



Prayer
An Act of Faith
*Submitted by a Member
of Westview*

40 days

Just imagine hearing this directive: **"Get out of your country, from your family ... to a land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1).**

With these words, God presented Abraham with a test of faith. He asked Abraham to pull up his tent stakes, leave his relatives, and go to a distant land—a land to be named later.

When God sends a test, His children have choices to make. And the same was true for Abraham. He accepted the challenge. He responded in faith. From the beginning of his journey with God, whether he heard the Lord speak directly to him or in visions, Abraham listened, believed, trusted, and obeyed. He didn't always understand. Often he "talked" things over with God through prayer.

Abraham was a man who made prayer a vital and natural part of his relationship with God. Abraham's prayers, offered up to God under a variety of circumstances and at different times in his life, give us a special opportunity to learn from the growth process of this remarkable man of faith.

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When you don't pray, your heart and emotions can dictate your decisions and direction and you can miss God's will. What does the Bible say about your heart? To ensure that your feelings and desires don't hinder you from choosing God's will, make sure you pray. Pray until your heart and emotions are neutral. Then you can better "hear" God speak to you through His Word and through wise counsel. Our prayers should be motivated by a desire to see God glorified.

Prayer is an act of faith. That's exactly what Abraham's life was all about – living a life of faith! He provides a wonderful lesson

there in England. But Carey didn't stop at just praying...he prayed...and then he attempted the impossible. If a shoemaker can touch off a worldwide missions awakening and lay the groundwork for millions to enter the kingdom, what does God have in store for each of us?

Reflection: Consider today whether or not you have given yourself wholly to the Lord, so that you are available to do great things through your life. Ask Him to reveal to you how you might do something great for His Kingdom's sake.



Now What?

Okay...so we've prayed for 40 days straight. Now what? Hopefully you've established some new habits. Hopefully prayer doesn't end today, simply because we've reached day #41. Take time to think through what you've learned over the past 40 days. What answers to prayer have you experienced? Who has the Lord laid upon your heart? Use the remaining spaces to reflect upon the last 40 Days of Prayer.

Answers to Prayer: _____



Great Expectations

I wonder if our prayer life is lacking at times because we don't really pray expecting great things from the Lord. Perhaps we believe God and do great things, but that is different than "expecting" great things.

I recently read the story of William Carey, a missionary who's motto was "*Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God.*"

Carey was a shoemaker who hung a world map on the wall of his shop and began praying for spiritual awakenings around the world. He eventually felt God calling him to go and minister in India (late 1700s). This would mean he'd have to leave the comforts of home, endure a long sea voyage, and put to shore in a land that was unfriendly to the gospel. In addition to these difficulties, Carey's family and friends thought he was crazy and tried to talk him out of going. At first, his wife refused to go, but later she went along. Carey faced tremendous financial setbacks, resistance from governments, sicknesses and dangers.

Looking back over time however, Carey's ministry became one of the most influential in Christian history, inspiring generations of missionaries. Carey translated the entire Bible into Bengali, Sanskrit, Hindi and other tongues. He rejoiced seeing the Indian people reading the Scriptures in their own language for the very first time.

Carey also started a college and was active in social reform. His mission station in Serampore became a model for missionaries the world over, earning him the title "Father of Modern Missions."

Carey never really saw the fruit of his efforts, but it can be said that millions have been led to Christ from the seeds he planted in the late 1700s and early 1800s.

Carey could have prayed over his map and stayed right

for you and me: Our trust at times may falter as it did with Abraham. But as the years go by and you see your prayers answered, as you taste more and more of God's goodness, your faith grows. Doubts and fears will fade, to be replaced by a confidence in God.

Reflection: How has your faith been tested during recent days or weeks? Has God called you to do something specific that has been difficult for you? Or perhaps life's circumstances have brought on some other sort of difficulty that is testing your faith. Take time to "talk" with God today about the journey that you are on today.



"Take *Time* to be Holy"

Submitted by a Member of Westview

Take time today to read the words of this hymn. Let them sink into your heart and soul. Allow the words to go deep and change your life.

Take Time to Be Holy – Longstaff and Stebbins

Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word.
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,
Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.
Take time to be holy, the world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.
Take time to be holy, let Him be thy Guide;
And run not before Him, whatever betide.
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
And, looking to Jesus, still trust in His Word.
Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each motive beneath His control.
Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love,
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.

This hymn speaks volumes of how we can become closer to the Lord. Note each stanza begins with "*Take Time*". In this world,

time seems to be in short supply. It has been said “you will make time for what is important to you.” Think about it. Let it soak in. If we truly want to be more like Jesus, we WILL make time in our lives to talk with Him and to read His Word. We WILL see it as a priority in our lives. Reread the hymn, paying close attention to verse 2. Take time today with the Lord. It will be time well spent.

Reflection: Pray today for the Lord to help you set your priorities in order. Take time to be with God.



Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians *Paul prays for the spiritual growth of the Christians in Ephesus.*

This notable prayer from the Apostle Paul has three major petitions. Paul is praying that the Ephesians would possess the strength of the Lord; experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and, find the fullness of God. Take a few moments to read Paul's prayer. Find a place to read it out loud.

Ephesians 3:14-21

“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

Reflection: Make Paul's prayer yours today.

Lord...

...strengthen me with YOUR strength.

...come and dwell in my heart.

...fill me with YOUR fullness.

Amen

Preparing for Personal Revival

From the writings of A. W. Tozer

Get thoroughly dissatisfied with yourself. *A contented, passive soul is a stagnant soul. “Stir up the gift of God” and “press toward the mark.” A broken and contrite heart God will not despise.*

Set your whole being *resolutely toward a sweeping transformation of your life. Refuse to be a religious trifter. Make time to seek His face with all your heart, and be determined to allow Him to change you. Learn to listen to His voice.*

Place yourself *“in the way of blessing.” Stop treating grace as if it were some form of magic. Get in the place of humble, believing prayer, and soak yourself in the Scriptures.*

Do a thorough job *of repenting. Don't rush. Let the consciousness of your personal need deepen the fear of the Lord. Do not tolerate conscious sin in your life. Honestly pray, “Search me, O God,” and then remove all “doubtful things” from your life.*

Make restitution *when it is in your power to do so. Make wrong things right. Seek to mend relationships according to Scriptural guidelines. If you owe a debt, pay it.*

Be sober minded. *Don't allow yourself to be distracted or sidetracked. Avoid things that allow you to escape reality. Habits must change! Face the real issues.*

Deliberately narrow *your interests. Prune, focus, distill and refine to become a specialist in Jesus only.*

Have faith in the Lord. *Expectantly look to your Heavenly Father. And as you follow in faith, realize that all of heaven is on your side for revival.*