

TOGETHER IN FAITH

40 Days of Prayer
Devotionals

**Wednesday
September 20, 2017**

If You Seek Him

The Lord is with you when you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you abandon Him, He will abandon you.—2 Chronicles 15:2

Our response to God greatly determines His presence in our lives. If we seek God with all of our hearts, then we will find Him (Jer. 29:13–14). The Lord wants to have fellowship with us, but He will not force a relationship upon us. We cannot reject fellowship with God and expect Him to remain near. He does not merely follow us throughout our day in case we need His assistance. If we continue to forsake Him, a time will come when we desperately need Him and He will not be near (Isa. 59:1–2).

It is an affront to sovereign God to treat Him like a servant who should wait upon us. God will relate to us on His terms, not ours. God desires a close walk with us. He will make His presence real and personal if that is our desire. If we repent of our sin and seek God on His terms, we can look forward to intimate fellowship with Him (James 4:8–10). We are to continually seek Him, not content to enter a new day without the assurance that God is walking beside us.

Do you say you want to experience God's presence while your actions reveal otherwise? If you say you want to know God better but neglect studying His word, are you truly seeking Him? Have you regularly forsaken the place of prayer? If your actions reveal that you are genuinely seeking God, then He promises that you will find Him (Matt. 7:7).

Seeking God daily in prayer asking;

1. God provide for us all that we need to accomplish your vision.
2. God, give wisdom to our Pastors and our Building Team as they lead.
3. God, what would you have me to do?

Experiencing God Day by Day

**By
Henry T. Blackaby
and Richard Blackaby**

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Thursday
September 21, 2017

Prayer Is Preparation

When the day of Pentecost had arrived, they were all together in one place.—Acts 2:1

Prayer does not give you spiritual power. Prayer aligns your life with God so that He chooses to demonstrate His power through you. The purpose of prayer is not to convince God to change your circumstances but to prepare you to be involved in God's activity.

The fervent prayer of the people at Pentecost did not induce the Holy Spirit to come upon them. Prayer brought them to a place where they were ready to participate in the mighty work God had already planned.

Jesus told His followers to remain in Jerusalem until the Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:4–5). The disciples obeyed His command, waiting for God's next directive. As they prayed, God adjusted their lives to what He intended to do next. As they prayed, a unity developed among them. For the first time the disciples used Scripture as their guide in decision making (Acts 1:15–26). The day of Pentecost arrived, and the city of Jerusalem filled with pilgrims from around the world. When God released His Holy Spirit upon the disciples, He had already filled the city with messengers who would carry the Gospel to every nation. Prayer had prepared the disciples for their obedient response.

Prayer is designed to adjust you to God's will, not to adjust God to your will. If God has not responded to what you are praying, you may need to adjust your praying to align with God's agenda. Rather than focusing on what you would like to see happen, realize that God may be more concerned with what He wants to see happen in you.

Seeking God daily in prayer asking:

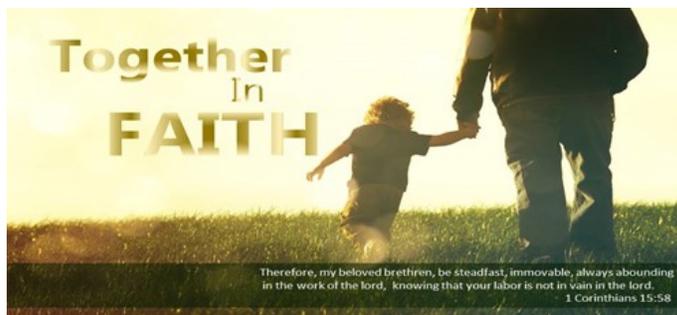
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Friday
September 22, 2017

An Imperishable Crown

Do you not know that the runners in a stadium all race, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Now everyone who competes exercises self-control in everything. However, they do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one.
—1 Corinthians 9:24–25

Athletes are willing to push themselves harder and longer and farther than anyone else. They strive to bring their bodies and minds completely under control so that they excel and receive a prize. Others go home to relax, but athletes continue to train. While most people protect themselves from any form of discomfort, athletes push themselves to the limits of their endurance. While some remain satisfied with mediocre performance, athletes pay any price for excellence. Paul said that despite their most valiant efforts, the athletes' successes and prizes are eventually forgotten. Even the greatest athletic achievements have not affected eternity.

