidance of our church. It is by their example and hard work that Reach Church will be led into a whole new level of good. They need our prayers! Secondly, we can be pro-active in encouraging our church leadership. Even just a few words of encouragement to a person in leadership that God lays on your heart is an important way that

we can support our leadership.

The leaders of Reach Church love our people fiercely -- they have sacrificed their time, their energy, their many gifts and talents, and so much more in order to shepherd us in these difficult days. In Scripture, it is made clear that the leadership of the local church is a big job with a high level of responsibility. Our Reach Church leaders do so much and they do it all with joy, and lots of energy! Our support, whether it be through prayer or encouragement of any kind, is huge in making it possible to lead in living the mission of reaching all people with *Nothing But Jesus*.

What is one way that you can support the leadership at Reach?

Is it a note of encouragement? Maybe remembering them in your prayers?

Write some ideas below and then challenge yourself to follow through on them.

LORD, I THANK YOU FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF REACH CHURCH. PLEASE BLESS THEIR EFFORTS AS THE PASTORS, STAFF, AND ELDERS WORK HARD TO GUIDE OUR CHURCH TOWARD A NEW LEVEL OF GOOD IN LIVING TO REACH ALL PEOPLE WITH NOTHING BUT JESUS. AMEN.

NEVER LOST - ELEVATION WORSHIP FEAT. TAUREN WELLS

FRIENDSHIPS

TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE, BECAUSE THEY HAVE A GOOD REWARD FOR THEIR TOIL. FOR IF THEY FALL, ONE WILL LIFT UP HIS FELLOW [WORKER]. BUT WOE TO HIM WHO IS ALONE WHEN HE FALLS AND HAS NOT ANOTHER TO LIFT HIM UP!

- ECCLESIASTES 4:9-10

In today's passage, the image of workers toiling gives us a depiction of the importance of surrounding ourselves with good friends, who are our co-laborers in the Gospel. Having solid friendships means that you will not be alone when the unexpected, or even expected, happens in life. It is crucial to have others with you to celebrate the good times and work through the hard times.

The reward is greater when the toil is shared between friends. At some point, circumstances in life will knock you down, but just as we are reminded in verse 10, a friend is there to lift you up! This is an incredible way that we can be a Christ-type in the lives of others, as He is the one who stays "closer than a brother," as we read in Proverbs 18:24.

What are some ways that you could come alongside your friends right now?
Who are a few people who could use a co-laborer that you could reach out to?

GOD, THANK YOU FOR THE FRIENDS IN MY LIFE. PLEASE DEEPEN MY FRIENDSHIPS WITH OTHERS AND ALLOW ME TO BE A FRIEND WHO ALWAYS SHARPENS MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS. LET ME HAVE A HEART AFTER YOUR OWN, LAYING DOWN MY LIFE FOR MY FRIENDS. AMEN.

NEVER ALONE - TORI KELLY FEAT. KIRK FRANKLIN

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

NOT NEGLECTING TO MEET TOGETHER, AS IS THE HABIT OF SOME, BUT
ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER, AND ALL THE MORE AS YOU SEE THE DAY
DRAWING NEAR. - HEBREWS 10:25

Social media is quite a hot topic. Some view it as a blessing, using it to expand their network, make connections and re-connections, and inform the internet about their goings-on. Others view it as a curse, claiming it causes dependency on technology, zombifies our youth, and is the reason for high rates of depression in our society. Regardless of what anyone thinks, when we break down the actual name, it means "medium of social activity." A medium is "an agency or means of doing something" and so by adding the word social, meaning interaction between people, we are claiming it to be a means

of interaction between people.

So, what does that have to do with Jesus? Well, if social media is a means of interacting with each other, then we ought to use it as such to the glory of God! However, it cannot and should supplant the place of in-person relationships. As followers of Jesus, our use of social media should seek to build and sustain relationships with people, ultimately in an attempt to build up our brothers and sisters in the church, and to bring outsiders into the church. In short, our online relationships must bolster and uplift our offline relationships.

How might your social media activity help strengthen your in-person relationships?
How might you apply wisdom to your social media activity?

**FATHER, LEAD US IN WISDOM THOUGH OUR ONLINE INTERACTIONS SO
THAT WE MAY FEEL THE POSITIVE RIPPLES IN OUR OFFLINE
INTERACTIONS AS WE STRIVE TO BUILD YOUR KINGDOM. AMEN.**

DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME - SIDEWALK PROPHETS

COMMUNITY / NEIGHBORHOOD

THEN JESUS CAME TO THEM AND SAID, "ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME. THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND TEACHING THEM TO OBEY EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. AND SURELY I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE VERY END OF THE AGE." - MATTHEW 28:18-20

If someone told me they had ALL authority in Heaven and Earth...I'd listen to them! Jesus' next words were "go make disciples of all nations." While this is a call for international missions, it is also a call for us to make disciples where we are. Bear, Delaware is a part of "all nations."

As Christians, our primary objective is to make disciples of Jesus Christ in our community.

Without Jesus, the needs of this world are pretty hopeless. So, we should pray and take action for the basic needs of our community and neighborhoods, but also pray and take action to meet their greatest need, Jesus Christ. Pray for opportunities to talk about Jesus and then in His strength, do it. Pray for opportunities to recognize the needs in our community, and then when you see them, help. We need Jesus Christ every single day, and so do our neighbors.

