

SEEK WEEK

DEVOTIONAL



MARCH 6-10,

2022

A note from our prayer team:

We encourage you to use this devotional to help you prepare for our time of prayer each night! Read through the daily devotion and go through the practical application steps before you join us for prayer.

“One Voice”

SEEK WEEK 2022

*May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with **one voice** glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Romans 15:5-6

SEEK WEEK 2022 SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 6

Kick-off Service at Broadview Heights Campus (only)
5:30-7:00 p.m.

Monday - Wednesday

Prayer services at both campuses
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 10

“Break the Fast” Meal at Brunswick Campus (only)
6:00 p.m.

Prayer service at Brunswick Campus (only)
7:00-8:30 p.m.

PREFACE

Welcome to Seek Week church family!
Each year we find a way to spend extra time together in prayer. In the past we have had any combination of multiple back-to-back days (like Seek Week), Saturday morning prayer summits, or other special gatherings focused on worship and prayer. The intent of these prayer gatherings is to break out of predictable and routine rhythms and challenge ourselves to extend our time seeking the Lord in prayer together.

As we see in 1 Chronicles 16:11, we want to faithfully, “Seek the LORD and his strength; seek His presence continually!” Times gathered together in extended prayer are always valuable, but especially right now during this season as we seek the Lord to become a **unified family of believers**. Praying together offers an opportunity for us to connect to God and each other unlike any other shared experience. We do not have the ability in our human efforts to generate true unity. Unity among us is a supernatural and spiritual outcome of seeking the Lord together.

So, thank you for stepping up and prioritizing a time of increased prayer together. Our belief is that this week will please the heart of our Heavenly Father as He sees His children seeking His face together, and it will bring us closer to Him and to each other as we unite in prayer.

Live New,
Pastor Chad

TIPS ON FASTING

There are many biblical examples that call for believers to fast and pray. This is a time set apart to seek the Lord. Jesus Christ also commanded it and He laid an example for us. He said, “And WHEN you fast ...” (Matt 6:16). His example of fasting in the Bible included voluntarily reducing or eliminating food intake for a specific time and purpose, to seek the Lord. In his book *Secret Church*, David Platt used this acronym for FAST:

F - Focus on God

A - Abstain from food (and other things that might distract)

S - Substitute the time with prayer and study

T - Taste and see that God is good.

Fasting will be different from one person to another, so we should seek Him on how best to seek His face in fasting this week and going forward.

1. Prepare spiritually – Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your entire fast. You can use the daily devotions and various Scriptural passages as a starting point on seeking His face.
2. Prepare physically – Know what type of fast you are planning to undertake for a specified period (Ex. No food/water, water only, juice only “Daniel fast”). Whatever fast you choose, it’s also important to only engage media when it is absolutely necessary.
3. Stay focused – Understand that the enemy will provide many opportunities for you to be distracted during your fast. Determine ahead of time that you are going to spend your time in prayer and study of God’s word, not just “staying busy” to avoid thinking about food.
4. Keep yourself hydrated – Drink at least 8 glasses of water per day while fasting.

5. Be wise – Educate yourself on how to care for your body while fasting and what warning signs to look for to maintain your physical health. Avoid strenuous physical activity.
6. Remember the purpose of fasting – The purpose is to deny a physical longing/hunger in order to focus on and fulfill a spiritual longing or hunger.

FASTING TIPS FOR KIDS

Give up one thing for the week such as bread, juice, snacks, or sweets. Pray as often as you can and whenever you find yourself wanting that one thing, use that as a reminder to pray. Give up TV and/or screen time on tablets or computers. Use this time in studying God's word and praying.

FASTING TIPS FOR TEENS

Give up all social media (including Tiktok, Instagram, etc.) for a week and replace it with a book/Bible study. Give up video games for the week and replace it with a new commitment for fellowship and outreach with others.

“Prayer that is born of meditation upon the Word of God is the prayer that soars upward most easily to God’s listening ears.” – R. A Torrey

“The word of God is the food by which prayer is nourished and made strong.” – E.M. Bounds

“Because prayer for the church is secret and therefore unrewarded by men, we shall only undertake it if we long for their spiritual warfare more than for their thanks.” -John Stott

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Day 1 – Sunday, March 6

Theme: Thanksgiving, Praise, and
Worship

Written by: Doug Back

Bible Passages

Psalm 100:1-4; Psalm 107:1; John 4:23-24;
Hebrews 13:12-15; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Devotional

Giving thanks runs deep in Christianity, from a simple prayer before a meal to moments when we're reflecting on who He is and the gifts/blessings God has given us. It's a daily practice that can get lost in our hectic lives. Being thankful, let alone expressing it, does not occur automatically for the Christ follower. We must have not only a reason for thankfulness, but also a resolve to express it. This is called intentionality.

