

40 DAYS OF *prayer*



THE ALLIANCE

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

WEEK 4

EVANGELISM (LOCAL AND REGIONAL)

All around us in this nation and right where each of us lives, there are people who need Jesus. They need the peace and hope that Jesus alone can bring. During our prayer times this week, let's allow the Spirit to bring people to our minds who need Jesus and need us to share His love and gospel with them. Jesus, bring new courage and fresh power upon us to fulfill Your mission.

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NEEDS IN YOUR CITY/COMMUNITY

JIM RUDD

Many factors determine whether a city struggles or thrives—housing and job markets, the climate, the school system, and population trends, to name a few. Some might seem too overwhelming for us to make a difference with our prayers.

King Solomon observed, “Through the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is destroyed” (Prov. 11:11). The wisest man in the Old Testament, a respected global leader, said that cities rise and fall based on how people talk about them.

How do you talk about your city? Would you characterize the way you speak about your city or region as blessing or cursing?

Cursing our cities sounds like: “Things will never get better” or “Our best days are behind us” or “This God-forsaken place.”

Blessing our cities sounds like: “God is working here!” or “Our city has a rich heritage of church unity” or “Anything is possible with God!”

Blessing our cities does not call for blind, unrealistic optimism. Blessing our cities is a matter of discovering the character and nature of God at work in the world around us.

It’s important that our prayers for our cities and regions don’t turn into a list of complaints about the quality of life. If Jesus has made us righteous, we have a responsibility to bless our cities. We should be quick to identify where God is active in our cities and always bless what He is doing.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Do you need to repent of cursing your city?
2. Where is God active in your city? Can you bless His work?
3. What are some areas of real need in your city or region that you could commit to pray blessing over this week?

CHURCHES TO BE RENEWED IN THEIR EVANGELISTIC PASSION ROSILIO ROMAN

When the Jews began persecuting the Jerusalem believers, many left the city, seeking refuge in Judea and Samaria (see Acts 8:3). As they scattered throughout the region, the believers shared the gospel with people everywhere. They became passionate about evangelism, and God affirmed their efforts with miraculous signs and wonders. Revival broke out throughout Samaria—the same region Jesus and His apostles had visited during His earthly ministry. God moved so powerfully that the disciples remaining in Jerusalem wound up sending Peter and John to confirm the news of the many conversions, praying for the new Samaritan believers to receive the Holy Spirit (see Acts 8:14–17).

Pondering on the current state of affairs in the United States, with so much hopelessness from the COVID-19 crisis and ongoing racial tension, I wonder if it will take persecution or great opposition from those hurting masses to scatter and propel us throughout the land to proclaim the gospel to everyone we encounter. Perhaps God may allow a season of persecution and suffering (see Acts 8:1–3) among our churches to have Spirit-filled men and women rise like Philip did in Samaria to spread the good news (see Acts 8:5–8).



PRAYER POINTS:

1. May every Alliance church gather for a season of prayer, asking God to send a fresh anointing of His Holy Spirit over our entire denomination.
2. May this prayer effort result in a great number of Alliance people sharing their testimonies of God's transforming power with everyone they meet.
3. I wonder if you, the reader, would join me in praying for God to renew our evangelistic passion to reach the lost in our families, communities, and workplaces. Would you pray with me to that end?

LOST PEOPLE IN MY SPHERE OF LIFE/ EVANGELISTIC COURAGE JEN VOGEL

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them (Heb. 7:25).

Through the years, I have prayed fervently with women, interceding and pleading for children and grandchildren who were not walking with Jesus. Primarily through the ministry of Moms in Prayer International™, I have gained both confidence and boldness in my prayers for the lost in our families.

Some women bear the heartache of a family member who was once near to God and is now distant; others plead for children and grandchildren who have not yet responded to the gospel. In both cases, we have claimed the truth found in Scripture to guide our intercession.

We know God does not want anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance (see 2 Peter 3:9). The Good Shepherd is willing to leave the ninety-nine to search for the one lost sheep until He finds it (see Luke 15:4). We can join God in this lovingly relentless pursuit. Today, I encourage you to pray these prayers for lost members in your own family. Better yet, connect with a friend and pray them together.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Prayer for mercy. "Father God, you are not willing that _____ be separated from you. Instead, you desire reconciliation with him/her. I pray your mercy on _____. Rescue _____ from the dominion of darkness and bring him/her into the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ, whom you love" (2 Pet. 3:9, Col. 1:13).
2. Prayer for myself. "Father God, may your kingdom come and your will be done today, on earth as it is in heaven. Jesus, I do believe you are able to save completely those who come to God through you, including _____. Help my unbelief" (Matt. 6:10, Heb. 7:25, Mk. 9:24).
3. Prayer of praise. "Father God, you are rich in mercy. Because of your great love, you made me alive with Christ even when I was dead in transgressions—it is by grace that I have been saved" (Eph. 2:4-5).

PRODIGALS AND LOST LOVED ONES

RON WALBORN

I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. [26] They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be a blessing (Ps. 37:25–26).

The Lord gave Psalm 37 to my wife, Wanda, and me early in our ministry. It promises God's faithfulness not only to the righteous but also to their children. Even before we had children, we began to pray God's blessing and favor over them and their future families. As our children grew and entered their teen years, those prayers became much more intense. Following are lessons we learned over the years about praying your children into their Psalm 37 place of blessing.



