

In Week One we talked about the fact that we, as the church, should be people of prayer and our church assemblies should be known for our corporate atmosphere of prayer, houses of prayer. We were encouraged to expand our prayer list to include Missional Prayers in Week Two.

Today, I want to talk about partnering together in prayer, making a commitment to pray for me and I will make a commitment to pray for you. We as a church need to be praying for all the Pastors and leaders of this church and not only me. Today, I will ask you to become a “**Pastor’s Prayer Partner**”.

Pray for Your Pastors

I firmly believe in John 10:10. There are two plans for our lives: the steal, kill, and destroy plan, and the abundant life Jesus plan. Every day we make decisions and choices that lean into one plan or the other. If our adversary wants to destroy us, the church, he is working overtime to destroy the leaders of the church. Pastors need your prayers.

- *1,500 pastors in America leave the ministry every month due to moral failure, burnout, or trouble in the church. (18,000 per year)*
- *82% of Pastors and their wives are discouraged in their work because they are told daily of someone who is displeased with them.*
- *97% of all Pastors have been betrayed, falsely accused, or hurt by their trusted friends. As a result, 78% do not have a close friend.*
- *50% of Pastors’ marriages end in divorce.*
- *80% of all Pastors’ children have a low level of trust of people within the church.*

Everything rises and falls on leadership; it is clear why the devil attacks the pastor and his family.

Matthew 26:31 Then Jesus told them, “**This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.**

(Zechariah 13:7)¹

Lift Your Pastor’s Hands

Exodus 17:8-13 The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. **9** Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.” **10** So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. **11** As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. **12** When Moses’ hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. **13** So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.

1. **Godly leaders can be attacked.** Exodus 17:8 Amalek came and fought against Israel and their leaders. It didn’t matter if Moses was chosen by God, spoke with God, had a track record of God’s deliverance and favor, performed miracles and spoke with God on the Holy Mountain. Satan doesn’t care. He is not impressed. His goal stays the same. Steal, kill, destroy.
2. **Godly leaders cannot win the battle alone.** Exodus 17:9 Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.” We are in this fight together. I need you. You need me. We need each other.

¹ Dr. Bill Purvis, Pray for Your Pastor, The Secret to Receiving God’s Favor (Xulonpress.com, 2008), pg. 17-24

3. **Godly leaders are human. Exodus 17:12** Moses' hands got heavy. Alone, he couldn't keep on doing what he needed to do to ensure God's people victory. He needed help. Aaron and Hur rose to the challenge and they had to hold Moses' hands up. I get tired and weary and need you to help me hold up my hands and do what God has called me to do.

A. Jesus was tempted and attacked by the devil when He was alone, isolated in the wilderness, and physically weak after 40 days of fasting. Jesus prevailed and overcame the temptations to get what God wanted Him to have in anyway other than God's way. He overcame with the truth found in God's word, telling Satan, "It is written..."

But notice the thought pattern of the devil. **Luke 4:13 When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.**

The devil is always looking for a more opportune time. Concerning the Pastors, the devil might be thinking, *"I will get him later. I will get him when his guard is down, when he is sick or tired, when the church people stop praying for him."*

4. **Godly leaders working hand in hand as Prayer Partners equals victory.**

Pastor Peter Had a Target on His Back

If there was ever a pastor who had a huge target on his back, it was Pastor Peter, the Apostle, Missionary, and leader of the Jerusalem Church.

Peter had a big mission, a big commission, and he carried the weight of the rapidly growing church on his shoulders. In Acts 2, the church added and baptized 3000 in one day. Later in Acts 4 the church increased to 5000. Most historians believe the church in Jerusalem grew to about 100,000. Imagine the responsibility that brought Peter. And of course... *"Proof of progress is increased opposition."*

Acts 12:1-5 It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. 2 He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. 3 When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. 4 After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

Peter should have been out growing the church, advancing the kingdom, but now he is sitting in prison. Why? The quickest way to stop a movement is to put a target on the leader's back.

But the Church Was Praying

Acts 12:5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

The church wondered, "Will progress be on pause. They are after the three; Peter, James, and John. James had just been beheaded by Herod. If Herod can get to them, just think about what he can do to us! They are shook! Now Herod has Peter in jail. The enemy goes after the head. Concerning Peter, Jesus said in **Matthew 16:18, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.** Has Herod curtailed the church?

