

Pray for Columbus



40 Days of Citywide Prayer

2016 Prayer Devotional

Week 2: October 9 - 15, 2016

PrayForColumbus.org
a Catalyst Initiative

Pray for Columbus

40 DAYS OF CITYWIDE PRAYER

a Catalyst Initiative

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”

Romans 1:16, NIV

What is power? Many believe that it is the ability to influence and persuade; to wield the physical force to overtake and overcome; to have the means to achieve objectives no matter what the cost. In the first century, Rome epitomized power—political, military, social, intellectual—power. The Apostle Paul understood this, but he recognized that real power is the power of transformation. He understood that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation. Salvation is not only the assurance of resurrection after you die. Salvation according to the Bible is being rescued from the power of sin in order to become the image bearers of God that he created us to be. It is the reclamation of our lives and ultimately the reclamation of the world. This is real power. Imagine if individuals, communities, and world leaders lived according to the nature and character of God? This is the vision of the future that is described by Isaiah and other prophets. The Great News is that we can begin this way of life today as more people embrace Jesus and live the resurrection life in Him! This is why Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel and dedicated his life to sharing the message. We should never view the Gospel as a religious message—it is the message that will change the world.

Paul goes on to say that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation for everyone—to the Jew first and also the Greek. Certainly the message of Jesus is for the Jewish people: he is the prophesied Messiah of Israel, who lived his life in and among the Jewish people and whose message was proclaimed by Jewish Apostles. What was astounding is that this message is also the power of transformation for the Greeks—people of power. May we never be ashamed or intimidated to share the Gospel. This is the paradox of power! What the powers of this world may view as foolishness is the true power of change! May our top priority be proclaiming the message of Messiah crucified and resurrected to the weakest and the most powerful of people. Everyone needs deliverance! May we speak into this world with the proclamation of the Gospel: the power of God for the salvation of the world.



Father we pray for the courage to stand firm and to look for every opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah. We pray for the salvation of the poor as well as the wealthy; the disenfranchised as well as the privileged. We pray for the Jewish people and all peoples. We pray for those in powerful positions. Amen.

DAY 8: October 10, 2016

Prayer Focus: salvation



Prayer Region: northeast

- Pray for the lost to receive the precious gift of salvation
- **Pray for a church partner for Berwick Alternative K-8**
- Pray for the faith partnerships with Alpine Elementary, Avondale Elementary and Cedarwood Alt. Elementary

Featured Contributor:

Howard Silverman is the Messianic Rabbi at Beth Messiah Congregation in Columbus Ohio where he has served for 25 years. Beth Messiah is a congregation of Jews and Gentiles who embrace Jesus the Messiah and demonstrate messianic community in a Jewish cultural context.

Pray for Columbus

40 DAYS OF CITYWIDE PRAYER

a Catalyst Initiative

“My children, let us not love merely in theory or in words—let us love in sincerity and in practice!”

I John 3:18, J.B. Phillips NT

The Merriam-Webster dictionary includes in its definition of community: a group of people who live in the same area; a group of people who have the same interests, religion, race, etc.; a group of nations; 1: a unified body of individuals; 2: society at large; 3: joint ownership or participation.

Community has always been in God’s heart and mind. After all, He makes it clear in His Word that He is One God, manifested and expressed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The world began from the activity of the community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God has chosen to get His work done in this world through the community of believers in Christ.

How important is this concept of community? Community provides the ground for transformation. We cannot become the people God wants us to be outside of our participation in community. It is in community with each other that our flaws, sins and weakness are brought to light as well as the identification and expression of our strengths and gifts for the benefit of others.

It is easy to love others when it is reciprocated. Can we love our enemies and those who despitely use us? A transformed heart will! Community moves us forward and we, as individuals, cannot move forward without it. The language of community can be summed up as “...Honor one another above yourselves.” (Romans 12:10b, NIV)

In our current times, we see the uproar, anger, fear and confrontational/combatative attitudes in our various communities at large. God has already provided the solutions to these problems by creating a community of believers who would not think in terms of me, my and mine, but would truly see, through our faith, that it is us, ours and theirs. Living our life in community with our sisters/brothers in Christ will impart the fullest expression of Christ to those around us and connected to us, making the Gospel a lived reality that others can grasp, take hold of and join in as we become agents of change by involving ourselves in providing solutions to the diverse issues our culture faces. Finally, there is no community without family. God’s foundational unit of design for the Kingdom is the family. Godly families produce Godly communities.



Father, thank You for the love You have toward our communities. Forgive us for failing to see our community from Your perspective and effectively engaging Your redemptive plan for them. Open our eyes and heart to love and value them, embracing Your plan to transform them. We release Your love and grace to our communities, anticipating the manifestation of Your glory among them. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

DAY 9: October 11, 2016

Prayer Focus: **community**



Prayer Region: **northeast**

- Pray for Church partners for: **Columbus Scioto 6-12, Dominion Middle School, East High School and Eastmoor Academy High School**

Featured Contributor:

Carolyn A. Quinichett, M.A., served the community as a Columbus Police Officer for over thirty four years. She is a member of Rhema Christian Center and was licensed for ministry by Dr. LaFayette Scales. She leads the RCC Prayer Life Ministry. She serves on the Board of Directors for Hannah Ministries, Inc. and leads the Intercessory Prayer Team during overseas missions. Her son, daughter-in-law and their two children reside in Atlanta, GA.

