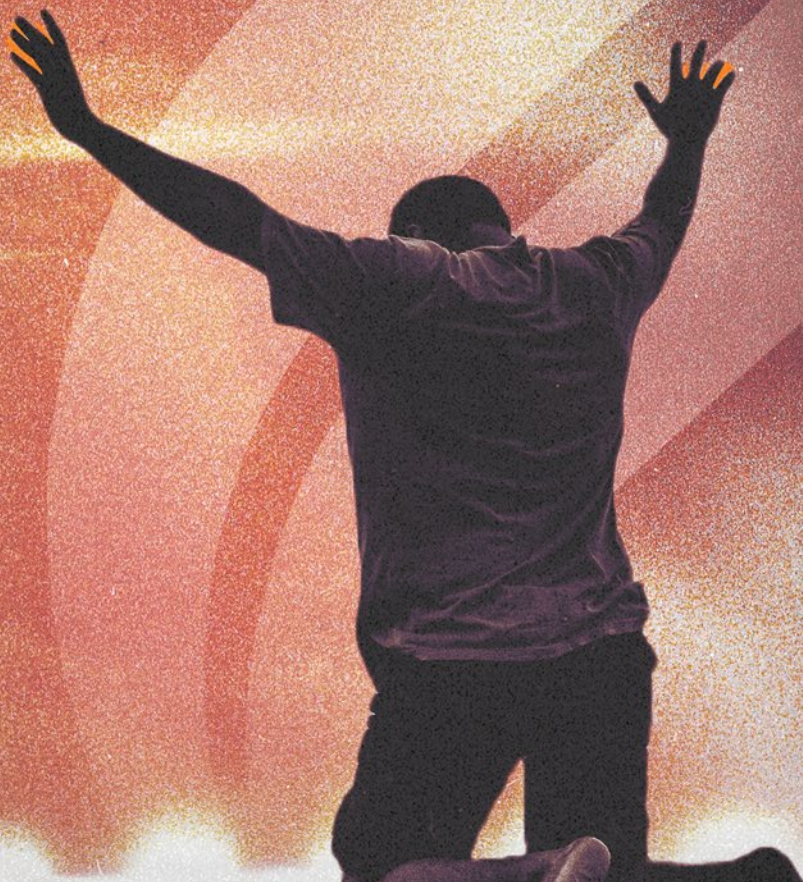


SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

JUNE 4-11, 2023



SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

J U N E 2 0 2 3

JAN-FEB

STRENGTHEN YOUR CORE

Beliefs & Convictions

MAR-APR

STRENGTHEN YOUR LOVE

God & Others

MAY-JUN

STRENGTHEN YOUR PRAYERS

Intercession & Spiritual Warfare

JUL-AUG

STRENGTHEN YOUR WITNESS

Taking The Gospel To The Nations

SEP-OCT

STRENGTHEN YOUR GRIP

Spiritual Growth & Leadership Development

NOV-DEC

**STRENGTHEN YOUR LOVE
AND SERVICE TO OTHERS**

Letting Our Light Shine

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3400 Moanalua Road, Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

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FOREWORD—CHURCH STRONG

- ❖ **Matthew 16:18 HCSB—And I also say to you that you are Peter, and ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE FORCES OF HADES WILL NOT OVERPOWER IT.**

Jesus Christ, The Builder, Chief Cornerstone, And Head Of His Church

Without Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world to redeem humanity, there is no Church. The Lamb of God gave His life and shed His blood to birth His Church into being by giving eternal life to all who believe in Him, making them sons and daughters of God. This new birth in Christ transforms sinners into Christ's family, body, and co-heirs.

The collective body of God's sons and daughters is the Church, also known as the *ekklesia* or "called out" ones. Because Christ Himself is the **ORIGINATOR, AUTHOR, BUILDER, AND CHIEF CORNERSTONE** of His Church, His saints take on **HIS IDENTITY AND NATURE**. Jesus Christ declares in Matthew 16:18, that He will build His Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail or overcome it. Who is He, this Builder of the Church? In Colossians 1:15–18 NKJV the Holy Spirit reveals Christ to all.