I have always been intrigued by the story in Luke 17 where we find Jesus healing ten lepers. In Jesus' day lepers were social and even religious outcasts in Israel. They had to cry out to Jesus for help from a distance because cultural restrictions forbade them to get close to other people. Yet all ten lepers were miraculously healed while they were on their way to testify to the priests, as directed by Jesus. They were immediately cleansed from a loathsome and feared disease that was likely more devastating than cancer at that time, a disease that destroyed families with members who were afflicted by it. All ten former lepers absolutely had cause for thanksgiving. Presumably all of them were thankful; however, only one returned to express his thanks to Jesus. Jesus' question in response is very convicting: **“Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?” (Luke 17:17).**

Only one former leper passed the test of intentionality with his thankfulness. The other former lepers were no doubt enjoying life and freedom having been delivered from a horribly debilitating disease. Surely, they must have been thankful! However, it is easy to just accept and enjoy a blessing but be too busy or simply lack intentionality to give thanks to Jesus. Have you and I been blessed? Are we passing the test of intentionality in offering our thanks to God? Think purposefully about it.

Practical Application

Think about it

How often do I stop during the day to give thanks to God for who He is (His character and His works)?

Worshiping God is more than just singing songs on a Sunday morning. Worshiping God is the supreme purpose for which mankind was created. The Bible teaches that God desires our worship. When was the last time you worshiped Him outside of a Sunday morning service? What needs to change?

What are some practical ways you can express praise and adoration to Jesus as you go about your day?

Pray about it

Lord Jesus, forgive me for the sin of ingratitude. I just don't thank you enough. Help me to give you thanks in all circumstances for this is pleasing in your sight. Please gently remind me to show more gratitude for my freedom to be able to follow you openly in our country and to live each day as your ambassador. Psalm 150:6 says, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Jesus, giving you praise is another area in my life that I fall short in. Help me to better express my adoration because you are worthy of all my praise. The psalmist said, "How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him!" Lastly Lord Jesus, I want to worship you from a heart that desires you alone. Forgive me for any idols that compete for attention in my life. May I agree with the psalmist who writes, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you." I pray all this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Ministry Prayer

Please take time to thank the Lord for the ministry of Cuyahoga Valley Church at Broadview Heights and Brunswick, for our leaders, staff, volunteers, and members/attenders.

Other Bible passages for further prayers

Psalm 7:17; Psalm 95:2; Psalm 117:1,2; Psalm 148;
Psalm 149; Nehemiah 9:5,6; Daniel 2:20; Romans 12:1;
2 Corinthians 4:15; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 3:15;
Colossians 4:2; Revelation 5:11-14; Revelation 14:7.

Day 2 - Monday, March 7

Theme: Repentance and Confession

Written by: Dale Piscura

Bible Passages

Psalms 139:23-24; James 5:16; Isaiah 59:1-2;
Philippians 2:5-8; James 4:7-8

Devotional

What does God desire from his children? If we understand His Word, we know that He has an everlasting love for us. We know there is nothing that can compare to the love of God. We know that He desires to walk with us in true relationship for our joy and pleasure. We know that He dwells in unsearchable light and there is no darkness in Him at all. We also know that sin separates us from Him, and our fellowship is therefore broken.

What has God provided and declared to repair this much desired relationship with us? In His loving kindness God has provided the means of cleansing sin through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God calls us to return to Him when we have wandered away and sinned against Him. God promises to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. God has declared that He will take the dark stains of our sins and make them white as snow.

All of God's marvelous provisions can be experienced if we humble ourselves (as Jesus did), confess our sins (as we are commanded to do), and turn from our wicked ways (true repentance). God has promised that if we seek Him with all our heart and pray, He will hear us and He will be found by us.

Practical Application

Think about it

Write down what the Lord revealed to you.

Pray about it

Use these prayer phrases to draw near to God and He will draw near to you. He promises to do so.

Jesus forgive me for ...

Lord, I repent of ...

Father help me to...

Spirit search me, show me my hidden sin ...

Father cleanse me from ...

Lord empty me of ...

Ministry Prayers

1. Pray that each saint at CVC will live out the glorious calling of God to be light and salt in our world (1 Peter 2:9-10 & 2 Thess. 1:11-12).
2. Pray that the saints at CVC will pursue deeper Christlikeness throughout the new year (2 Peter 2:9-10 & 1 Timothy 6:11-12).

Other Bible passages for further prayers

Psalms 51; Daniel 9:1-19; Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 1:9-10; Isaiah 53:6; Hosea 6:1; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Lamentations 3:40; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Job 13:23; 2 Chronicles 7:14.

