

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

WEEK 3 HIS NOW

John 15:16

God created us to be His possession and for His glory. However, sin separated us from the holy God, and all of us fall short of His glory. But through God's grace, we have been justified freely through the redemption that came through Jesus Christ. Because of what Jesus did on the Cross, we are now reconciled with our Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ. As joint heirs with Christ, we share the "glory of Christ," which God the Father gave to Jesus. Hence, we are now His! We are His chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, special possessions, sheep, messengers, and masterpieces.

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HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE

JOHN 15:16

Frodo: "I wish the Ring had never come to me. I wish none of this had happened."

Gandalf: "So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us. There are other forces at work in this world, Frodo, besides that of evil. Bilbo was meant to find the Ring, in which case you were also meant to have it. And that is an encouraging thought."

—J. R. R. Tolkien

This work of fiction by Tolkien illustrates the reality that Jesus explains in John 15:16: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you."

We were meant to be His people. We are appointed to bear fruit. He is the One we belong to, and He is orchestrating the sequence and events of our lives so that our lives produce eternal results (fruit that lasts). You are His, and He has given you the time you have to impact eternity. That is an encouraging thought.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Father, we are privileged to belong to You. You are the source of any fruit that our lives produce. When we look more like Your Son than the day before, this is Your work in us. When we impact other believers with love, encouragement, or equipping, You are the source of that fruit. When we give gospel access to the lost and they respond to the truth, You are the one appointing that relationship. May we be led by Your Spirit daily so that all our resources and all our relationships bring glory to the name of Jesus. Amen.

HIS ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

1 PETER 2:5

Do you feel unworthy, out of place, or not good enough? The truth is, we all have feelings and emotions that sometimes make us feel that we are unwanted or unloved. We think having a big title, a million friends, the perfect relationship, or a bunch of money will make us feel worthy and loved. But the sad truth is, none of these things will make us worthy. But don't worry. Because of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, He opened an entrance for every believer to be in the presence of the Father through their faith. Jesus made you worthy!

You have direct access into God's holy presence, and it's not because of who you are or what you have done. It is because God loves you and thinks of you as a member of His holy priesthood. You have been accepted in Christ through your faith. You are now His ambassador, entrusted with the gospel. And you can come boldly into His presence, offering sacrifices of praise. As you live here on earth, you represent another kingdom—God's Kingdom. You are a stone set aside for God's specific project. So, remember—always remember—you are not alone. You are worthy, and no matter what, you are always loved in the presence of God.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for choosing me and giving me direct access to Your holy presence. Thank You for making me worthy. I know I can do all things through You, and I know You have great plans for my life—plans to use me to advance Your Kingdom. I praise You, Lord. Thank You for Your love, Your mercy, Your forgiveness, and most of all, for Your Son, Jesus. Please continue to humble my heart to bring others into Your presence, telling everyone they are loved, not alone, and they, too, are worthy. I pray all of this in Your Son's name. Amen.

HIS HOLY NATION

DEUTERONOMY 26:19

Have you ever been the last one picked? Teams are being chosen, and one by one the people next to you get put on their respective sides. With each passing selection, the knot in your stomach expands. *Will I ever get chosen?* On the other hand, have you ever had the privilege of being the first one picked? When you hear your name called out before all the others, your chest swells with pride at the honor you are receiving.

Israel was God's pick. Out of all the nations on earth, God said, *You are the one I am going to use to be on my side and reveal to the world who I am and what I am about.* What an honor! What a privilege! As we fast-forward to the New Testament, in Jesus Christ we find out that we, as the Church, become the ones who are picked by God. We are now the consecrated people who God has chosen to reveal who He is to the world.

What is unique to being picked by God as part of His holy nation is that we are built not to hold on to our position as God's chosen with pride in our own status but to serve and bless every other person and people on earth. Like Israel, we are blessed so that we can be a blessing. Being part of this holy nation comes with the responsibility to bless others and serve out of self-sacrificial love.



REFLECTION PRAYER

God, we thank You that in Jesus, You have picked us and we are on Your team, a holy nation and a royal priesthood. Thank You for inviting us into loving relationship with You. We are so grateful. Help us not to be prideful in our position as Your people, but instead, with hearts full of gratitude, help us bless those around us who do not yet know You. Give us the strength to sacrifice out of the richness of Your blessings in our lives to serve those who are still far from You. Amen.

