

**WEEK ONE** 

#### **UPWARD**

In our first week, we will begin our 40 days of prayer by simply seeking the face of God. We want to see Him. We want to behold Him. We want to draw near to Him. Nothing else matters during this season if we do not first seek the face of the One who deserves our worship, who died to save us, and who demands our allegiance. Each day during this week, you will use various Scriptures throughout the Bible to help you look UPWARD as you pray each day. There will also be a space to jot down notes or anything of importance the Lord brings to mind.

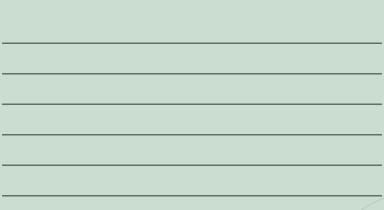
UPWARD September 8



"And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

#### **PHILIPPIANS 1:6**

Today, as you begin this journey, ask the Lord to give you strength and resolve to finish this 40 days of prayer with confidence and assurance. God has promised to honor our prayers when we commit to honor Him. Use today's scripture to help you commit yourself to the task before you. Write out today's scripture below and commit it to memory. Spend today thinking about all the many things God has done for you.





UPWARD September 9

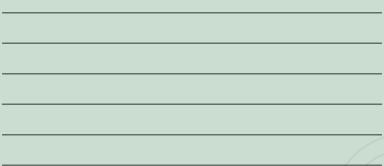


"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

JAMES 4:10

In today's prayer time, focus on one thing:
drawing near to God.

God has promised us that if we will draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. As you pray today, ask the Lord to cleanse your hands and heart. Confess any and all sins as you approach His holy presence. You are not asking for anything; you simply want to draw near to Him. Ask Him to teach you how to come into His presence and to know that He is near.





UPWARD September 10



"O Lord, who shall sojourn in Your tent? Who shall dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart;"

#### **PSALM 15:1-2**

In Psalm 15, David's desire was to dwell with God; to sojourn in His tent. This is the language of abiding in the presence of God. In today's prayer time, ask the Lord to help you to abide in His presence. To dwell or rest near Him. To not be in a hurry to finish or leave. Learn to abide in the quiet and stillness of God's presence. Force yourself to sit in silence and resist the urge to fill the space with noise. Close your eyes if it helps you to focus on abiding.



**UPWARD** September 11



"But from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find Him, if you search after Him with all your heart and with all your soul."

#### **DEUTERONOMY 4:29**

As you continue to look upward, remember this wonderful promise given to Moses and to all who seek to draw near to God. This season of prayer is not for the faint of heart or the complacent soul. Ask the Lord to help you search after Him with all of your heart and soul. Do not hold anything back in your pursuit of His presence. Ask the Lord this honest question: "Lord, if there's anything holding me back from knowing You as You want me to know You, reveal it to me please." Then, listen for His answer.

DAY	Cedar Creek Baptist Church



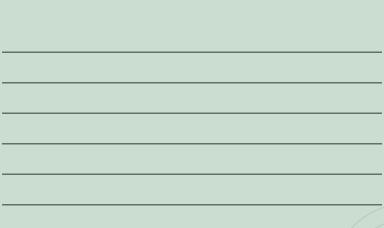
UPWARD September 12



"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him."

**HEBREWS 11:6** 

The author of Hebrews reminds us that we do not seek God's presence by what we see or feel; we seek Him by what we know and believe. We will never experience the personal, powerful presence of God without faith. We must believe that God is faithful and true and that He will reveal Himself to those who draw near to Him by faith. Remember, God can take just a tiny seed of faith and use it to move mountains. What can He do with your small faith?





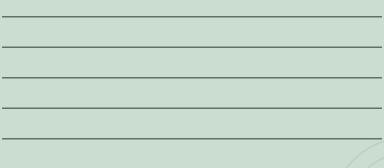
UPWARD September 13



"I love those who love Me, and those who seek me diligently find Me."

