

# WORD FOR 2023

ANNUAL PRAYER AND FASTING RETREAT

PRAY FOR A "WORD" FOR THE YEAR!

I LOVE THE FOCUS IT GIVES!

**2023 CHURCH: KEEP PERSONAL: TRUST**

**Definition of KEEP:**

1. To have or retain possession of.
2. To cause to continue in a specified condition, position, course, etc.

- 1) To have or retain possession of.

Keep those you entrusted to us  
Keep the right foundations  
Keep the right focus  
Keep trusting in dependency

- 2) To cause to continue in a specified condition, position, course, etc.

Keep moving forward  
Keep taking ground  
Keep speaking truth

**TEXT FOR TODAY: John 17:15-21**

**Jesus Prays for His Disciples**

**John 17:15-19 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.<sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.<sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.<sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.<sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.**

**Jesus Prays for All Believers**

**John 17:20-21 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,<sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.**

**BREAK IT DOWN: John 17:15-19**

**Verse 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.**

.....**not that you take them out of the world**

WHY ARE WE STILL HERE?

-We are here for a purpose! A Mission! MAKE DISCIPLES! Great commission!

-God's will that none would perish, but that all would know Him!

**2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**

.....**but that you protect them from the evil one.**

John 10:10 says .....Devil comes to steal & kill and destroy.....-Jesus give life to the full

-John 16:33 In this world you WILL have trouble, but take heart...I have overcome the world!

**Verses 16-17: They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.<sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.**

**Sanctify: to set it apart for God's special use and purpose.**

HOW?? BY THE WORD.....YOUR WORD IS TRUTH!!!!

**2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

**Hebrews 4:12-13 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.<sup>13</sup> Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.**

**GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH!!! THERE IS A STANDARD!**

**-IT IS WHAT SANCTIFIES (SET'S US APART) FROM THE WORLD!**

**Verse 18-19: As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.<sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified**

-We are now the hands and feet of Jesus extended to the world HE loves!

-He wants us (Sanctified) SET APART for his PURPOSE AND PLANS!

**Verse 20-21 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.**

-HUGE BIBLICAL THEME: UNITY & RELATIONSHIP!

LOVE GOD/LOVE PEOPLE

**Philippians 2:1-2 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.**

-JUST GET ALONG!!!!

HOW?? THE ANSWER IS IN THE NEXT 2 VERSES

**Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.**

**HOW: “Keep our eyes outside of our walls”**

**May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.**

Our UNITY.....is a testimony to who Jesus is!

-CHURCH IS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST!

**JOHN 13:34-35** “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

THAT IS THE MARK OF TRUE SPIRITUAL MATURITY!

**Ephesians 4:1-5** Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. **2** Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. **3** Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. **4** There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6** one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

**WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER.....WE NEED EACH OTHER!**

**Ephesians 4:11-16** So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12** to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. **14** THEN we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. **15** Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. **16** From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its WORK.

Maturity is understanding WE ARE ON A TEAM.....Better together!!!!

WE NEED EACH OTHER!!!

THE CHURCH IS NOT A BUILDING OR A PASTOR.....  
.....IT IS A FAMILY!!!

AND WE NEED YOU!!!!!!

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4. To cause to continue in a specified condition, position, course, etc.

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HOW DO WE DO THIS????? STRATEGY:

LOVE GOD  
LOVE PEOPLE  
LOVE LIFE

Isolation:

Watch Vikings alone (ON TV) .....with a group I know, or a stadium with people I don't know!

**-WE NEED EACH OTHER!!!!**

We need more help! MORE GROUPS! MORE LEADERS!

**THAT IS THE HEART BEHIND THE MINGLER!**