PRAYER POINTS:

- 1.** Pray out of faith, not fear. Often when our children go through crisis, we shift from a position of faith to fear. We have learned that prayers birthed in fear are weak. But when we keep our eyes on a God who is always faithful, our own faith begins to arise. This frees us from the spirit of fear.
- 2.** As you pray for your children, remember they are writing their own testimony—not yours. We can certainly pray that what the enemy means for evil will be redeemed for God's glory in their lives, but never forget you have to love and pray for them even when the path they choose is not one you would have chosen for them. This frees us—and them—from the unhealthy spirit of control.
- 3.** Finally, pray for yourself—specifically that you will become a place of mercy and grace instead of one of punishment and judgment. Years ago, the Holy Spirit whispered in our ears that prodigals will never return home to a place of judgment but only to one of mercy and grace. Ask God to show you how to win the battle for their hearts and not just their behavior. This frees us from the spirit of religion.

THE CALL FOR RESILIENT CHILD DISCIPLES LEAH BROACH

Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert (Isa. 43:19).

The early portion of Isaiah's prophetic poetry is a reflection on the grim effects of generations disobeying God and caving to wicked cultures. Our present-day circumstances often mimic this decay. It seems no one is listening, and old methods to reach new generations no longer work. But God ultimately used Isaiah's words to bring lasting hope through the promised Redeemer. His message shouts to believers today this fresh call to raise generations that know and love Jesus.

This courageous call to faith must include reaching our children. We are not to get distracted or discouraged by the noise of the pervasive culture. We are responsible for pressing into the lives of children with the good news. Nothing is more transformative to a generation or culture than resilient disciples of Christ. And nothing is more damaging than failing in our responsibility to reach and raise children who know and love God.

Reaching today's children and growing their faith resiliency amid a world screaming ideologies counter to Scripture is no small task. We need fresh perspective from the Creator Himself. We do well to remember that children have the full capacity for transformative faith. This kind of faith starts with us passing on the truths of the whole Bible, living out the gospel in our daily lives, and showing radical love to the world. Doing so ensures we are sending living testimonies to the present and the future of the power of salvation through Christ. When we prioritize reaching the children of our communities, we can expect God to do new and beautiful things now and in the coming generations.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Lord, give me eyes to see all the children in my sphere of influence, and burden my heart for their faith development.
2. Grant me compassion, creativity, and innovation to bring Your truth to a generation that is taught subjective truth.
3. Pour over me Your perspective and excitement for the NEW thing You will do in this generation.

REACHING AND DISCIPLING TEENS

DAN BOAL

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up (Deut. 6:6–7).

Have you ever had a conversation that changed the direction of your day, week, month—or life? Like going to the store and trying on new clothes to see what you like, teenagers are constantly trying out new thoughts, activities, behaviors, and philosophies of thinking. These activities are critical to identity formation. As they find concepts and behavior they like, they will eventually adopt them as their own and discard the concepts and actions that don't resonate with the core of who they believe themselves to be. Think back on your own life and identify seasons where you “tried on” different behaviors simply because someone suggested you should. Are you embarrassed, ashamed, and confused? Or grateful, excited, and happy?

Deuteronomy 6:6–7 emphasizes the older generation's powerful responsibility to be the initiators of that one conversation with the next generation that will change their life. It's not a teen's responsibility to ask about Jesus and what it is like to follow Him. It is an adult's responsibility to inform them EVERY MOMENT POSSIBLE how good and wonderful it is to follow after Jesus and invite them to try it for themselves. You just might be the person who has the one conversation that changes their life forever.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Jesus, is there a younger person in my life I can talk with about following You?
2. Jesus, give me the words to say and courage to share the many stories of Your faithfulness in my life in a way that resonates with this young person.
3. Jesus, allow the generation of believers in my church to be found faithful in Your eyes to pass on the faith from one generation to the next.

CHURCH PLANTS AND AREAS NEAR YOU THAT NEED A NEW CHURCH IVÁN MARTÍ

He replied, “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times” (Matt. 16:2–3).

Have you ever lost your wallet or your keys? I have. Typically, we begin by searching the kitchen counter, dresser, dining room table, etc. Why do we never check our pockets first?

Sometimes we can miss what is right under our noses. Did you know that more than 40 percent of members at successful church plants were previously unchurched? Every year, about 4,000 churches are planted in the United States, and about 3,700 churches close—leaving a net gain of only about 300 churches per year. Church planting needs to increase by two to three times to address population growth and anticipated closures.

Church plants are needed everywhere in the United States—especially in the Northeast and on the West Coast. Urban centers continue to grow at a staggering rate, but 54 percent of Americans reside in small towns or the rural countryside. Both need churches that thrive in their communities to reach the lost.

We must pray to the Lord of the harvest to send prayerful, Spirit-filled laborers into the fields. In this moment in history, we have a unique opportunity for great Kingdom impact. Will we discern the times in which we live and respond as God would have us? Or will we look elsewhere and ignore what is right in front of us?



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that believers are willing to participate in reaching the lost in their communities.
2. Pray that people will contribute to a church plant, whether financially or by volunteering.
3. Pray that more Alliance churches will hear the call to plant multiplying churches.