



40 DAYS OF PRAYER

FOR THE
WORK OF EVANGELISM
IN THE
LIFE OF OUR CHURCH

DAILY DEVOTIONALS
BY THE REV. JIM BRADSHAW





HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL BOOK

1. Open your bible to the selected scripture for the day.
2. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you in the reading for understanding and for help in your prayers.
3. Read the scripture slowly and then the devotional words for the day.
4. Start your prayers of intercession with the bold type words in the devotional words for the day.



DAY 1

Scripture
Matthew 28:16-20

...make disciples of all nations...

The last thing Jesus told his disciples was to make disciples. This is called the Great Commission, applicable to the Church of every generation. God calls us to make disciples today. This is not a question of prayer, whether or not we should make disciples, but rather a practice of prayer by which we seek God's help to fulfill this Great Commission. So as we begin this journey in prayer, **let us first pray that we will be faithful as a church toward fulfilling this mission.** If there are any doubts, and at times there will be (some doubted even then as recorded in verse 17), remember that the Risen Lord Jesus is with us always to accomplish God's purposes.



DAY 2

Scripture
Acts 1:4-8

But you will receive power...

Jesus tells the disciples why they are alive and serving now instead of enjoying the full reign of God on earth. They are alive to witness to this present age the wonderful words of life. Now, Jesus knows our weaknesses. In the flesh our witness will not bear lasting fruit. He knows we need the Holy Spirit to give us the power to witness to Christ and his kingdom, which is not of this world. The Holy Spirit changes us from the inside out as we confess that nothing good exists within us apart from God. So, **let us pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to work in us, making us like Christ, and to work through us, leading people to Christ.** With God's help we will indeed lead people into the kingdom!



DAY 3

Scripture
Philippians 1:3-6

He who began a good work in you...

This journey is not simply about gaining converts, but about making disciples. There's a big difference between the two, one of ever-deepening commitment and obedience, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Believers growing in discipleship are more likely to share their faith and influence others positively than those who are stale and stagnant. I heard a preacher once say that Jesus would prefer 10 disciples over 100 decisions for him because God can do more with people who are disciples rather than those who just made decisions. So, **let us pray that our focus would remain on the long term: making disciples and just not getting decisions for Christ.**



DAY 4

Scripture
John 4:34-38

...open your eyes...

Disciple-making begins with prayer, and an obvious question as we pray is: For whom do we pray? We must ask ourselves this question, but even more so we must ask **God** this question. For whom does God want us to pray concerning discipleship? This will require us to be quiet and still before God. This will require us to hear Jesus words, "open your eyes," to the world in which we live. To whom are we a potential witness, both in word and deed? **Let us pray about this often: "God, who do you want on my spiritual radar screen as a prospect for my influence in his/her life?"** Let us be open to divine appointments, serendipitous moments and continuing conversations.



DAY 5

Scripture
2 Timothy 1:7

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity...

Praying for people is all well and good, but then there is the time to actually DO something. The time comes when we need to take the initiative in disciple-making. What often holds us

back when it comes to both sharing our faith and even inviting people to church is fear. So, as we go to fulfill our responsibility in the part of making disciples that includes sharing our faith and inviting people to believe in Christ, **we must pray to overcome our fears**. We will gain the victory as we pray AND act through our fears. Praying will get us ready. However, those feelings of fear just won't go away until we stare them down and do what is right regardless of how we feel in any given moment.



DAY 6

Scripture
Romans 1:16-17

I am not ashamed of the gospel...

The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news, the best news any sinner could ever hear. We should gladly risk rejection by some with the hope that others will indeed receive the good news of Christ through our witness. For this gospel is not empty, nor weak, but powerful to the working of salvation for all who come to believe. The gospel of Jesus Christ changes lives, first of which is ours as a testimony to all who will hear our witness. No one can deny the witness of God working in our lives through faith in Jesus Christ. So, **let us pray that we will be bold in sharing our witness to others, believing in God's power to change lives through the proclamation of the gospel.**



DAY 7

Scripture
John 6:65 & 12:32

I will draw everyone to myself.

Disciple-making starts with God's heart. Evangelism is first and foremost God's work, which God chooses to accomplish through us, the body of Christ. How do we invite people to worship God, to come to faith in Christ, to follow Jesus as Lord of their lives? As we touch the heart of God through our pursuit of God in Christian discipleship and prayer, His heart begins to radiate through our heart. We become a beacon of light that can't help but invite others in ways that are both spoken and unspoken. So, **pray that we may radiate the heart of God**. Let us pursue God with our lives and become a living invitation, encouraging others to seek after God.