Pray for Columbus

40 DAYS OF CITYWIDE PRAYER

a Catalyst Initiative

“And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Matthew 3:17, NIV

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us”

Romans 5:8, NIV

Identity is everything ...

One of the greatest gifts we're given next to Salvation is identity.

The definition of identity is the fact of being who or what a person or thing is. And my prayer is that you realize you are a child of the Most High God when you decide to make Jesus Christ Lord of your life.

So many people struggle with this certainty, that God loves you for who you are. He loves you for who you are, not what you do. And because of this lack of identity, many people look to other things to find their identity in. They look to careers, addictions, money, popularity, even other people to find what only God can provide.

Even with this struggle, there's a great passage of Scripture that shows us the mindset of God and how much He loves us. It's found in Romans 5:8. The Bible says, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

What a beautiful truth. Our identity is found in Jesus Christ. In fact, we read in the Bible about how Jesus walked up one day and John the Baptist saw Him. Jesus then asked John to baptize Him. After this exchange of John baptizing Jesus, we see a powerful exchange take place between Father and Son. This exchange can be found in Matthew 3:17 where we see God speak. The Bible says, “And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”

Why is this so important?

It's important because at this point of Jesus' life, Jesus hadn't performed any miracles yet. He hadn't walked on water. He hadn't opened any blind eyes or made anyone lame walk. He hadn't even fed the 10,000 plus men, women and children that we've read about. Jesus hadn't done anything of significance, yet God validates the identity of Jesus and who He was. He was God's Son. And the Father, God, was pleased with His Son.

That is how God views you when you accept the free gift of Salvation only found in His Son Jesus. He views you as a son or a daughter that He is passionately in love with. Now, I'm not saying that our working for good and trying to be like Jesus isn't important. But I'm saying that in all of the doing, and going, and working, that God's love isn't based on that. His love for us is based on the finished work of Jesus Christ through His death, burial and resurrection. Jesus is the only way to a relationship with God. Jesus Christ is the only way to recognizing and establishing your true identity.

Father, I pray for the revelation of identity with Your people. I pray that we can connect with You on a deeper level, more than ever before. That You grant us the wisdom to see the beauty of Your love for us. I pray for understanding. An understanding that You love us for who we are and not what we do. Thank you for showing us this great love by sending Your One and only Son Jesus. We thank you for what You have done. We thank You for what You are doing. And we thank You for the great things You are going to do in us and in this city. Amen and Amen.



DAY 10: October 12, 2016

Prayer Focus: discipleship



Prayer Region: northeast

- Pray for a church partner for **Huy/AG Elementary and Innis Elementary Schools.**
- Pray for intentional discipleship relationships with every new believer.

Featured Contributor:

Dax Welsheimer is the pastor at 104.9 and 89.3 the River. As the River Pastor, he's focused on two things: being a pastor to the pastor-less and connecting those without a home church to one that's life-giving. He's also engaged in working with senior/lead pastors to help support the ministry and call that God's placed on their life. He resides in Westerville with his wife and two children.

Pray for Columbus

40 DAYS OF CITYWIDE PRAYER

a Catalyst Initiative

“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently...Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:1-2, NIV

As a retired prison warden, I have witnessed countless men and women being released back to their communities with literally the clothes they were wearing and perhaps a small bag of hygiene necessities. Those sparse possessions and a nominal \$75.00 send-off is what they leave prison with to reenter the community and “stake their claim” in order to work the land as contributing members of society. This stark reality inspired the development of a reentry ministry called Kindway to work with incarcerated men and women before they are released from prison to better prepare them for a successful transition to community. Kindway is mobilizing the Body of Christ in central Ohio with the Body of Christ inside the Ohio Reformatory for Women and the Marion Correctional Institution.

Columbus offers good, rich soil for returning citizens to flourish. Throughout the city, with some digging, one finds ample opportunities to live out Galatians 6:1-2 as “the spiritual who should restore him gently” in the spirit of compassion. These are valued partnerships and friendships to Kindway as we connect our participants with these spiritual persons who indeed help to restore them gently.



Father, help us understand compassion means that if I see my friend and my enemy in equal need, I shall help them both equally. Justice demands that we seek and find the stranger, the broken, the prisoner and comfort them and offer them our help.

(Based on a prayer written in the 13th Century by St. Mechtild of Magdeburg)

DAY 11: October 13, 2016

Prayer Focus: transformation



Prayer Region: northeast

- Pray for a church partner for **Mifflin Middle School, North Linden Elementary and Northland High School.**
- Pray for ex-offenders and ministries that serve them.
- Pray for employers and landlords for ex-offenders.