Day 3 – Tuesday, March 8

Theme: Unity, the Great Commandment, and the Great Commission

Written by: Sola Oshunniyi

Bible Passages

John 17:20-26; Matthew 22:34-40; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8

Devotional

Jesus' high priestly prayer is documented in the book of John Chapter 17. Jesus of course knew what would happen after He would physically depart from this world. He sought the face of the Father and earnestly prayed for us to be one in the same way He and the Father are one. The reason for Him and the Father being one was simply because His desire is always to do the will of His Father who sent Him and to fulfill it (John 4:34).

Since we have been saved, what are we saved for? Have we allowed various issues to distract us from the main calling for which we are saved? Have we allowed sins and weights to pull us away from our calling (Hebrews 12:1)? Rather than being conformed to the Lord, are we now being conformed to the world (Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 3:3)?

We are saved to glorify Him and to make disciples of ALL nations. His calling is to a life of total obedience, love, and affection to the Lord our God. The Old Testament has hundreds of laws that one must keep, but by His coming, His death and resurrection, He summed up all the laws into two: (1) To love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind and (2) To love our neighbors as ourselves.

Jesus and John went further to make known that the test of our love for the Father is demonstrated by our love for the people that we see daily (1 John 4:20;

Matthew 25:42-46). With all the divisions we have experienced with regards to political issues, COVID, racial tension, and vaccinations, have you been involved in stoking divisions, lies, hatred? How have these issues affected your relationship with fellow believers and unbelievers who do not share your opinions?

We need to come back to the centrality of the gospel. We need to revisit the great commandment and the great commission and get back to partnering with God to fulfill His purpose. Jesus Christ's calling is greater than any other calling that this world might want to call us to. We need to be a unified body of Christ that is motivated by the great commandment and devoted to the great commission.

Practical Application

Think about it

Considering Matthew 22:34-40, what would be your response to the following questions?

A. My love for God presently is ...

B. My love for people is ...

What needs to change in A above?

What need to change in B above?

With reference to Matthew 28: 18-19, make of list of what hinders you from fulfilling the great commission:

Pray about it

Take time to pray to God about the things that He brought to your mind.

Ministry Prayer

1. That God would bless our efforts to disciple people through our discipleship huddles (Colossians 1:28-29).
2. That the Lord would enable us to disciple our people so well that they could be equipped and sent out from CVC as church staff members, pastors, missionaries, church planters, and laborers where they live, work, and play (Matthew 9:36-38).
3. That the women/men/children of CVC will be passionate about serving those with spiritual, physical, and emotional needs for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Other Bible passages for further prayers

Psalm 133; Philippians 2:1-11; Ephesians 4:1-6;
John 17; Ephesians 3:16-17; Philippians 2:1-5;
1 John 4:7-11, 17-20; Mathew 25:31-46; Romans 5:5;
Acts 1:8; 2:1, 41-47; 4:23-31.

Day 4 – Wednesday, March 9

Theme: Next Generation

Written by: Joe Valenti

Bible Passage

Mark 1:16-20

Devotional

What do you think was so special about Simon, Andrew, James, and John? What was it about these three young fishermen that qualified them to be chosen for Jesus' inner circle? I'd bet that their parents and families were surprised. As we continue to read through the gospels, you'll notice that there isn't much special about them at all. They're typical teenagers - they didn't always understand his teaching (Mark 4:10-13; Matthew 16:1), they argued about who was most important (Luke 22:24), they ran away when times got tough (Matthew 26:56), and Peter made some major promises that he couldn't keep (John 13:38). As you read the gospels, you'll quickly learn that the disciples are pretty dense - they are far from "well-trained ministry leaders."

But that doesn't seem to matter to Jesus when he calls them to follow him. He doesn't ask them to go to seminary first or to get their lives in order or to go through some sort of prep class. He just calls them to follow him, and he takes care of the teaching.

I worry that too many adults miss discipleship opportunities because their expectations of teens and young adults are unbiblical. We don't like the messiness of real discipleship, so we put off investing in the next generation until they mature and become a bit more manageable. But when we do this, we miss the opportunity to invest in young people during the most important years of their lives. One of our elders once asked me, "Why do you keep doing next gen ministry?" It might surprise you to know that I didn't say, "Because I love it!" I actually told him, "Because

it's the best investment in the Kingdom that I know of."

Most of us know the principles of compound interest. The earlier you start saving money, the faster your money starts to make money. I think that the same is true of discipleship - the earlier a person becomes passionate about loving and serving Jesus, the faster multiplication of disciples from their life will happen. It's pretty basic math. And I think Jesus got that - he started with this group of young punks because he was able to see their potential. And I want to encourage you to see their potential as well!