- ❖ **He is the IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, the firstborn over all creation. For BY HIM ALL THINGS WERE CREATED that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. ALL THINGS WERE CREATED THROUGH HIM AND FOR HIM. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in ALL THINGS HE MAY HAVE THE PREMINENCE.**

Jesus Christ is God Almighty and the Lord over all from eternity to eternity. He holds eternity, thrones, dominions, powers, and the whole universe in the palm of His hand. Nothing exists without Him, for all things, visible and invisible, were created through Him and for Him. **HE IS GOD ETERNAL, SUPERNATURAL, INVINCIBLE, AND TRANSCENDENT OVER ALL.** He is infinitely and immortally superior and supreme. **HE IS GOD, THE UTMOST AND THE ONE AND ONLY LORD ALMIGHTY.** There is none before Him, above Him, or beside Him. In His person, nature, presence, and power, He is forever unequaled, untouchable, unbeatable, and incomparable. He is immortally limitless and matchless, without

beginning and end, because He is the Alpha and Omega.

At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is God as the Holy Spirit takes an oath in Romans 14:11 NIV, **“AS SURELY AS I LIVE,’ says the Lord, ‘EVERY KNEE WILL BOW BEFORE ME; EVERY TONGUE WILL ACKNOWLEDGE GOD.”** This is He who is building His Church. Therefore, no one and nothing can overcome His Church. He has birthed and built His Church to prevail over all—to take down powers of darkness, rulers of wickedness, and all that is of the prince of this world.

We are CHURCH STRONG because JESUS is not only the BUILDER OF HIS CHURCH, He is our CHIEF CORNERSTONE upon whom we, the living stones, are COLLECTIVELY BUILT TOGETHER AS HIS SPIRITUAL HOUSE. The Church shall prevail and shine forth His glory to the ends of the world (1 Peter 2:4–10). We, the Church, are to be like the children of faith in Hebrews 11, who triumphed in strength through violent and severe persecution. They were undefeatable as they lived in God’s power, displaying His glory in the darkest of times. They were Church Strong. Hebrews 11:33–34 LEB testifies to these.

❖ **WHO THROUGH FAITH CONQUERED kingdoms, ACCOMPLISHED justice, OBTAINED what was promised, SHUT the mouths of lions, EXTINGUISHED the effectiveness of fire, ESCAPED the edge of the sword, WERE MADE STRONG FROM WEAKNESS, BECAME MIGHTY IN BATTLE, PUT TO FLIGHT ENEMY BATTLE LINES.**

We are Church Strong because CHRIST, THE ETERNAL LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, IS THE HEAD OF HIS CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS BODY. Even as the head cannot be separated from the body, nothing can separate Christ from His Church. **We are eternally and inseparably joined to Him. THEREFORE, CHRIST IS THE LIFE, THE POWER, AND THE STRENGTH OF HIS CHURCH.** As Christ, the Head, is alive, indestructible, eternal, supernatural, magnificent, and powerful so is His body, the Church. **WE ARE CHURCH STRONG!**

Christ’s Supernatural And Eternal Church: Magnificent, Full Of Glory And Power

By faith in Jesus Christ, the Church (formerly sinners) is born-again into a new existence as sons and daughters of God. 2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV says, **“Therefore, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION; old things have passed away; BEHOLD, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW.”**

The old creature has been eternally done away by this new birth, and a new creation comes into being. Those born-again in Christ are no longer children of disobedience but children of God; no longer living in darkness but dwelling in the light; and no longer lost, wretched, condemned, but found, belonging to Christ and righteous. Therefore, the Church must walk worthy of Jesus Christ, who saved and translated us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God.

We also understand that He has brought us into a SUPERNATURAL, SPIRITUAL, AND ETERNAL UNION with Him, as HE INDWELLS US BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT. For this reason, our born-again and regenerated spirit can hear, know and respond to His indwelling Holy Spirit, who testifies of God's born-again children, His Church, in Romans 8:14–17 NKJV.

❖ *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you **RECEIVED the SPIRIT OF ADOPTION by whom we cry out, "ABBA, FATHER."** **THE SPIRIT HIMSELF BEARS WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT THAT WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD, and if children, then heirs—HEIRS OF GOD AND JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST, IF INDEED WE SUFFER WITH HIM, THAT WE MAY ALSO BE GLORIFIED TOGETHER.***

In Matthew 16, when Jesus declared to Peter, "I will build My Church," He was speaking forth the eternal will, purpose, and work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is the birthing and building of His prevailing Church. Who can refute, deny, obstruct, or thwart what God has set to do before the foundation of the world—to birth and build His spiritual, supernatural, indestructible, and overcoming Church (Ephesians 1)? Who can stop the hand of God? Who can prevent His will? None and nothing can in the past, present, and future.