HIS SPECIAL POSSESSION

DEUTERONOMY 14:2

As an introvert, there are many times I am content to observe and not stand out. I'm happy with serving in the background and blending in. It can be mindless in the chaos; it can be comfortable when everything else seems so drastically changing and radical. It's sometimes even easier that way, especially in this present world when it seems like any opinion or stance you take is both criticized and up for ridicule.

But right now, the truth about God is so blurred. We have a desperate need for people to be different, to stand out. And although the idea of standing out is often not one of the attributes we love as Christians, especially for introverts, the world is rapidly pushing and trying to tell us to stay in its boundaries, to stay to the side.

This competitive, power-hungry world can make you feel like you've been set aside, rejected, and unwanted. But God has way better plans for each of us than that. He calls us to be set apart, which means to be given an assignment or special task, to be a special possession—His special possession. And there is something wonderfully comforting and powerful in the realization that He has personally chosen each one of us to represent Him here on the earth. So, may we stand bold in this truth and feel compelled to stand up and out for Christ, to show His love and mercy to all the world.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Dear Lord, we are not here to be set aside; we hear Your call to be set apart. Help us to believe in this calling from You, and give us Your strength and wisdom in all our moments to stand out. Help us know that we cannot influence the world when we look just like it. Wrap us in Your holiness, grace, and love so we may remember to whom we fully belong and who we were meant to be. Thank You for always and forever choosing us. Amen.

HIS SHEEP

JOHN 10:27

For most of my life, I have been an incredibly self-confident person—not caring what others thought about me or needing anyone’s approval in my life. Then one day, my world was rocked by something that came seemingly out of nowhere. My confidence was shaken, and I found myself wanting assurance from those closest to me that I would be OK. This was new territory for me, and it was uncomfortable to say the least. I began questioning every move I made.

In one of the many moments on my knees before Jesus, I cried out, asking for help with the insecurity I was experiencing, and I felt him say, “I am your assurance. Your assurance is in me.” I was reminded that as close and reliant as we feel to those around us, the reality is that all we need is Jesus. Throughout Scripture, we see Jesus calling person after person to stop relying on every earthly thing they have—their job, family, title, money—and to just follow Him.

As I got up off my knees that day, I felt a strength and a peace—an assurance—that I knew could only come from Him. And though there have been many times I’ve had to go back to that word and remind myself that my assurance is in God, I’m thankful that He is faithfully there, ready to speak over me again and again.

Listen to His voice. He knows you. Follow Him.



REFLECTION PRAYER

Precious Father, You are our Good Shepherd. You know Your sheep, and Your sheep know Your voice. Thank You for Your faithfulness to love, guide, and protect us. Thank You for speaking to us. Father, help us to recognize and listen to Your voice. Protect us from the temptation to listen to others’ voices that would lead us astray and that might lead us away from what Your will is over our lives. Give us the strength and courage to follow You wherever You lead, even when others don’t approve. Father, You are our assurance and our strength, and we give You praise. Amen.

HIS MESSENGERS

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18

God has given each of us the ministry of reconciliation. In this sense, reconciliation has to do with making peace between parties that are at odds with one another. As followers of Jesus, we have the great and sacred responsibility of helping others come to peace with God. Christ made such peace possible through His sacrifice on the Cross. His part is complete, and ours is ongoing.

Every person you see is a candidate for reconciliation. We regard no one as unworthy of God's mercy or from a "worldly point of view" (2 Cor. 5:16). It is easy to view humanity from a worldly perspective, but we must see them from heaven's point of view.

Recently, a family member was telling me about her neighbors. There was a single mom struggling to make a living, a young couple who had taken in the wife's father, a soon-to-be high school graduate who was excited about his future, and a host of others. As she told me about the circumstances of people's lives, she had one prevailing burden, and it was that they would know Jesus! We discussed how that burden could translate into something intentional. Most of these people did not attend church and were unlikely to do so anytime soon.

I asked, "What if your living room became their church?" We agreed it was a great option for the ministry of reconciliation she had been given. This is the ministry each of us is called to do. Go for it!