Practical Application

Think about it

In what ways might God be calling you to invest in the next generation?

Are there any attitudes or postures that you have had towards the next generation for which you need to repent?

Pray about it

Lord, help me to see the next generation with your eyes. Give me the courage to engage them and the grace to walk with them through the messiness of genuine discipleship.

Ministry Prayer:

1. Pray that the Lord will help us as a church to see the next generation with His eyes.
2. Pray that the Lord will give every member of CVC the wisdom, courage, and desire to engage the next generation so we can all grow together in Christ.
3. Pray that we as a church will receive the grace to walk with them through the messiness of genuine discipleship.
4. That God would allow us to deeply minister to international students and see many come to Christ and get baptized! (Zechariah 7:9-10)

Day 5 - Thursday, March 10

Theme: Great Commission - To Serve,
to Be Sent

Written by: Rick Duncan

Bible Passages

Matthew 4:4; Matthew 9:35-38; Matthew 28:18-20

Devotional

Christians today are not believing as passionately as we once did that Jesus is the only way. We must keep reminding ourselves about the "only-way-ness" of Jesus. He said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). He is not saying that He's a way, a truth, and a life. He's claiming to be THE way, THE truth, and THE life - the only way to God.

We are not left with the great man/good teacher option when it comes to Jesus. He's claiming to be unique—the only way to be saved. He's either right or wrong about that.

So, how will this message about Jesus reach the people with whom we live, work, and play? Jonathan Dodson says, "God chooses to work through means, and that means you and me."

We must become bolder in sharing our faith. Lee Strobel challenges us, "I've seen far too many Christians who are more than willing to travel halfway around the world to volunteer for a week in an orphanage, but who cannot bring themselves to take the personal risk of sharing Jesus with the co-worker who sits day after day in the cubicle right next to them."

Perhaps a Personal Evangelism Self-Assessment Tool would help us see where we need to grow in this area. Give yourself a score on a scale of 1-10, 10 being high.

10 - Very much true of me

7 - Typically true of me

5 - Moderately true of me

3 - Sometimes true of me

1 - Rarely true of me

___ I often ask God to increase my burden for those who are lost.

___ I regularly, systematically pray for non-believers I know and ask the Lord to help me win them.

___ I intentionally maintain relationships with non-believers in order to share my story.

___ I routinely show hospitality to people who are far from God.

___ I look for opportunities to turn routine conversations into gospel conversations.

___ I routinely share my story about my faith in Christ with non-believers.

___ I have learned and can articulate an effective method of sharing the gospel story.

___ I have memorized 8-10 verses that I use in my evangelistic conversations.

___ I help others understand how to effectively share the gospel message.

___ My actions and lifestyle demonstrate that I am genuinely committed to the Great Commission.

___ **My score**

Where did you score highest? Lowest? What steps could you take to increase your passion for evangelism and witnessing in 2022?

Practical Application

Think about it

Write what God is revealing to you.

Pray about it

“Lord, help me be devoted to the Great Commission where I live, work, and play. Teach me to live as one who is sent – as one who looks for opportunities to have Gospel conversations every day. Give me the grace to be one who regularly invites people to new life in Christ. Help me go to heaven and take as many people with me as I possibly can! Burden me to actually make disciples – to lead people to Jesus in one-on-one conversations. And bless my sisters and brothers at CVC with a burden to win the lost, to seize many opportunities to point people to Jesus, and to be bold as faithful witnesses. Make it so, in Jesus’ name, Amen!”

Ministry Prayer

1. That the Lord will give the women/men/children of CVC confidence in sharing their faith and discipling others – a confidence that stems from a relationship with the Lord and right knowledge of His Word.
2. That the Lord will use the events that we have planned this year, across the church and in the women’s ministry specifically, to deepen the faith of CVCers and give them an urgency and a passion for knowing and living for God.

3. Would God help us identify people who are being called out to be Pastors, Missionaries, Non-Profit leaders, as well as seeing hundreds more using their gifts to bless the body and reach the lost! (Ephesians 4: 11-16)
4. Pray for the 13 people from CVC taking the Global Perspectives Course! May God increase affection for the unreached around the globe (Revelation 7:9-10).
5. Would God allow us to open doors in the Brunswick community to see many unbelievers come to saving faith through our outreach efforts being established out there! (2 Corinthians 2:15).

Other Bible passages for further prayers

Acts 20:24; Matthew 5:15-16; Romans 1:16;
1 Peter 3:15; Mark 10:29-30; Acts 1:8;
2 Corinthians 5:20; Proverbs 11:30; Isaiah 6:8;
Luke 12:8; John 15:8.

Notes

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