**PROVERBS 8:17** 

Today is our final day of our UPWARD focus. As we close out this first week, remember to keep your eyes UPWARD. Never lose sight of the most important direction in prayer. Prayer was never given to us so that we could get something. God gave us the privilege of prayer so that we could get someone; and that is God Himself. In all that you pray, pray for the singular purpose of knowing God. There is no greater gift than your personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. Every moment in life flows from that relationship.







**WEEK TWO** 

#### **INWARD**

In our second week, we begin to pray and ask the Lord to search our hearts. We want the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas of our heart that are not fully surrendered to His will. We want to ask the Holy Spirit to teach us how to have the mind of Christ. Allow the Lord to have full access to every part of you. Come before Him in humility and honesty and ask Him to reveal those areas within you that are not surrendered to His will. As you pray, ask Him to fill you with the power and presence of His Spirit.

INWARD September 14



"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!"

**PSALM 139:23-24** 

Today we begin to look INWARD. As David prayed in Psalm 139, we want to ask the Lord to search our hearts. Ask Him to reveal any grievous or sinful way that is opposed to who God is and what He desires for us. This week is all about coming to God in humility and with honesty. Ask God to search you and then be ready and willing to respond. Let me gently remind you: if you're not willing to get honest with God, you're wasting your time. The good news is, God already knows your heart and He loves you!

#### **INWARD** September 15



"In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne...And I said: 'Woe is me! For I am lost: for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

**ISAIAH 6:1a, 5** 

When Isaiah got a glimpse of the holiness of God, he was able to see his true condition. A proper view of God will result in a truthful view of our true selves. As you pray today, continue to focus on what God wants to reveal about your heart, mind, attitude, or preconceptions. Be willing to receive those hard truths that God may reveal to you.



INWARD September 16



"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** 

More likely than not, we are conditioned to be conformed to the world. We are always moving in a direction. We are never neutral. Either we drift away from God or we move towards Him. In today's prayer, ask the Lord to identify any areas where you have conformed to the world's standards. And then ask Him to begin transforming you by renewing your mind.



INWARD September 17



"Finally, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

**PHILIPPIANS 4:8** 

## Do one simple thing today: think about the things you think about.

- · Where does your mind go when you let it wander?
- What direction does your mind want to take you?
- Towards the things of God, or away from them?

Did you learn anything today that surprised you about the things you think about?



INWARD September 18



"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

#### **GALATIANS 5:16**

The key to holy living is living surrendered. As we allow the Lord to search us, we will not like what we see. Hidden attitudes, unholy vows, and spiritual strongholds are often buried deep within us. When the Holy Spirit reveals those things to us, we confess them and begin to live in the power of the Holy Spirit. Oftentimes, we may need a trusted counselor or friend to help us walk through these difficult places. The reward is freedom! When we walk in the Spirit, we put to death the desires of the flesh.

INWARD September 19



"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

**PROVERBS 4:23** 



INWARD September 20



"...for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

#### **PHILIPPIANS 2:13**

Today is the last day of our INWARD week. This may have been a hard week of prayer for you. The Lord may have revealed some areas of your life that you were unaware of. As you started this week in humility and honesty, stay there.

Don't shy away from the work of sanctification where God is purifying you.

Finish this week of inward focus by remaining completely and fully surrendered to the work God is doing in your life. He is up to something great!

Give Him complete and total access to every part of you!





**WEEK THREE** 

#### **OUTWARD**

In our third week, we want to begin praying for our relationships with those around us. The Church thrives on healthy and holy relationships. God has described His church as a body. Connected and interdependant upon one another. The strength of our inter-personal relationships will be the key to our future. It's been said that there is no such thing as a "Lone Ranger" Christian. We are not invited to live the Christian life alone. Instead, we are to be connected and stay connected to each other.

OUTWARD
September 21



"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12

Today, we begin our OUTWARD week. As you pray today, ask the Lord to help you see and recognize the true picture of the church as a body of believers. As the members of a body are in relationship with one another, so are the members of the church body. The future of a church thrives or dies with relationships. Simply put, we need one another. Spend time today praying over the truth of the Scripture above, and begin reflecting on your personal relationships within your church family.