DAY 8

Scripture
Matthew 9:36-38

Ask the Lord of the harvest...

God's heart beats with compassion for those who are "harassed and helpless." God desires people to know the truth about His love for them, and that such truth will set them free from the bondage of sin in this world. We wrestle in prayer in the spiritual realm for people to enter into God's kingdom. That is why Paul asked the Ephesians to pray for him to boldly proclaim the gospel (6:19-20). Jesus instructs all of us to pray for more laborers who will take the lead in gathering up those who are "harassed and helpless," bringing them into God's kingdom. So, **let's pray for fervent, evangelistic leadership in our church, reaching out to all with the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**



DAY 9

Scripture
Romans 12:9-18

Practice hospitality.

The Apostle Paul tells the Romans to make sure that their love is not phony, but genuine. After various exhortations he includes one near the end that says, "Practice hospitality." Do we welcome new people into our lives? One of the most important evangelistic qualities of any church is the ability to welcome new people. Instead of just a polite "hello," we extend an "I want you to feel at home" attitude – practicing hospitality. It's funny how hard the secular business world practices this principle in order to gain and retain business. Their "love" is not so genuine. **Let us pray that our love would indeed be genuine, from the heart, and welcome people into the community of faith.**



DAY 10

Scripture
Romans 12:9-18

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.

Everybody needs a friend, somebody with flesh and blood and arms and feet to show them care. New people need others to be there for them in whatever ways the new people want

to define this. We do not want to encourage an unhealthy co-dependency. Rather, we want to influence people in their faith, that they count, that they are wanted, that God has a place for them within the body of Christ. Everybody needs a family, and the church is a spiritual family that addresses not only spiritual needs, but also common needs of people. Therefore, **pray that our outreach to new people will include brotherly love.** Maybe God will call you to be a “church pal” to some new person in the life of our church.



DAY 11

Scripture
John 13:34-35

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples...

We are the means of telling others the good news of Jesus. You and I are responsible to win people to Christ. Who we are matters to who we win for Christ. How are people going to know that we are disciples of Jesus? The answer is found in the remainder of verse 35, “if we have love one for one another.” Our hospitality and brotherly love becomes evident to prospective disciples by our behavior around them and the family of God. If we treat one another with disrespect and unkindness, that negatively effects our witness. **Let us pray to reach out to new people with love and kindness as well as to care for our current church family. Let us pray to love one another.**



DAY 12

Scripture
Colossians 1:19-23

...making peace through the blood of his cross.

What did we ever do to get saved? Nothing! We didn’t deserve our salvation when it first appeared to us back when, and we don’t deserve our salvation now. Consequently, anyone qualifies as a potential disciple of Christ, for all disciples were in need of forgiveness of sin before they ever came to Christ and still stand in need everyday. **Let us thank God for the blood of Christ, through which we are saved.** “O the blood of Jesus, it makes me white as snow!” **Let us pray that the blood of Christ may be applied to the hearts of those for whom God has us praying.** The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sins (1 John 1:7). Hallelujah!



DAY 13

Scripture
Romans 3:23

For all have sinned...

If not for sin, we would not be bothering with this devotional journey. Pastor Rick Warren says that there are two things that we can do on earth that we can't do in heaven: sin and evangelize. We need to evangelize because people need to deal with their sin. Sin keeps humanity out of God's kingdom. Forgiveness of sin allows us to be in God's eternal presence. The only provision that God has given to us in dealing with sin is Jesus and his sacrificial death for humanity. (see 1 John 2:1-2). People will not get saved until they realize they need to deal with their sin. Therefore, **let us pray that the people for whom we are praying will recognize their need to deal with their sin before God through Jesus Christ.**



DAY 14

Scripture
Romans 5:6-8

...while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

It is amazing yet true: God loves sinners so much that His Son died for them – for us! When that truth hits home, how can anyone resist being converted and born again? This is what we want to communicate to others with our words and with our deeds. Appreciation, gratitude and joy for God's gift of salvation to us must be sincerely evident in our lives if we are to successfully evangelize the world. That is what revivals are built upon – the personal realization of God's amazing grace to each and everyone who truly believes. **Let us pray for ourselves, that we may reflect such an attitude sincerely. Let us also pray for others to want what we have in Christ.**



DAY 15

Scripture
Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we are justified by faith...

