

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

WEEK 5

REAWAKENING TO THE MISSION OF CHRIST

This week, we will look at some of the things Jesus has called us to do as we live on mission with Him in this world. He defines and assigns the mission we are to carry out. May we carry it out in obedience and dependence!

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BEING SALT AND LIGHT

MATTHEW 5:13-16

The Scriptures tell us that we are the salt of the earth, but what does that mean?

Salt is an enhancer that makes flavors better by suppressing bitter compounds. So many things cause bitterness—unfilled expectations, unforgiveness, unkindness, etc. As salt, we fight against this flavor, and as we do, we reveal sweetness. This is how salt is salty—it suppresses the bitter and magnifies the sweet. Can you think of any areas in your life that might need a little saltiness?

As we get older and life seems to get more complicated, there are many things that can make us feel weary. Yet, we have a place to find rest. As we rest in the Lord, our hope is found. Psalm 62:5 says: “Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him.”

Does your hope come from God? What do you hope for? Who do you hope for? God not only calls us to find our hope in Him, He calls us to hope and be hope for others.

It is because we have this hope that we are a light in the world. In our relationships with other people, we shine the way for them to find their path toward God. With our words and our actions, we can help guide others so that they do not fall or become lost. A light helps people see.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ask God to reveal to you ways that you can better become like salt, inviting Him into your life to truly magnify Himself over you.
2. Pray that the Holy Spirit will open your eyes to the ways you need to rely on Him more than you rely on yourself.
3. Pray that the Lord will guide you to better guide others in a life of His presence and His glory.

» by Angie Valli

BEING FISHERS OF PEOPLE

LUKE 5:1-11

Simon Peter, John, and James had been fishing all night with no luck. They gave up because they knew that if they had no luck at night, they certainly were not going to have any during the day. It is at this moment that Jesus tells them to go out and cast their nets again.

Simon Peter chooses to listen, and to their surprise, they caught so many fish that both boats began to sink. Simon Peter, realizing Jesus' immense power, begs Him to depart from them because he knows that he is a sinner. Jesus responds by calling Simon Peter, James, and John to be fishers of men.

Amazingly, the three future disciples didn't ask any questions; they left everything and followed Jesus. They witnessed firsthand Jesus' power so they had confidence that they could become fishers of people.

As followers of Christ, we also have this call to be fishers of people. Even though we have this calling, many of us are hesitant to live it out. A common reason many Christians are reluctant to share their faith is because they have yet to experience Jesus' power or they have forgotten about how amazing Jesus' power really is. The same God who commands creation and makes fish appear out of nowhere can and will help as you partake on this journey of leading people to Christ.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ask God for a fresh experience of His power that enables you to be bold in your faith.
2. As you walk into school, ask God to reveal to you people who you need to be reaching out to, people who you need to be fishing for.
3. Write down the name of at least one person who you will be praying for and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in praying for anyone He brings to mind.

CARING FOR HURTING PEOPLE

MATTHEW 25:31-46

When God asks us to care for the hurting, the hungry, the people who are downtrodden or forgotten by society, He asks us to extend His compassion. He desires that we bravely open our eyes to see the beauty of humanity.

When we choose to look deeper than outward circumstances and lay aside our uncomfortable anxieties or misguided assumptions, we find ourselves face-to-face with our Creator God. He pulls us toward Himself, and we experience the vastness of His love and mercy. The grandeur of His design and purpose for the whole of humanity becomes more and more evident. We are all designed to be near to Him, know Him, belong with Him.

There are people we know and see each day who crave the love and affection of their Creator. If we ask and listen, the Holy Spirit will gently whisper to us, encouraging our hearts to fall further in love with God by seeing and serving those who are hungry and thirsty.

Each day, we must open our eyes and intently search for Jesus. If we do, we will find the people right in front of us who yearn for the love and affection of God. The healing Kingdom is for the hungry and thirsty. They will taste and see Christ and be satisfied.



PRAYER POINTS:

- 1.** Thank and praise God for seeing you and accepting you as His own. Ask God to give you eyes to see and know the people around you.
- 2.** Ask the Holy Spirit to show you hungry and thirsty people today. Listen and respond. Don't ignore the nudge to talk to someone new even if it feels a little uncomfortable.
- 3.** As you go out into the world today, search for Christ. Ask Him to transform you into someone hungry and thirsty for righteousness.

» by Kelsey Manfrew

PREACHING THE GOSPEL TO THE WHOLE WORLD **MATTHEW 24:14**

This week's devotional jumps into the Gospel of Matthew. We're going to be looking at some of the things Jesus called us to do as we live on mission with Him. Today, we will look at a verse that tells us one of the many signs and actions leading up to the end times. Read Matthew 24:14.

What is the point of this verse? How do we even start praying for this? Jesus is communicating two things: (1) The end will come no matter what; and (2) He wants us to be prepared and on His team.