REFLECTION PRAYER

Lord, help us to see others the way You see them. Grant us opportunities to bring Your peace to the hurting and hopeless of the world. Use our efforts to bring real and lasting change in the lives of others. We're especially mindful of those we love deeply and who are without Christ in the world. Save them, Lord. Holy Spirit, tenderize the hearts of those on the receiving end of our efforts so they may hear Your gospel and respond positively. We ask You to do this wherever we labor for Your glory and the good of others. Amen.

HIS HANDIWORK

EPHESIANS 2:10

Some Bible translations use the word *handiwork* while others use *masterpiece* for the very same context. When I think about the word *masterpiece*, the first thing that comes to my mind is a jewelry store that displays many beautiful items. There are always some masterpieces of jewelry that are not on regular display but kept in a safe and secure glass box and positioned in a place that makes them visible to everyone who comes to the store. What makes these pieces of jewelry so special? Obviously, they are more expensive and beautiful. The reason they look so beautiful is because the goldsmith took so much time and effort to craft them into a beautiful masterpiece. Each one has to go through a vigorous process to get to the place of perfection.

Our Heavenly Father sees you and me the same way. He does not see our mess, but the beautiful masterpiece that He can make us through Christ Jesus. In the same way that a metal goes through rigorous process to become a masterpiece, our salvation through Jesus Christ initiates the process of becoming a masterpiece in God's hand. Our salvation through Jesus cleanses us from all impurities and sins. As we begin to grow in our personal relationship with Jesus, He sanctifies us and empowers us for His service and holy living. He will begin to unfold His plans in our lives so that He can fulfill His purpose through us for His glory. We are His handiwork!



REFLECTION PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for creating us for Your purpose and glory. Help us to submit to You and walk according to Your direction so that You can lead us into the wonderful plans that You have already created for us. You are the Potter, and we are the clay. Break us, mold us, and shape us to be beautiful and useful vessels in Your hands for Your Kingdom work. Help us to have the confidence and assurance that we are Your handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works for Your glory! In Jesus' name, amen.

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

JULIE ARANT

Since 1979, Julie has been on a journey that has opened her eyes to beautiful people from the nations and has taken her as an “armchair traveler” to the ends of the earth. It all began when her father and mother met a special international friend at a local supermarket.

EDGAR CASTRO

Edgar was born in El Salvador. On October 16, 2004, he married Bertha N. Martinez, and they have two children. In 2016, he received the call to work as the Hispanic coordinator for the Central Pacific District. In 2020, Edgar was appointed to lead the CPD in the area of church multiplication.

HANNAH CASTRO

Hannah is the senior editor/story liaison at the National Office. She is passionate about drawing people closer to Jesus through testimony and story. She and her husband, Ciro, live in Columbus, Ohio.

CHARLES CHAPMAN

Since 2021, Charles has served as the candidate development specialist for Alliance Missions where he helps recruit, develop, and deploy IW candidates from all around the country. Charles moved from Pennsylvania to Ohio with his wife, Liz, and children, Julia and Marcus, in 2022 to join the National Office team.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

ISAAC CHARLES

Isaac serves as the pastor and church planter at Jubilee Intercultural Alliance Church in Columbus, Ohio, and he and his family are from India. He recently received his ordination with the Ohio Valley District. He has served in Church Ministries at the C&MA National Office in Reynoldsburg since September 2021. He is married to his wife, Leena, and they have two boys, Brayden and Bryan.

ADAM CLEWER

Adam is a father, son, follower, leader, minister, angler, writer, swimmer, and student of theology. He is surprisingly good at playing pool one-handed.

BILL CORBIN

Bill was a college pastor for 25 years, he has been married to Heidi for 25 years, and they have five kids. He loves Jesus, loves students, and loves the gospel!

ANA CUEVAS

Ana is the national director for Alliance Women. She has a bachelor's degree in missiology from Toccoa Falls College. She is a certified teacher and works as an ESL teacher in Ohio. Ana loves to go on road trips with her husband, Jorge, and two sons, Jorge Daniel and Jonatán.

MATT CYR

Matt currently serves as a workplace chaplain with Corporate Chaplains of America in southeast Wisconsin. He is married and has two young children. In his free time, he enjoys road cycling, good coffee, and family time.