Justified means to be made right. The scripture says we are made right with God and that we have peace with God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus

saves us from our sins so that we can stand before a holy God free and clear and clean. Theologians call this justifying grace, and we can remember its effect upon us by breaking up the word justify into just-as-if. Justifying grace means God looks at us through Christ just-as-if we didn't sin. Jesus paid the price for our sins with his blood on the cross and therefore we have peace with God. **Let us pray for those God has placed on our hearts, that they may discover through faith in Christ this eternal peace with God.**



DAY 16

Scripture
Romans 6:20-23

...the gift of God is eternal life...

When we receive a gift, we do not pay for it. It is something given to us free of charge. Otherwise, it would not be a gift. Eternal life, forgiveness of sins, salvation, Jesus coming into our lives is all a gift free of charge. We can do nothing to earn such a gift. All we can do is accept the gift or reject it. **Let us pray that those whom we will influence in becoming Christian disciples will learn to accept God's gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. Let us also pray that we give evidence of living by God' gift of grace of God in our lives.** Life is a gift. Eternal life is a gift. Thanks be to God!



DAY 17

Scripture
Romans 10:5-10

...confess with your mouth...believe in your heart...

After hearing the gospel and having conviction strike the heart, people need to confirm their faith in Christ. Sometimes they figure out on their own what they need to do. Often, they need help in what to do next. We at times may have the privilege to lead people to Christ and the scripture above helps us to do just that. If we confess with our mouths that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised him from the dead, then we will be saved. How clearer can that be? All true believers come to this point in their lives, "closing the deal," that confirms their saving faith in Jesus Christ. **Let us pray that God will use us to help seekers accept Christ in their lives.**



DAY 18

Scripture
Romans 8:1-2

...there is now no condemnation...

When we are “in Christ,” when we are believing and living in Him, when we have been saved and know it, when we have given our lives to Jesus, when we have asked Him to be our Lord and Savior, then the guilt that condemns has no power over us. Living in victory over sin and evil comes without condemnation. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to live in ways that please the Lord. **So, let us pray that we may influence others to be disciples who live victoriously over sin and death. Let us pray that we will not condemn others because we live without condemnation ourselves.** Let us live with gratitude for God’s gift of salvation to us!



DAY 19

Scripture
Romans 8:12-17

...for all who are led by the Spirit of God...

When we receive Jesus in to our hearts, we receive his Spirit, the Holy Spirit, who marks us as a true believer. We are “born again” by the Holy Spirit taking residence among our spirit within us. Yet, that does not mean that we lose everything in us that still rebels against God, wanting things our way. This is why we need to yield to the Holy Spirit in our lives – to be “led by the Spirit of God” – so that we may not live according to the desires of our flesh that lead towards death. **Let us pray for ourselves and for those whom we lead into the family of God to be continually filled with God’s Spirit, to submit to his presence in our lives, so that we may do his will above all else.**



DAY 20

Scripture
Romans 12:1-2

...present your bodies as a living sacrifice...

To live in the Spirit we must be willing to give up what we want, what we think is best for our lives apart from guidance from both the written word and the Living Word. We need to submit to God's word, listen to the counsel of godly men and women and heed the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit who always confirms the truth of the scriptures. This is no easy task. We can easily be distracted and misdirected along the way. That is why we pray, ask questions, seek to be in fellowship and search the scriptures. The Lord will bring us back and keep us on track while we pursue him in these ways. **Let us pray that we continually pursue God for guidance in our lives as a witness to others to do the same.**



DAY 21

Scripture 2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful...

The previous devotions have included many scripture verses from the book of Romans. Many of these should be put to memory, if you have not done so already. Such scriptures equip us to share some essential truths of the gospel. So, take some time and choose some if not all of the following references to memory. (Work on one at a time for an entire week each day.)

Romans 3:23; 5:1; 5:8; 6:23; 8:1; 12:1

Travel the “Romans’ Road” and take others with you as you share the gospel with these scripture references committed to memory. **Let us pray that the Lord will help us to put his word deep in our hearts to share with others.**



DAY 22

Scripture 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Everybody has a role to play when it comes to making disciples. Our roles are determined by the Holy Spirit living within us. The Holy Spirit takes our unique personalities and adds to them particular spiritual gifts that fulfill the purpose towards the redemption of the world. These spiritual gifts are given to each of us for the common good. No one person is gifted exactly the same, although we may have similar gifts. The Holy Spirit works with us together to witness to Christ and bring people into the family of God. **Therefore, let us pray that we receive and use these spiritual gifts as God intended, to build up the body of Christ, without division.**



DAY 23

Scripture
1 Corinthians 12:1-11

*All these are the work of one and the same Spirit,
and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.*

The Holy Spirit calls the body of Christ into ministry to one another and to the world. We do not compete against others when it comes to ministry. We may have similar gifts or we may have different gifts among the people we find ourselves ministering to others. In every case the Holy Spirit leads us to support one another as He works through each of us. **Let us pray then that we will submit to one another and the Holy Spirit as we work together as a team, as the body of Christ.** When we work together with the Holy Spirit in charge we will experience the blessing of God.