Jesus had commissioned Peter, telling him to, "Feed my lambs and sheep". The calling on Peter's life is to build the church, but now he is in prison, ministry on pause. Maybe even Peter is thinking about what Jesus said about his death.... People responded to Jesus' call, "Follow Me". But now, is this the end?

Peace Rather Than Panic

Acts 12:6 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance.

He slept because the church was praying! (Peter's life of prayer brought peace rather than panic!)

Acts 12:7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists.

Why Deliverance from Prison? Many People Had Gathered to Pray

Acts 12:11-12 Then Peter came to himself and said, “Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.” 12 When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.

Don’t Be Surprised When the Thing You Prayed for is Knocking at Your Door

The very thing they had prayed for was knocking at the door and they didn’t believe it. Rhoda, the servant girl, told them Peter was at the door, and they told her... **Acts 12:15 “You’re out of your mind,” they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, “It must be his angel.” 16 But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished.** The Church wanted Peter out of prison and now he is standing at the door.

- When you pray, you get the victory.
- When the church prays, the people get the victory.

When the People Prayed

- All the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

When Zachariah ministered to the Lord in temple, I believe he prayed again for a son. The angel appears and declares that John the Baptist would be born as the forerunner to Christ Jesus. But don’t miss the supernatural atmosphere that was created when the worshippers prayed in unity outside while Zechariah went in. **Luke 1:8-10 And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.**

- Jesus modeled prayer to His followers and when he asked them to pray for Him.

Matthew 26:36-38 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” 37 He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” Pray with me!

- In Acts 2 the Church was enabled by the Holy Spirit as they prayed.

Acts 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

- The Church was enabled to speak boldly when they asked in prayer.

Acts 4:23-24 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God.

Acts 4:29-31 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

- Paul and Silas ushered in the presence of Jesus in prison resulting in a jail break and salvations!

They were arrested on the way to a prayer meeting (Acts 16:16) and when they landed in prison they kept right on praying. **Acts 16:25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.**

- The secret weapon is a praying church.

As Paul gives God glory for past, present, and future deliverance, He lets us in on the secret weapon.

2 Corinthians 1:10-11 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, 11 as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

Pastor's Prayer Partners 2021

1) "Pastor's Prayer Partners". Today I'm inviting you to sign up to be a Pastor's Prayer Partner, but I only want you to do it if you will be seriously committed to it.

You will be committing to pray for your pastors' needs, their families' needs and your church every day.

- You will pray that God will protect your Pastors physically, morally, mentally, and spiritually.
 - Pastors will update you with specific prayer requests for them and their families.
- You will pray for Believers Church. (In Week Two we learned how to pray for Believers)

The Pastors will also commit to pray for you daily as well.

- Write on the card two – three specific things that you want God to do for you this year. No one will see these requests except the pastors.
- We will pray for you this year as you are praying for us.

2) "Pastor's Prayer Partner Team".

- This team commits to praying for the Pastors and Church daily.
- Every Sunday, this team will pray for the Pastors, the ministry teams, the teachers, and the service in general asking the Holy Spirit to move in the lives of the attendees.
- The team will meet and pray 30 minutes prior to the service and/or attend one, serve one and pray during the entire service.

3) Wednesday Night Corporate Prayer. On Wednesday nights, Believers will offer a time of corporate prayer in the sanctuary from at least 6:00 – 6:30 p.m. prior to Wednesday Night Life Groups.

- This could be a time for individual prayer, agreement in prayer, general or focused prayer, all with very little structure as we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us in prayer each week.
- All Children's/Student Ministries will be open early at 6:00 p.m. to accommodate prayer.
- (6:30 p.m.) Life Groups / EDGE / BK / Next Steps classes begin.

4) Tuesday Staff Prayer. Staff Prayer will continue to be open to the church on Tuesdays at noon.

5) Special Events Prayer Tents (EX: Christmas Party, Free Sale, other Outreaches etc.)

Pastor's Prayer Partner Commitment Form

Name: / Address: City/ States / Zip: / Birthdate: / Email: / Cell: / Other Phone:

- I commit to pray for my pastors' needs, their families' needs and my church every day.
- I commit to join a Pastor's Prayer Partner Team in prayer 30 minutes prior to at least two services per month to pray for God to move in the service.
- I commit to attend one, serve one and pray during the entire 1st or 2nd service one a month.

I would like the Pastor's to pray for me daily concerning these areas in my life.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____