What is one way you can be involved in Reach Church's mission of reaching our community with Jesus?

LORD, PLEASE GIVE REACH CHURCH THE WISDOM AND ENERGY TO SPREAD YOUR GOOD NEWS, SHOWING US THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY AND HOW TO MEET THEM. AMEN

O COME TO THE ALTAR - ELEVATION WORSHIP

WORK

LOOK CAREFULLY THEN HOW YOU WALK, NOT AS UNWISE BUT AS WISE, MAKING THE BEST USE OF THE TIME. – EPHESIANS 5:15-16

The phrase “wasting time” is thrown around a lot in the work place. Whether its a boss chastising an employee, a speedy worker who finished their daily projects, or a young staffer procrastinating, these all have an element of wasting time. However, we as Christians can understand this idea on a completely different dimension. When we ponder “wasting time” as a spiritual idea, it takes on a whole new meaning, and should make us feel a sense of urgency. This is the idea Paul is driving at here in Ephesians, “making the best use of the time”. For the majority of us, our relationships with our coworkers are surface level: we go in to work, we chat a bit, we talk business,

but for the most part these relationships don’t often take root.

Now there are a litany of reasons for this, but the point here is God has placed these people in our lives right now, and we should not waste any opportunity to grow with them because we can’t really say when we may be taken into a new season of life away from them, or them from us. We should walk as wise, seeking to make the best use of our time, not just to efficiently get our work done, but to efficiently strengthen our relationships with coworkers in hopes that they may see Jesus through us.

How might God be calling you to deepen your work relationships?
How might you make “the best use of the time”?

FATHER, DON'T LET US TAKE ANY RELATIONSHIP FOR GRANTED. PLEASE GROW OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR COWORKERS. MAKE US A CHURCH THAT INVESTS DEEPLY IN RELATIONSHIPS FOR THE SAKE OF THE KINGDOM, MAKING THE BEST USE OF THE TIME. AMEN.

START A FIRE – UNSPOKEN

FAMILY

THEREFORE BE IMITATORS OF GOD, AS BELOVED CHILDREN. AND WALK IN LOVE,
AS CHRIST LOVED US AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR US, A FRAGRANT OFFERING
AND SACRIFICE TO GOD. - EPHESIANS 5:1-2

Busy, busy, busy, working late, busy, have to get this done, busy -- this was life's mantra before the quarantine. Oftentimes, family time was low on the priority list. Oftentimes, I wasn't able to keep track of what was going on with each individual family member. Enter the 2020 pandemic. God took all of my late nights at work, and all of my busy-ness, and said, "enough -- take a rest". As much stress and negativity as the Coronavirus has brought into our lives, one good thing that God used it to give me something that I didn't even know I needed -- time. Time to be slow and to invest in the people I love. Time to spend with my kids.

As life starts to re-open, I don't want that to slip away. Part of a "New Level of Good" is recognizing what God is showing me during this challenging season. Our culture idolizes busy-ness and a fast paced life. I want more -- I don't want to go back to normal. I want to move into a new level of good with my family -- and with my church family

Jesus laid his life down for the family of God, because of His great love for us. When I fix my eyes on His love for His family, I am encouraged, because His perfect love continues to equip us to love and serve our families.

What will a new level of good in your family look like?
What are the ways that God has provided for your family in 2020?

LORD, PLEASE LET ME LOVE MY FAMILY BETTER EVERY DAY. LET ME BE A TRUE IMITATOR OF YOU, WALKING IN LOVE. LET ME SERVE THEM AS YOU HAVE SHOWN US IN THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

CHURCH UNITY

FOR AS IN ONE BODY WE HAVE MANY MEMBERS, AND THE MEMBERS DO NOT ALL HAVE THE SAME FUNCTION, SO WE, THOUGH MANY, ARE ONE BODY IN CHRIST, AND INDIVIDUALLY MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER. - ROMANS 12:4-5

As we begin meeting live again and move into this era of a New Level of Good, it is an all-hands-on-deck endeavor! While volunteer and leadership opportunities may look different from the typical positions of being a greeter or being part of another team, we need YOU to be part of what is happening at Reach Church. Just as our passage for today speaks of a body needing its different parts to do different functions, we need you and your unique mix of gifts to take Reach Church to the next level!

Our CORE Team training has been incredible in bringing our members even more clarity in what our mission looks like and how you can be part of living it out! If you have not come to CORE Team training live or via zoom, sign up for the last few sessions! If you have not yet completed the online membership class to be a member of Reach Church, it is an incredible way to come on-board and be part of all the amazing things that are happening. We would love for YOU to be even more a part of Reach Church.

In what ways could you be a more active part of Reach Church?
What would it take for me to take the next step in being more involved?

GOD, PLEASE BLESS REACH CHURCH AS WE STRIVE TO BRING YOUR NAME TO THE WORLD WITH A UNITY LIKE NEVER BEFORE. LET OUR SOLE FOCUS BE ON THE MISSION OF REACHING ALL PEOPLE WITH NOTHING BUT JESUS. PLEASE ALLOW MY GIFTS TO BE USED TO YOUR GLORY. AMEN.

BUILD YOUR KINGDOM HERE - REND COLLECTIVE