OUTWARD September 22



"And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

#### **COLOSSIANS 3:14**

Love is the glue that binds the church body together. Without love, it is impossible for the church to be who God has called us to be, and to do what God has called us to do. If there is one thing we must get right, it is our love for one another. Love is what creates harmony. Love covers a multitude of sins. When all else fails, love remains. Spend some time today in prayer considering all the many ways that you can show love to your church family.



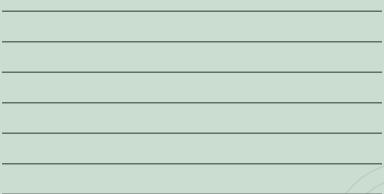
OUTWARD September 23



"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

JOHN 13:35

Love not only promotes unity and harmony among the church body, but it also serves as evidence of our love for Jesus and our faith in Him as Lord and Savior. Many times we think that we have to perform some extraordinary feat of faith in order to convince the world that we are Christians. Jesus reminds us that it is our love for one another that is proof of our faith. Pray today that God would increase your love for your church family. Think about how you have demonstrated love to someone this past week.





OUTWARD September 24



"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

#### 1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

As we continue to look outward at our relationships with others, one of the greatest ways to strengthen relationships within the church body is to learn how to encourage someone. The word "encourage" means "to build up". Far too often, we tear others down with wrong motives and harsh words. Instead, God calls us to build others up with kindness, compassion, and grace. Pray and ask the Lord to reveal the names of some people that you can encourage this week and write their names below.

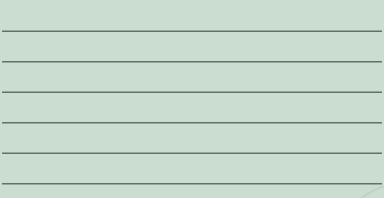
OUTWARD September 25



"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

**EPHESIANS 4:32** 

In your prayer time today, spend some time reading and thinking about Ephesians 4:25-32. One of the greatest ways to have godly, Christ-centered relationships in the church body is to forgive others (and forgive them often!). The basis for our forgiveness of others is found at the cross. God has forgiven us freely in Christ and therefore called us to forgive others freely. Is there anyone you need to forgive today?





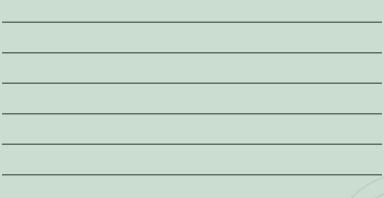
OUTWARD
September 26



"But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."

#### **EXODUS 17:12**

God calls us together in one body because we need each other. We cannot live the Christian life alone, nor were we meant to. As Aaron and Hur assisted Moses in ministry, so are we called to do for one another. Life gets hard. Days get long. Nights get cold. Why don't you look around you this week and consider how you can help those around you who are struggling with life?





OUTWARD September 27



"And all who believed were together and had all things in common." ACTS 2:44

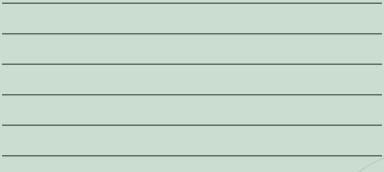
Let's close out our OUTWARD week by catching a glimpse of the early church.

Spend time in Acts 2:42-47 today.

Consider these questions:

- · What was church life like for the early Christians?
- · How is it different from today?
- · What were the things the church was involved in?
- What happened in the church as a result of their relationships with one another?

In your prayer time today, ask the Lord to create an Acts church right here at Cedar Creek!







**WEEK FOUR** 

#### **BACKWARD**

In our fourth week, we want to take what may be a surprising direction: BACKWARD. It is imperative to our future that we acknowledge our past. As we pray this week, we want the Holy Spirit to remind us of our great heritage. God has been faithful to CCBC and we should remind ourselves often of those who have come before us. As we look backwards, we also want to let go of anything that could be holding us back. We will be praying this week for the Lord to reveal those places and people that we need Him to heal and set us free to move into our future!