MARY DELLOS

Mary has been serving with the C&MA since 1982. She and her husband, Don, have been church planters in the States, missionaries in Argentina, and dorm parents at the Alliance Academy in Ecuador. She has been serving companies as a chaplain in Denver for the past 18 years.

STACY DOUGLAS

Stacy currently serves alongside her husband in his role as district superintendent of the Central Pacific District of the C&MA. She is also a nurse on a med/surg floor. She is privileged to work at a Christian hospital in California that allows her to be both nurse and pastor.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

JUSTIN DUBOSE

Justin is the lead pastor at Alliance Bible Church in Baytown, Texas. He is also a CH (MAJ) in the USAR serving as chaplain for the 7th Psychological Operations Group (POG). A husband to Alanna since 2005, they have five beautiful children. He is passionate about training and empowering leaders.

ELLIOT ENNS

Elliot grew up as a third culture kid (TCK) with the C&MA Canada. He taught for several years at an international school in Ghana, where he met his wife, Morgan. They moved to Columbus, Ohio, in 2021, and he joined the National Office as an administrative coordinator for Alliance Missions in 2022.

PHYLLIS FITZWATER

Phyllis is a Board clinical chaplain and Board-certified pastoral counselor. She is a consecrated woman in ministry with The Christian & Missionary Alliance and has also served with her local hospice programs. She has served on the Board for the Orlando Health Bioethics Committee and was the Board chair for Life Legacy.

TOM FLANDERS

Tom serves as district superintendent for the Alliance Southeast. He and his wife, Chris, have served in the C&MA for more than thirty years, shepherding local congregations and the Alliance New England District prior to their most recent assignment.

THOMAS GEORGE

Thomas is a disciple of Jesus, husband, father, grandfather, pastor to pastors, and district superintendent. He is also the C&MA's corporate secretary.

SARAH GRIMES

Sarah lives in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, with her husband and three kids. They like trying new things and often find themselves in way over their heads. They tend to need Jesus an awful lot.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

LORIE HUNEYCUTT

Lorie is a wife, mom, and full-time caregiver. She resides with her husband, Paul, daughter Rylie (18), and son Hudson (16) in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. She is passionate about advocating for overlooked people groups and being a voice for the disability and caregiver communities through writing.

WILLIE JOHNSON

Willie is the pastor of Redefine Church in St. Louis, Missouri.

JENNY KARR

Jenny is the director for IW engagement and partnerships at the National Office. She has trained and coached thousands of Christian workers in partnership development over the past 10 years. She and her husband relocated to Ohio last year and have one daughter studying English at Vanderbilt University.

DAVID LANE

David and his wife, Susan, live in Ohio where David serves as the district superintendent. They have two adult kids. David passionately desires that the 7.3 million people living in his district have a repeated opportunity to see, hear, and respond to the gospel.

KYLE MAGSTADT

Kyle is the associate superintendent for church multiplication in the North Central District. He lives in Roseville, MN, with his wife, Molly, and two kids, June and Elm.

SARAH MANKO

Sarah was born and raised a Buckeye in central Ohio. She attends The Crosswalk (Alliance) Church in Reynoldsburg, OH, and is in her final year of dental school at OSU. She is excited to see where God will take her following graduation.

VICTOR MATOS

Victor is an Army chaplain serving in Fort Riley, Kansas. He served as an associate pastor in Colorado Springs before joining the chaplaincy. Victor is married to Christine, and they have two children, Caleb (18) and Allie (15).

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

KENDALL MCKEE

Kendall is a college pastor and residency coordinator at First Alliance Church in Lexington, Kentucky. He loves to spend his days discipling the next generation and walking through life with those close to him.

JESSICA MCCULLOUGH

Jessica lives in Lima, Ohio, with her husband and two boys. She serves in missions and family life at Shawnee Alliance Church and is also the district missions mobilizer for the Ohio Valley District. She enjoys reading, music, volleyball, card games, cats, cows and ducks, and Jesus.

MIRIAM NELSON

Miriam is a licensed teacher, counselor, mother of four, and wife of 19 years. She enjoys serving others and believes each person is gifted by God to bring heavenly influence. Who she is and who she is not are shaped by the hand of Jesus in her life!