Jesus was not referring to building a weak, defeated, timid, vacillating, tired, inferior, lukewarm, and mediocre Church. **IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR CHRIST TO BUILD ANYTHING WEAK, POWERLESS, AND INFERIOR, especially through the sacrifice of His life and the shedding of His blood.** He did not come to build a Church with a form of godliness but denying its power. Jesus did not come to build a soft and fuzzy church that is seeker sensitive, but rather a **STRONG AND MIGHTY CHURCH that is SEEKER CONVICTING; NOT A CRUISE SHIP BUT GOD'S BATTLESHIP on His mission to set the captives free and destroy the works of the devil.** This Church Jesus gave His life to build is **strong, passionate, powerful, mighty, on fire, and overcoming that even the COMBINED FORCES OF HELL WILL NOT BE ABLE TO OVERPOWER IT.** Nothing past, present,

or future can prevail against His Church—no man, organization, entity, power, or EVEN TIME.

When the Church fails to live as Christ's supernatural, magnificent, powerful body, the problem is with the Church. Has the Church lost the knowledge of who we are in Christ Jesus? Has the Church forgotten that Jesus Christ is the Author, Builder, Chief Cornerstone, and Head of His Church? **Have we become ignorant that HE HAS PUT ETERNITY IN HIS CHURCH? We, His Body, are spiritually indestructible, and imperishable.** Have we forgotten that Christ has built His Church upon the Rock and that all the collective forces of hell are impotent and doomed in their attempts to prevail against the Church? Truthfully the Church shall crush the forces of hell through the Blood of the Lamb, by the Word of our testimony as we love not our lives unto death (Revelation 12:11)! **IN POWER, STRENGTH, AND OBEDIENCE TO THE LAMB, HIS CHURCH SHALL SEE HIS KINGDOM COME, AND HIS WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN** (Matthew 6:10).

Understanding Satan's Unmitigated Hatred For—And His Attacks Against—God And His Church

1 Peter 5:8 ESV warns us concerning satan, **“BE SOBER-MINDED; BE WATCHFUL. Your adversary THE DEVIL PROWLs AROUND LIKE A ROARING LION, SEEKING SOMEONE TO DEVOUR.”** The devil is ruthlessly evil and unspeakably wicked and full of hate. His absolute passion is to seek to attack in order to steal, kill and destroy. **Paul instructs us in 2 Corinthians 2:11 NKJV to give no room to the devil, “LEST SATAN SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US; FOR WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES.”**

To be Church Strong, we must KNOW our adversary, his devices, and ARISE TO WAR against him and PREVAIL. We must awaken to the knowledge of his unmitigated hatred and unrelenting attacks against God and His Church. **His whole being is in utter rebellion against God, and he has set himself up with all his minions to oppose God and everything that is of God.** The Church must not fall into the trap of fearing or underestimating him, nor should we presumptuously ignore him. The Holy Spirit, through the Bible, teaches much about satan, demonic spirits, rulers of darkness, and principalities so that we will not be ignorant. **THE HOLY SPIRIT ALSO OFTEN WARNS US TO BE SOBER, ALERT, AND WATCHFUL.** If we are not, instead of overcoming satan, we become his easy prey—easy to trap, pounce on, and devour. **In Ephesians 6, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, firmly instructs all believers to PUT ON THE**

WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD AND THEN TO STAND AND WITHSTAND AGAINST THE WILES OF THE ENEMY.

From the beginning of creation, satan had sought out Adam and Eve to steal, kill and destroy. If he could outwit Adam and Eve and tempt them to fall into sin, they who were created in the very image of God—perfectly holy, untouched by anything sinful, unwounded by brokenness, having no knowledge of the fallen flesh nature and walking in perfect intimacy with God—how then can we overcome him if we do not keep alert, watchful and sober more than Adam and Eve? The Church’s mistake in trying not to “glorify” the devil or give him too much attention is to diminish satan and treat him casually in contradiction to the warnings of the Holy Spirit. **We become presumptuously and foolishly careless, ignorant, and asleep towards our enemy, his wickedness, and his evil devices against us.** It is like being thrust into the deadliest warfare but totally naked without our armor on, untrained, unprepared, unarmed, and ignorant.