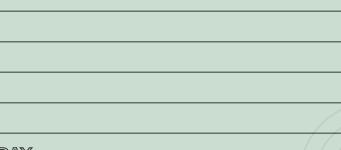
BACKWARD September 28



"I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old. I will ponder all Your work, and meditate on Your mighty deeds."

#### **PSALM 77:11-12**

Over and over in the Bible, God calls His people to remember. Remembering something is an act of looking BACKWARD. As you begin this week of remembering all the many things God has done, would you take some time today and reflect on all the many ways that God has proved His faithfulness to you? As the old poem "Footprints" reads, where are the places in your life where God carried you through? List them below:





BACKWARD September 29



"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

#### **HEBREWS 13:8**

Jesus was a perfect example of the past, present, and future. In one person, we see a Savior that has always existed with God. We see Jesus as Emmanuel; God with us. And we know that Jesus will one day return and we will see Him as He really is. In a world that is rapidly changing, we take comfort in the fact that Jesus never changes. How does God's unchanging nature affect the way we approach all the many aspects of our life?

Reflect on the last year of your life.

What has changed the most?



**BACKWARD** September 30



"And Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body, which is given for uou. Do this in remembrance of Me."

**LUKE 22:19** 

When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, He wanted us to always remember. To never forget what has been done for us at the cross and through His death and resurrection. A Christian who forgets is a Christian without assurance for the future. Think back to yesterday. How often have you remembered the great price that was paid for your salvation? Spend some time today thinking about the cross and what Jesus did for you.



## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER BACKWARD

October 1



"Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan...and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.'"

**JOSHUA 4:2-3** 

Take a few minutes today to read
Joshua 4:1-9. What was God trying to
teach His people through the command
to lay down these stones?
Think about these questions:

- Where has God demonstrated His power in your life?
- Have you ever told your story to someone else?
- Are there any "stones" to remember in your life?



# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER BACKWARD October 2



"...do this in remembrance of Me..."

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 11:24

The Lord's Supper is a simple act of worship that has a profound meaning. In the Lord's Supper, we look backwards. Jesus wants us to remember Him each time we eat of the bread and drink of the juice. Why is remembering necessary? Because we are forgetful people. We get busy and distracted. We lose our focus and lose our perspective. The life and death of Jesus is the one thing we need to bring everything back into perspective. We must remember because remembering the past prepares us for the future. Pray and live today in light of His sacrifice for you.



## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER BACKWARD

October 3

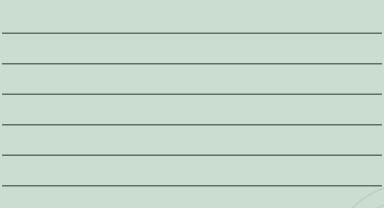


"Then Jesus answered, 'Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?'"

Spend some time reading through Luke
17:11-19 today. Jesus performed a powerful miracle in the lives of these ten lepers.

After receiving such a miraculous gift of healing, only one returned to give thanks.

Why do you think such an act of grace went largely unnoticed? We may be tempted to find fault with these ungrateful lepers, but has there ever been a time when you did not return and give thanks to the Lord for something He did for you or in your family?





## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER BACKWARD

October 4



"I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well."

#### **2 TIMOTHY 1:5**

Timothy's spiritual foundation was provided by his mother and grandmother. As you read 2 Timothy 1:3-7, think back on your own life. Who are the people from your past that contributed to your own spiritual foundation? Think back on your time as a child. Was it a Sunday School teacher, Pastor, or a Deacon? As you remember those people, what were the qualities about their faith that impacted you the most? And then consider how different your life would have been without their example.



**WEEK FIVE** 

#### **DOWNWARD**

In our fifth week, we want to ask the Lord to begin to stir our hearts and souls about our personal spiritual growth. As a farmer prepares the soil for planting, so does God prepare our hearts for the fruit of the Spirit to be prepared and planted in order to produce good works. We will consider ways to grow deeper in our walk with Christ. We will ask the Holy Spirit to help us plant deep roots into His Word so that we can be nourished and strengthened to grow up in our faith in order to become like Jesus.

## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER DOWNWARD

October 5



"As I was on my way and drew near to Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone around me. And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'"

**ACTS 22:6-7** 

Spend some time today reading through Acts 22:6-21. As you read the testimony of Paul, begin to think about your personal salvation experience. What would you tell someone if they asked you to describe God's work of salvation in your life? Not every testimony is as dramatic as Paul's. However, begin to think how you would describe what God has done for you in Christ so that you can share your own testimony in much the same way Paul did.



# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER DOWNWARD October 6

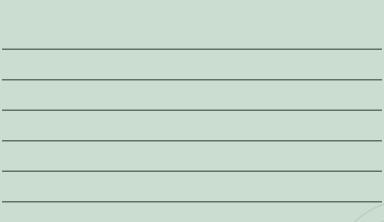


"Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap."

GALATIANS 6:7

One of the unchangeable Laws of God is the Law of Sowing and Reaping. This Law is true in the natural world and in the spiritual world. We always reap what we sow, later than we sow, and more than we sow. In your prayer time today, ask the Lord to reveal those "seeds" that have been planted into your heart and soul over the years. Think about the areas of your life where you have grown spiritually, and then think about those areas where you would like to see God do more in your life.

Where do you want to grow?





### DOWNWARD October 7



"He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."

**PSALM 1:3** 

## There are two kinds of people described in Psalm 1:

One who is healthy and one who is not.

One that produces good "fruit" and one who does not.

One that lasts and one who does not.

One that prospers and one who does not.

What is the secret to the tree planted by streams of water?

Spend some time in prayer today considering how spiritual healthy you are. Are you growing? Prospering?

Do you feel spiritually healthy?



## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER DOWNWARD

October 8



"As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"

#### 1 PETER 1:14-16

When you were a child, your parents may have measured your physical growth by markings on a closet door or wall in your home. Those marks represented actual, visible, measurable growth in your life. We should be able to measure our spiritual growth in a similar way. As you read and pray today, take a moment to look at the "growth marks" in your life. Where are the areas that you can see where you've grown? Or, areas where you have not seen as much growth as you would like? What's holding you back from growing?



## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER DOWNWARD

October 9



"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to harvest..."

#### **ECCLESIASTES 3:1-2**

Life is all about seasons. Each one of us are in a different season of life today. The writer of Ecclesiastes understood what we fail to at times. For the farmer, each year brings times of preparation, planting, waiting, and harvest. Our lives are like that. Consider which of the four seasons you are in today. Is God preparing you?

Or planting a seed? Or are you in a season of waiting? Or is God producing a great harvest in you? Spend some time today in prayer asking the Lord to reveal the season of spiritual growth you are currently in.



# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER DOWNWARD October 10



"Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

**JOHN 6:35** 

Let's get gut-level honest. It's just you and the Holy Spirit. No one else is listening. No one else is looking. Deep down in your heart, are you truly experiencing the soulsatisfying life that Jesus offers? Do you feel as if something is still missing? Yes, you have all the answers worked out in your head, but your heart still feels empty. You may look around at others and think, "well, it works for them, but not for me." Take a long, hard look inside your heart and soul today, and ask this question:

"Do you know - without a doubt - that you

have a real, personal relationship
with Jesus Christ?"



## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER DOWNWARD

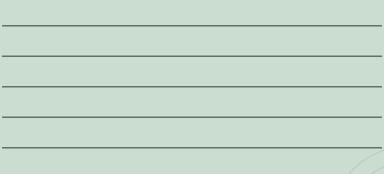
October 11



"And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments."