DAVID PEPPERS

David fell in love with the Lord when he was 13. When he was around 15 or so, he slipped away from his first love. At the age of 21, he came back and has been pursuing the goodness of the Lord ever since. David is the executive director for Alliance Benefits.

JESSE PFAU

Jesse and his beautiful wife, Eli, have one son, Fitz. They enjoy food and currently reside in Columbus, Ohio.

KEVIN PIES

Kevin is the executive director for the Alliance Chaplain Ministries for military and federal chaplains. He is a retired U.S. Army chaplain colonel; a graduate of Crown College (1982); Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1987 (MDiv); and an Army War College Fellow graduate of the U.S. Institute of Peace (2014).

JEFF PRICE

Jeff serves as a teaching pastor at Alliance Community Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and is a U.S. Army chaplain. Jeff and his wife, Megan, have one daughter, Charley.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

ALAN RATHBUN

Alan serves on the Eastern PA District team and as cohost of the Alliance EquippingU podcast. He has also served as a youth pastor, church planter, and pastor. He's married to Sandra, and they have three married children. He loves road trips, baseball, disc golfing, and eating good ice cream.

AMY ROEDDING

Amy Roedding is passionate about helping the next generation step into their ministry calling in the Alliance family. She serves as the director for Candidate Recruitment and Development for The Alliance, and though her role oversees both men and women being developed for Kingdom work in The Alliance, she enthusiastically pursues helping women find their place in ministry. Amy also teaches spiritual formation for Crown College's online ministry program. Amy and her husband live in Pataskala, Ohio.

JOSH SADLON

Josh is a worship leader, event producer, and songwriter who serves with Alliance Youth and Alliance Worship. Josh, his wife, Emily, and son, Gideon, live on a small farm in Kentucky.

JIM SAPPPIA

Jim, with his wife Kathy and their three children, served with aXcess for 20 years in Thailand and a CAC country. They currently live in Pickerington, Ohio, where Jim serves as the director for Global Link at the National Office.

TERRY SMITH

Terry Smith is the vice president for Church Ministries for The Alliance. He and his wife, Ruth, have two married sons and five grandchildren. Terry holds degrees from Toccoa Falls College and Crown College. He is the author of *Changing Course: Leading Older Churches in a New Direction*.

RAYNA STRONG

Rayna and her husband, Brian, live in rural Ohio and are members and servants of Clear Fork Alliance Church. They have two adult sons and daughters-in-law. In 2022, Rayna began working at the National Office as the administrative assistant for Global Link.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

PANG THAO

Pang grew up with 12 siblings and attended church in the Hmong District her entire life. She has served in her church in a variety of capacities since accepting Christ at the age of 15. She serves with Envision in operations and moved with The Alliance from Colorado Springs to Columbus, Ohio.

STEVE TRUDEL

Steve has had the great joy of living on Cape Cod for almost 30 years. He has been the lead pastor of Cape Cod Bible Alliance Church for the last six years. He is married to Alison, a Jesus-loving follower of God, and they have four wonderful children.

MICHELLE UNWIN

Michelle (“Meesh”) is the director for the International Placement Office. She has been married to Steve for 32 years. They have two amazing adult children, Kaylee and Noah, and one weird dog, Moe. Meesh loves flip-flops, sunshine, and Coca-Cola, and she really loves raising up new workers!

OLIVIA VINSON

Olivia is the assistant campus pastor and chapel worship coordinator at Crown College in St. Bonifacious, MN. She has loved being a part of the C&MA family in Troy, MI, and Lexington, KY, and has a heart to develop the future leaders of the Church through higher education.

LISA VOGAN

Lisa has the privilege of serving in the Northeastern District as disciplemaking specialist. She has been serving the Alliance family for more than 30 years in various leadership roles. She lives near Buffalo, New York, with her husband, Rohn.

HALEY WARRICK

Haley is a lifelong resident of Columbus, Ohio, a devoted wife, and has been involved in worship and various children’s ministries. She is currently called to the ministry of motherhood, staying at home to raise her twin toddlers.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE WRITERS

JAMIE ZACHARIAS

Jamie serves as the children's ministry director of Jubilee Intercultural Alliance Church. She is married and has two children. Jamie has been teaching for 17 years, and her mission is to inspire the next generation and help them and their families grow in their faith and have a relationship with Jesus.