Featured Contributor:

Chris Money is the Executive Director of Kindway. Located in Westerville, Kindway operates EMBARK, a Christ-centered prison reentry ministry. Participants leave prison as restored citizens locating to Columbus. Staff and volunteers stand in the gap for participants to pave the way for a successful transition.

Pray for Columbus

40 DAYS OF CITYWIDE PRAYER

a Catalyst Initiative

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:1-2, NIV

In Romans 12:1, Paul urges us to offer ourselves as living sacrifice to God. As Paul, put it, in view of who God is, this is our reasonable response. This passage has always been a very powerful challenge for me. I often ask myself, “What does it mean to be a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God?”

One of the delightful things about Scripture is that if you keep reading it, often your questions are answered in remarkable ways. In verse 2, Paul challenges us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. When this takes place, we are no longer conformed to the pattern of this world. That sounds like living sacrifice to me!

As you go throughout your day today, ask yourself this question, “Am I offering a living or dead sacrifice?” The thing about offering a living sacrifice is that it requires constant and persistent reliance on God and resistance of the world.

The reality is that worship, true and living worship, cost us something. It’s called a sacrifice because we must give up our will and way, for the divine purpose of God. Anything we are unwilling to give up for God has become our God.

The powerful thing about this is as each of us begins to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, our families will be impacted, our churches will be blessed, our communities will be healthier and our world will be changed.



Father, help me to walk today in your goodness and glory. I freely surrender my life as a living sacrifice to You, the only One who is able to save and keep me. May I continually transform my mind as I resist the temptation to be conformed to this world. I ask You to bless and keep me as only You can do. Amen.

DAY 12: October 14, 2016

Prayer Focus: living sacrifice



Prayer Region: northeast

- Pray for church partners for **South High School 7-12** and **Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy**.
- Pray to be a living sacrifice and to renew your mind.

Featured Contributor:

Noah Mitchell is currently the Director of Maturity (Discipleship) at New Salem Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio where his pastor is Dr. Keith A. Troy. Noah has spent over a decade in ministry and has extensive experience in the area of Christian Discipleship/education and Spiritual Growth. Noah received his undergraduate degree in 2005 and his graduate degree in ministry in 2007, both from John Brown University.

Pray for Columbus

40 DAYS OF CITYWIDE PRAYER

a Catalyst Initiative

For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12, NLT

When we look around and see the injustices and historical hurts in a community like Milo-Grogan, it is easy to lose sight of who the real enemy is. When a 70-year-old neighbor tells me that he has rarely travels for fear of being pulled over by police for the crime of simply being a black man in America, I get angry – angry with people. When he further tells me that he seldom leaves Milo-Grogan because it is one of the few places where he can feel safe, comfortable to be himself, and not to be overwhelmed by the pressures of dominant culture, it is difficult not to abhor the power brokers that seek to “transform” Milo-Grogan into a gentrified, multi-ethnic (increasingly white), middle-class success story. At what point do we stop sacrificing the poor and marginalized on the altars of our strategic initiatives, investment opportunities, and plans for urban renewal?

A 17-year-old neighbor, whom my wife and I have watched grow and mature over the last ten years and who loves us very much once accused us of “bringing the white people to the neighborhood.” It is hard to hear because that comment expresses how people are very fearful of losing their community to an outside world imposing on them what is best for them and without seeking their input. It is also hard to hear because it makes me wonder about how I, like many other well-meaning believers might have also hurt those whom I love and contributed to the injustices in their lives.

It is easy to see people as the enemy: a well-resourced suburban church willing to invest in the inner-city, but unwilling to relinquish ultimate control and the plan they have decided upon; the white church inoculated by a book or seminar, but blind to the hurt they may inflict; the large black church that has found safety inside of their urban fortress; public officials deciding on the fate of the inner-city. All of us may be guilty at some level. We must remember, however, that people are not the enemy. Rather, we are called to stand together against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world and mighty powers in this dark world that lie behind oppressive systems of injustice.



Lord forgive us for fighting the wrong enemy, both within and outside of the body of Christ, for hiding behind strategy and do-gooder heroism in the quest of our own goals, for failing to include the truly marginalized in the decisions that affect their lives, for not having the courage to be a voice for the voiceless, and for distancing ourselves from the pain of the poor for the sake of our comfort. Give us boldness and wisdom to stand against the injustices of our day for your glory alone. Amen.

DAY 13: October 15, 2016

Prayer Focus: unseen enemies



Prayer Region: northeast

- Pray for unity in the body of Christ.
- Ask God to give us His heart for Biblical justice in our city.
- Pray for grace to understand one another and courage to love when we don't.

Featured Contributor:

Aaron Starr, with his wife Emily, has been serving the youth and families of the Milo-Grogan community for 12 years, living there for almost ten. They founded RTNI (www.reachtni.org) in 2007 and believe that God will use “their kids” to turn the world upside down with the gospel, going to where there is little or no testimony of Christ. He has shared the gospel in every inhabitable continent except Australia, and longs to see believers enter into lasting, fruitful Christian ministry.