DAY 24

Scripture
1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Teamwork is necessary when it comes to evangelism and discipleship within the body of Christ. Some of us are better at **inviting** people. Others are better at **hospitality** (welcoming). Others are better at **leading to commitment**. Some are better at **nurturing** faith. What are you better at doing? Although we have responsibility with accomplishing all of the above, it is wise for us to play off one another's strength in order to do our best in making disciples for Christ through the life of the local church. **Let us pray that God helps identify our gifts and strengths to effectively work together as a team towards the discipleship of new people within the life of our church.**



DAY 25

Scripture
Philippians 2:1-5

Each of you should look not only to your own interests...

We are often tempted by the flesh to be recognized for our gifts. We share a common need to be affirmed and loved. Such needs, however, should be addressed **before** ministry.

Whenever we take such basic needs unmet into ministry, we ask for trouble. We are tempted to minister to our own needs than those who looking to us for help. The gifts given to us are not to be measured by our maturity. The Holy Spirit can give wonderful gifts to the most immature people. We are called to become mature in the Spirit so that we may minister to others. **Therefore, let us pray for maturity so that we may minister well together to others.**



DAY 26

Scripture
Ephesians 6:10-18

...be strong in the Lord...

To do our part in evangelism and discipleship requires us to be strong in the Lord. We are battling many unseen forces in our attempts to make disciples. Fortunately, *the one who is in [us] is greater than the one who is in the world* (1John 4:4). Therefore, we must be aware of this spiritual battle that takes place over souls. While *the battle is the LORD's* (1Samuel 17:47), we also must prepare ourselves to engage as God's servants. As we read through the battle gear described by Paul in the passage from Ephesians, **let us pray each one onto our body. Let us pray that we will not be unaware of the tricks of the devil to get us down, but defend ourselves accordingly.**



DAY 27

Scripture
Ephesians 6:10-18

Take...the sword of the Spirit...

As we prepare for the battle we have not only defensive armor, but offensive weaponry. Paul lists two of them in this passage. First is the Holy Scriptures. The Word of God reminds the devil and us of God's promises, which are always true. It is good to have a regular diet of scripture each day and to have some references remembered for a time of need for yourself and for others. Second is prayer, particularly *praying in the Spirit*. When we consciously allow the Holy Spirit to help us pray, we participate with God to tear down the devil's hold upon people. We intercede according to the will of the Spirit. Let us pray to use these offensive weapons effectively in the battle for souls.

DAY 28

Scripture
Isaiah 58:3-12

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen...

We fast in order to intensify our call for God to help us. In Isaiah 58 the prophet speaks for God to instruct us with directions to fast. It is more than a practice of humility, leaning more upon God. Fasting leads to action, to do the will of the Lord in our lives. Fasting leads to gaining the spiritual strength to be what God calls us to be and to do what God calls us to do in all righteousness and justice. Indeed, God will answer our prayers if we intend to do God's will. So, **let's us fast and pray today, to seek God's will for our lives and for others, particularly when it comes to knowing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.**



DAY 29

Scripture
Isaiah 58:3-12

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen...

Were you able to fast yesterday? If the charge took you by surprise, then plan a day right now from the remaining 40 days to fast. We fast to intensify our prayer efforts to hear God's will as well as to face our selfish nature. Fasting is *meant* to be a challenge. We are supposed to eat, and wanting to eat is not wrong. We fast because we want God's will more than anything else. As we plan to fast **let us pray that God will make us more sensitive to the opportunities for ministry around us that help us witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.** The need is great, but God is greater than any need and is already working among the people to whom we can minister.



DAY 30

Scripture
Luke 18:1-8

...they should always pray and not give up.