God warned Cain in Genesis 4:7 NLT, “You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then **WATCH OUT! SIN IS CROUCHING AT THE DOOR, EAGER TO CONTROL YOU. BUT YOU MUST SUBDUE IT AND BE ITS MASTER.**” If God had to warn Cain against satan’s device seeking to control him, how can we not warn ourselves and others against satan, his evil plans, and strategies against the Church? **ONE OF SATAN’S VERY EFFECTIVE WEAPONS AGAINST THE CHURCH IS TO LULL US INTO FALSE SECURITY AND EASE THAT WE LOSE ALL SPIRITUAL WATCHFULNESS.** We are no longer the army of God but a social club. We are no longer God’s battleship, but a cruise ship. We party more than prepare for war. We complain more than we combat the enemy. We confess that we are in warfare but live to the contrary. **There is no watchfulness of a soldier, no urgency in readiness, or being armed for battle.**

Unless we are saved, walking in obedience to God, we are no match for satan. Without God, we will be the enemy’s easy prey, and we will be devoured. When the Bible assures us that greater is God in us than satan that is in the world, it does not mean God intends for the Church to sit back, be at ease and be blessed while cruising our way into heaven. **SPIRITUAL WARFARE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.** Abraham was called to war, the children of Israel were constantly at war against their enemies, and the Church has been at war with satan from its inception. **This is the time to hear the cry of the Holy Spirit for us to awake and arise to war in Ephesians 5:8–17 NKJV.**

❖ *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **WALK AS***

CHILDREN OF LIGHT (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), **finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.** For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: **“AWAKE, YOU WHO SLEEP, ARISE FROM THE DEAD, AND CHRIST WILL GIVE YOU LIGHT.”** See then that you **WALK CIRCUMSPECTLY**, not as fools but as wise, **REDEEMING THE TIME, BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE EVIL. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.**

Are we out of step with the Holy Spirit in these end times? There is a call to war against satan and his devices. The Holy Spirit is calling the Church to awake, arise, and be equipped, armed, suited up for battle and to attack and overcome the enemy. We must take a stand—**FIGHT AND WIN THE WAR.** Has the Church been lulled to sleep by being engrossed with the cares of life, personal needs, losing battles in our personal lives, and consumed with self-absorption to be blessed and have a good life? **WHERE ARE THE SOLDIERS? WHERE ARE THE SPIRITUAL MARINES? Where are the Davids, Daniels, Esthers, Joshuas, Calebs, Pauls, Peters, and Johns?** Satan, like Goliath, is striding, parading, mocking, shouting, and challenging with the intent to steal, kill and destroy. Is the Church in hiding, distracted, or slumbering? Are we fighting for our family, children, neighbors, and nations to be saved? Are we battling without yielding an inch to the enemy for all generations to come into God’s kingdom? **UNLESS WE WAR AND WIN, WE ARE NOT CHURCH STRONG.**

To Be Church Strong We Must Never Concede But Prevail In Warfare

To be Church Strong, WE MUST NEVER CEDE NOR CONCEDE TO THE FLESH OR THE DEVIL at any time, place, or circumstance. They are both lethal enemies to the *ekklesia*. **THE FLESH, not the devil, IS THE NUMBER ONE ENEMY OF THE CHURCH.** The devil we can crush and cast out by submitting to God and warring according to God’s spiritual weapons. Revelation 12:11 NKJV says, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” However, the flesh cannot be defeated in the same way. It cannot be cast out. **The flesh is the persisting, rotting corpse of the fallen nature of humanity because of Adam’s and Eve’s choice to rebel against God.** They chose to reject and resist God

in submission to satanic counsel. **Therefore, the flesh is a living, cooperative, and an all-in partner to satan in any spiritual warfare. IT WILL ALWAYS YIELD AND SUBMIT TO THE DEVIL AND HIS DEVICES.** The flesh cannot be counseled, encouraged, negotiated with, or subdued to submit to God. It is incapable of that because its very nature results from rebellion. We must immediately and ruthlessly put it to death. **IT MUST BE VIOLENTLY AND COMPLETELY RENDERED LIFELESS AND POWERLESS BY CRUCIFYING IT.** Matthew 11:12 NKJV declares, **“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.”**