If an athlete can be motivated to make incredible sacrifices for a perishable reward, how much more ought Christians to strive for an imperishable one? If an athlete will labor day after day in order to receive glory from others, how much harder ought Christians to work for the "well done" of their Master? Are you striving to bring your body into subjection for the glory of God? Are you training your mind to think the thoughts of God rather than thoughts of the world? Are you disciplining your life in prayer? When others are sleeping, are you interceding? Have you studied God's word so diligently that you are prepared to find answers to the challenges you face? Have you equipped yourself in evangelism so that you are ready to share your faith? Have you prepared yourself as a Christian in order to qualify for the imperishable crown that awaits you?

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**Saturday
September 23, 2017**

A Part of Something Bigger

Then He continued, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.—Exodus 3:6

God always speaks to you in the context of what He has done in the lives of those who have gone before you. When God encountered Moses, He did not give him an assignment independent of what He had done through those who had preceded him. God had made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hundreds of years earlier, and He was now going to involve Moses in His ongoing activity to fulfill the covenant He had made with Moses' forefathers.

The God who led Moses, who worked through Elijah, who directed Paul, who guided each man and woman of God through the centuries, is the same God who approaches you to become involved in His work. Do you sense the significance of that? You are a vital part of something much bigger than yourself!

We tend to think only of the present. We want immediate results and lack a sense of eternity. We often act as if God had not been working at all where we are before He approached us. We expect that anything God does through us will be completed while we can see the results. We become impatient if God intends to complete what He began in us through another person or even another generation.

Moses came to understand that his involvement in God's work was in the context of hundreds of years of divine activity. When Moses came face to face with the same God who had guided his forefathers, he was deeply humbled. Do you sense that your life is a part of God's eternal purposes?

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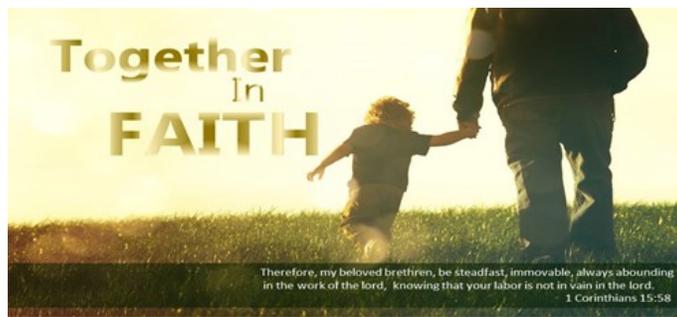
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Sunday
September 24, 2017

Freely Give

You have received free of charge; give free of charge.—Matthew 10:8b

There is no room for misers in God's kingdom. When we begin to struggle in giving what we have to others, we have forgotten where we received our possessions. Every good thing we have ever received has come from God (James 1:17). All that we have acquired has been dependent upon His grace (1 Cor. 4:7). Job accurately summarized our condition: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, / And naked shall I return there. / The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; / Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

We easily assume a sense of ownership of our possessions, as if they were things we earned ourselves, thereby giving us a right to them. Jesus reminds us to be prepared to give our possessions as freely and joyfully as we received them. It should be a pleasure for us to give what we have to others (2 Cor. 9:7). We ought to be a conduit through whom the Lord can pour His blessings, knowing we will disperse them to everyone around us. Sometimes we claim we are trying to be good stewards of our resources when actually we are being selfish.

If you struggle to give freely to others, you have become more attached to the gift than to the Giver. The account of the rich young ruler shows the tragedy of becoming too attached to worldly treasures (Luke 8:18–24). Meditate on all that your Lord has given to you (John 3:16). Resolve to express your gratitude to Him through your giving

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