We can be quite impatient with God acting not only in our lives, but also in the lives of others. Fortunately, we have testimonies of those who have prayed years for loved ones to come to Christ and they finally did. So, **let us continue to pray no matter how long it**

takes for some of our love ones and friends to come to Christ. Never give up in praying. That is the purpose of the illustration in today's selected scripture. Just as the widow continually beseeched the judge for justice, we are to continually beseech the Lord for justice and righteousness to come on earth through personal knowledge and experience of Jesus the Messiah. Praise God that God is not like the unjust judge. God is faithful!



DAY 31

Scripture
Ephesians 5:17-20

Be filled with the Spirit.

To become an effective witness for Christ requires that we constantly live in communion with God. This is possible only through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Ephesians 5:18 reminds us to constantly be filled with the Spirit, an experience of opening ourselves up to God's love, joy and peace evident in us and through us. So, **let us pray to be filled with the Spirit everyday, and that we will also encourage new disciples to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to live for Christ each day, one day at a time.** The Holy Spirit makes all the difference in the world when it comes to being disciples in this world.



DAY 32

Scripture
Proverbs 11:30

...he who wins souls is wise.

Life is better than death. Goodness is better than evil. Righteousness is better than sin. To win people into the Kingdom of God is better than to leave them in the kingdom of this world. The problems of this world have the common denominator of sin. The gospel of Jesus Christ offers the only lasting and eternal solution to sin. When we follow God as our Shepherd, we find ourselves walking in paths of righteousness giving glory and honor to God. To win souls mean more than gaining converts; it means to help people tap into the righteousness of God by which we may truly love God and others. Therefore, **let us pray that we win souls for Christ to impact this world for good.**



DAY 33

Scripture
John 4:1-7

Will you give me a drink?

Jesus engages in conversation with a strange woman in a public place. He did so by means of a common request for water, since she was drawing water from a well. Jesus revealed his need for water, drawing upon her ability to give him some from her bucket. Now that Jesus had asked her for something, then maybe she would be open to ask him for something. Notice that what Jesus asked of her, water, was something that he could connect to God concerning salvation and relationship. There are common items within our everyday conversations that connect us to God. **Let us pray that God helps us to see these obvious everyday common items as means to discuss our need for God with others.**



DAY 34

Scripture
John 4:7-11

You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman.

Barriers of all kind exist among people. Fortunately, there is no barrier that God cannot breach in order to bring people together into one family. Jesus shows that with his discussion with the Samaritan woman. God's reconciling work brings people together from varied backgrounds. This work takes time and effort for us to experience. We must love, be patient, show mercy, forgive and consider the perspectives of others. But for the sake of reconciliation with God, we seek a common bond made by Christ. **Let us pray for God's help and guidance in the reconciling work of the church for all people.**



DAY 35

Scripture
John 4:10-15

If you knew the gift of God...

People just do not know what they are missing apart from a close relationship with God. As the psalmist says, *Your love is better than life* (Psalm 63:3). One of our jobs as witnesses to Christ is to help people ask questions about relating to God. Inside everyone is a desire to

understand who they are and why they exist. Our conversations over common matters help people to connect them to deeper concerns of the heart and soul. Through such conversations we can help people receive the gift of God. **Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will help us in making such connections of common things to spiritual things, like physical water to living water.**



DAY 36

Scripture
John 4:15-26

The fact is...

Our sin keeps us from God. We hesitate to deal with our sin, let alone admit that we have sin in our lives. Yet, confession of sin is necessary in order to get right with God. There is no way getting around sin in our lives if we are going to have an authentic relationship with God. If we try to avoid dealing with sin, then people will not get in – to the Kingdom of God. **Therefore, let us pray that the Holy Spirit will convict people of their sin, even beginning with us, so that we may be authentic witnesses of God's love and forgiveness of our sins.** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).*



DAY 37

Scripture
John 4:27-30

Could this be the Christ?

Questions of wonder may lead us to the truth. In this case Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well brought her in touch with her hunger for God that she wonder if she had indeed found the Answer to her deepest need. Before we satisfy any hunger we must first have the hunger. Part of our witnessing is helping people discover their hunger for God. Until they believe they have a need, they will not pursue that which will satisfy that need. Advertisers try to do this all the time with their products. We, however, have in mind eternal matters that give life over death, freedom over bondage, salvation over sin. **Pray for the Holy Spirit to instill hunger in us and through us for the salvation of those to whom we witness.**



DAY 38

Scripture
John 4:31-38

“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

Only God can satisfy. Nothing else and no one else will do. God allows us to try different pursuits, some more harmful than others. Time and again we must come to realize that doing God’s will is what is best for us. We must be convinced of this; otherwise our witness will be weak. Are there things we desire more than the Lord? If we are honest, sometimes we act as though there are. **Let us pray that our witness may show an every-growing longing for the things of God over the things of humanity.** May we be honest in our self-assessments, realizing that God is still at work within us. Only God can satisfy.