When satan came to tempt Jesus after forty days and nights of prayer and fasting, the devil was trying to entice Jesus to act in a fleshly way by turning rocks into bread, casting Himself down from a high place and testing God, and ultimately bowing down to worship the devil to gain the world. Jesus refused his bait and rebuked him with the Word of God. **Jesus chose to remain in submission to God. He resisted the devil and did not act in a fleshly manner.** The Holy Spirit speaks concerning the flesh as an enemy of God in Romans 8:5–8 NKJV.

❖ *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. **FOR TO BE CARNALLY MINDED IS DEATH, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. BECAUSE THE CARNAL MIND IS ENMITY AGAINST GOD; FOR IT IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD, NOR INDEED CAN BE. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.***

Any believer living in the flesh cannot be trained, armed, and equipped to fight in spiritual warfare. **The fallen flesh is ENEMY NUMBER ONE to the BELIEVER because the “CARNAL MIND IS ENMITY AGAINST GOD.”** It is not subject to the Law of God because it cannot. **TO BE CHURCH STRONG, WE MUST SUMMARILY AND CONCLUSIVELY DEAL A DEATH BLOW TO THE FLESH.** If not, it will not cease to violently oppose God—His word, will, and ways. Its very nature is rebellion against the Holy Spirit and the things of God. We will lose the battle if we do not put it to death. We will never be the victor but the victim of demonic strategies. Indeed, we cannot be Church Strong. Other scriptures affirming this truth are:

❖ **Romans 8:13 NKJV**—*For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

- ❖ **Galatians 5:17 ESV**—*For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.*
- ❖ **Galatians 5:24 NIV**—*And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

To be Church Strong, we must know our enemies that we war against and prevail over them. We must never cede nor concede to them. Just like the *ekklesia* in Hebrews 11, we, too, can be Church Strong by the power and the grace of the Holy Spirit. Our passion for God can grow stronger amid pain and suffering. Our commitment to love and serve Him can grow deeper in the furnace of testing and persecution. Our obedience to Him can become unshakeable even in the face of death. **WE ARE GOD'S BATTLESHIP ON THIS EARTH. WE ARE HIS MANIFESTED PRESENCE AND GLORY.** We are prevailers, more than conquerors, and we can do all things through His Holy Spirit, who strengthens us. **WE ARE CHURCH STRONG!**

HOW DO WE BECOME CHURCH STRONG? WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO TO BE STRENGTHENED AND BE THE CHURCH JESUS ENVISIONED? These are things we can do as Christ's *ekklesia* to be Church Strong:

- **Strengthen our core**—beliefs and convictions.
- **Strengthen our love**—for God and others.
- **Strengthen our prayers**—intercession and spiritual warfare.
- **Strengthen our witness**—at home and abroad.
- **Strengthen our grip**—spiritual growth and leadership development.
- **Strengthen our love and service to others.**

Notes:

CALLED TO SOLEMN ASSEMBLY: JUNE 2023

Week 1 — Personal Preparation (May 28–June 3)

Week 2 — Corporate Prayer And Fasting (June 4–11)

Regional and Corporate Prayer Schedule (June 5–11)

Morning Prayer	6:00–7:00am	Mon–Fri	Red Hill Central Oahu Metro East Honolulu Windward
	6:00–7:00am	Mon, Wed, Fri	Leeward
Corporate Noon Prayer	12:00–1:00pm	Mon–Fri	Red Hill
Corporate Evening Prayer	6:00–8:00pm	Mon–Fri	Red Hill
Personal and Family Prayer	Anytime	Sat	No Corporate Assembly
Thanksgiving and Exhortation	6:00–8:00pm	Sun	Red Hill

Instructions For All Concerning Prayer Time

Please do not fellowship during times of prayer. Let us honor the presence of God and guard the spiritual sobriety and sanctity of the occasion. Be encouraged to wait on God and hear Him. Take notes of what you hear.