Preparation is a common theme for Jesus. Unlike the first time, there will be no mistaking the Second Coming of Jesus. He calls us to be a part of His ministry by calling others to prepare as well.



PRAYER POINTS:

- 1.** Pray for the world. There are people in the world—in other countries or maybe even in your own town or school—who have never heard of Jesus. Pray that the gospel will move to those unreached places and people.
- 2.** Pray that the Lord will give you names of people in your own life who need to hear the good news. God has placed all of us exactly where we are for many reasons, and one is to be a light and reflect Jesus.
- 3.** Pray for boldness. Jesus says right before verse 14 that we will be hated because of our relationship with Him. This is a scary promise, but He doesn't expect us to do it on our own. We can do anything through the strength that only Christ can give us. Pray that the Lord will give you a bold heart as you join in His ministry.

YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES

ACTS 1:8

As Jesus' time with His disciples drew to an end, they asked the question that was at the forefront of their minds: "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). Basically, they were asking, "When does everything get better?" Jesus answered that God holds times and dates for Himself, which is clearly not what the disciples wanted to hear. But Jesus turned around and gave them what they actually needed: a mission and a means.

Their mission was to be witnesses and embrace the identity of those who experienced the resurrected Jesus—this mission was their chief purpose. The scope of this mission was gradual but not limited. He told them to start within their immediate context and not to stop until the ends of the earth.

This mission is daunting, but He also promised a means to accomplish it—power, specifically Holy Spirit power! So, what does this mean for us? Where do you fit in this mission?



PRAYER POINTS:

1. How has Jesus changed your life? Take time to list changes He's made in your life and give praise and thanks for His life-changing work.
2. Ask God to impress His mission on your heart. The next time you are in a crowded location, at a grocery store, or at a sports game, stop and look at individuals and ask God to help you see them as He does.
3. Instead of worrying about the current troubles of our times, spend time praying for God to show you how to live on purpose with Holy Spirit power. Discuss with a peer what that may look like in your life.

» by Erich Wiegner

PREPARED TO GIVE AN ANSWER

1 PETER 3:15

When you enter a competition (for example, swimming, running, the math league, or choir ensemble), you go into training for the big day. You dedicate time every day to improve yourself so that you are ready for when the day comes. People see the effort you put in and want to know why you're preparing so much, and since it is a passion of yours, you readily and lovingly explain to them why.

The same concept can be applied to your faith in Jesus. As you live with a Kingdom-focus and have your hope in Jesus, people will see a difference in you and want to know why you have this hope—be prepared. Abide in Christ (see John 15:1–10) and live with Him as Lord and King over everything in your life.

Knowing Jesus takes time and effort—just like preparing for your competition—because it is a personal relationship. Taking time each day to talk with Him and listen are vital to growing and being rooted in His love (see Colossians 2:6–7, Ephesians 3:17–19), and knowing the voice of the Holy Spirit (see John 14:26). Read the Word of God and allow His words to reign in your life (see Colossians 3:16) so that you know how to answer people gracefully and lovingly (see Colossians 4:5–6).



PRAYER POINTS:

- 1.** What is your hope in? As you prayerfully consider this, also talk with Jesus about why you believe in Him, and ask Him to reveal Scripture to you to steady your foundation in Him.
- 2.** Ask the Holy Spirit for boldness and the opportunities to share your faith and hope in Jesus with others.
- 3.** As you encounter people, ask the Holy Spirit who He wants you to talk to, and follow His promptings—maybe it is with your neighbor, a classmate, or someone at the grocery store or library.

GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES

MATTHEW 28:18-20

If you've ever seen or participated in a 400-meter relay, you may know that some of the most important moments during that event are the handoffs. The moment the baton is passed between teammates is so important because the split second it takes to recover from a bad handoff could mean the difference between winning or losing. It requires both the one passing and the one receiving the baton to be in sync with one another.

In the final moments before He was taken up into heaven, Jesus brought His disciples together for one final reminder of His authority, His mission, and His continued presence with them. He said, "You've seen what I've been doing; now it's your turn."

The disciples had been following Jesus for three years now watching, learning, and partnering with Him in His mission. Now it was their turn to run. But unlike in the 400-meter relay, the one who passes the baton keeps running with us—He encourages us, teaches us, guides us, comforts us, and gives us the strength to keep on running into all that He has for us and all that He calls us into.



PRAYER POINTS:

- 1.** Ask the Lord to make you aware of the ways He's calling you to partner with Him in His mission and to prepare you for it.
- 2.** Ask Jesus specifically for opportunities to step into what He's calling you to.
- 3.** Thank Him for His presence with you as you step into His calling, and ask Him to help you keep in step with His Spirit as you partner with Him in His mission.

» by Nick Galluccio