DAY 39

Scripture
John 4:39-42

And because of his words many more became believers.

O to be true for us, that because of our words and actions many would come to be believers and disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We need much grace from God and focused intention on our part to fulfill this Great Commission to make disciples. So, **we pray for God to work miracles in our lives and among those whom we live so that we may witness many more coming to faith in Christ. May our words point to God’s words, and may our actions point to God’s actions, and where we fail may God still succeed in the proclamation of the gospel.**

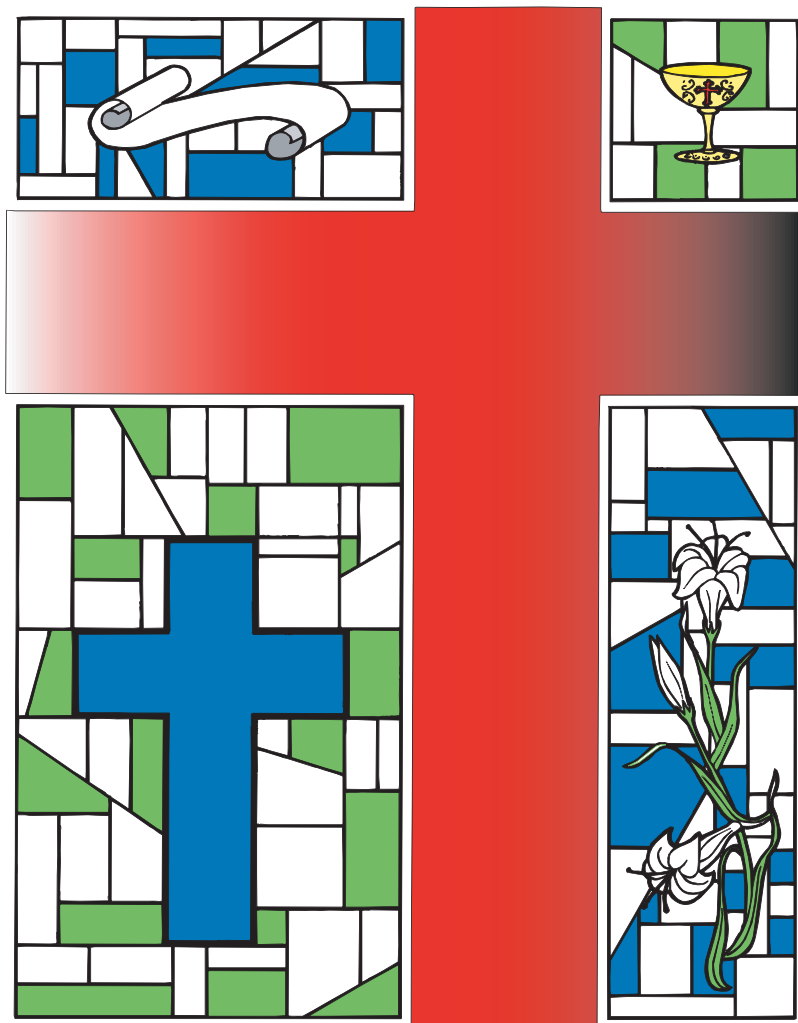


DAY 40

Scripture
1 Corinthians 1:9

God...is faithful.

God does not give us a command or a mission that we cannot do apart from His help. We may wonder how we can make disciples given our particular circumstances. We may have doubts in our abilities and we should, because apart from Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5)! But God is more than able (see Ephesians 3:20) to accomplish this work of disciple-making through us. However, it must be a team effort. A disciple is made through the combined efforts of the body of Christ of which every true believer is a part. So, as we enter into this disciple-making endeavor, **let us pray believing that God is indeed going to accomplish disciple-making through us because He is faithful!**





CONGRATULATIONS!

You have completed this 40 days of prayer and devotion for the sake of evangelism and discipleship through our local church. Let this devotion be a catalyst for continual prayers and efforts to make disciples. May we all work together in this endeavor each and everyday. Finally, may God bless us in this commitment to faithfully fulfill the Great Commission given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. Together we can make a difference, experiencing God's great salvation working through the life of the church. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!



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