#### 1 JOHN 2:3

As we close out our "DOWNWARD" week, read through 1 John 2:3-6. This week may have been hard for you. The good news is, God's grace and mercy are new each day. He provides everything we need to become the people He calls us to be. And one of those gracious and merciful things He gives is a new day. You may not have everything figured out, but make it your goal to do one thing: just simply obey God. When all else fails, just bow before Him and walk in obedience. Commit yourself today to renew your desire to obey God no matter the cost.







**WEEK SIX** 

#### **FORWARD**

In our final week, we want to set our eyes on our future and ask the Lord to guide us and direct our steps into a bold new direction. All across the Bible, God is often leading His people into places they've never been to do things they've never done in order to see things they've never seen. May that same attitude and approach be evident here at CCBC. Let's close out our season of prayer simply asking the Lord to show us His will, His way, and His work that He is calling us to do!

# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER FORWARD October 12



"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for Him."

#### **ISAIAH 64:4**

As we begin our final week, we set our eyes and hearts forward into a glorious future. I truly believe our best days as God's people are before us, not behind us. God is always at work in us, through us, and around us. His plans and purposes for our church are far beyond anything we could ever imagine. Let's begin our final week by simply asking God to open our eyes and hearts to show us what He wants. Where is He working? Where is He leading? Where is He calling us to join Him in His work?



## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER FORWARD

October 13



"Then the Lord said to me, 'You have been traveling around this mountain country long enough. Turn northward..."

#### **DEUTERONOMY 2:2-3**

I hate to get lost. It's happened more times than I'd like to admit. There is nothing more discouraging in life than feeling like you're just going around in circles. The nation of Israel knew what that was like. Because of their lack of faith and disobedience, God allowed them to wander in the wilderness until it was time for them to move "northward." This can easily happen in churches. We wake up and find ourselves wandering in the desert rather than living on purpose. In today's prayer time, ask the Lord to reveal His direction for our church. Is it time for us to turn "northward"?

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# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER FORWARD October 14



"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

#### **HEBREWS 12:1-2**

With the example of Jesus above, consider this question in today's prayer time: What would I be willing to do in order to see God work? Before you answer, think about what Jesus was willing to do. He was willing to endure the cross. The physical pain. The emotional toil. The spiritual torture of bearing our sin. It's beyond our understanding. But He was willing to endure the shame of our sin. And yet, the writer says that it was a joy for Jesus to do this for our sake. So again, ask yourself:

"What would I be willing to do to see God work in my family, church, and community?"

# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER FORWARD October 15



"And He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

**LUKE 10:27** 

Read through Luke 10:25-37 and put yourself in the shoes of the Good Samaritan. In yesterday's devotion, we asked what you would be willing to do in order to see God work? Today, let's take it one step further and ask: what would you be willing to give in order to see God work? All throughout the Bible, we have story after story of men and women, young and old, who were willing to give up their time, talents, and treasure for a greater cause than themselves. What if God is calling you and I to practice that kind of generosity today? Spend time today asking the Lord to reveal what He's calling you to give.



## 40 DAYS OF PRAYER FORWARD

October 16



"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

**ISAIAH 43:18-19** 

The prophet Isaiah was used by God to encourage God's people to look forward. They were reminded that God was going to be faithful to His promises. That no matter what happened vesterday, there is always tomorrow for God's people. As you pray today, ask the Lord if He desires to do a "new thing" in your life. It's been rightly said that there is no such thing as cruise control for the Church. We are either advancing forward or we're falling behind. So much is at stake in our nation and world today. Would you pray today that God would reveal His will for our future and would you ask Him to align your will with His will?



# 40 DAYS OF PRAYER FORWARD October 17



"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

#### 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

You made it! Congratulations! Our final day of prayer together. Let's close out our 40 days of prayer with perhaps the greatest reminder for every moment and season of life. The singular focus of our lives is the glory of God. In our marriages and families. In our church. In our jobs. In our finances. In our relationships. In life and even in death. We live for God's glory. As we move forward into our great future, never forget who you are and whose you are. We are God's beloved children, purchased by precious blood to display the hope and love and glory of our King to a lost and dying world. Write a simple prayer below committing yourself to the glory of God above all other things.