Evening Prayer Schedule:	6:00–6:30pm	Personal Prayer
	6:30–7:30pm	Corporate Prayer
	7:30–8:00pm	Personal Prayer

DAILY PRAYER FOCUS FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 4, 2023

Day 1 (Sunday)	Ministry of the Word (AM and PM services)
Day 2 (Monday)	Strengthen Your Prayers: Intercession and Spiritual Warfare
Day 3 (Tuesday)	Strengthen Your Witness
Day 4 (Wednesday)	Strengthen Your Grip
Day 5 (Thursday)	Strengthen Your Love and Service to Others
Day 6 (Friday)	Strengthen by the Power of the Holy Spirit
Day 7 (Saturday)	Personal and Family Prayer
Day 8 (Sunday)	Thanksgiving and Exhortation

WEEK OF PERSONAL PREPARATION

May 28–June 3, 2023 (Sunday to Saturday)

Six Steps To Preparation For Solemn Assembly

Sunday, May 28 through Saturday, June 3, 2023, is a week of personal preparation before the Solemn Assembly. Like the Levitical priests who carefully prepared themselves before they entered the Tabernacle to minister to God, it is important that we take time to prayerfully prepare ourselves to enter Solemn Assembly in the spirit and posture of heart that is pleasing to God. Record all that God will be speaking to you throughout this season of prayer and fasting on the pages provided in this booklet.

STEP 1: Plan your week's schedule to include times for corporate and personal prayer.

STEP 2: Personal preparation (Psalm 51:1–19 NKJV)

❖ *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.*

1. Prepare your heart to come before God in humility and contrition.
2. Allow the Holy Spirit to do a deep searching of your heart and life. Bring everything to light and let nothing be hidden.
3. Pray through Psalm 51. Repent and ask God to forgive you, cleanse your heart, and renew a right spirit within you.

4. Ask God to open the eyes of your understanding; remove all unbelief, hardness, pride and resistance to His Holy Spirit. Ask God to put truth and wisdom in your inward parts.
5. Make relationships right with God and with others.

STEP 3: Prepare as a family (Joshua 24:14–15; Psalm 133 NKJV)

❖ *Now, therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!...But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*

1. Heads of families: help prepare your family and share the personal application of Solemn Assembly to every person in your household.
2. Minister unity and oneness; bring healing and reconciliation to all relationships in your family, repent of sins committed against each other, and minister love and forgiveness towards one another.
3. Married couples: read 1 Peter 3:1–7 and Colossians 3:18–19.
4. Parents and children: read Colossians 3:20–21.
5. Have a family communion time to seal the oneness of spirit, love and peace; pray Psalm 133 and Colossians 3 into your family.

STEP 4: Spiritual house-cleansing (2 Chronicles 34:3–27 NKJV)

❖ *For in the eighth year of his (Josiah's) reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images...in the eighteenth year of his reign...he sent Shaphan...to repair the house of the LORD... because your heart was tender...and you humbled yourself before Me...I also have heard you, says the LORD.*

1. Do spiritual house-cleaning (2 Chronicles 34:1–33); if there is any item in your possession that contains spiritually defiling material and is not pleasing to God, get rid of it.
2. These things defile us and our homes, and become gateways for the enemy to infiltrate.
3. Repair your personal and family altar (daily devotions, prayer and the Word).

STEP 5: Prepare all ministries (Colossians 3:12–15 NKJV)

❖ *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another; and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

1. Heads of ministries: prepare all helpers and others under your care, and ensure that everyone is informed concerning the purpose and times of prayer.
2. Exhort all to participate in the blessing of Solemn Assembly.
3. Minister unity, reconciliation and oneness; if there is any rift in ministerial relationships, prayerfully bring reconciliation and oneness.
4. Renew commitments to God and each other; pray Psalm 133 and Colossians 3 into your ministry.

STEP 6: Ask God to infuse great faith in us (Hebrews 11:6 NKJV)

❖ *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

1. Seek God diligently and believe in Him for great things.
2. Step into the week of Solemn Assembly with a contrite heart and great faith.

WHAT IS SOLEMN ASSEMBLY?**The Call To Humbly Seek God In Prayer And Fasting**

❖ **Joel 1:14 NKJV**—*Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God and cry out to the LORD.*

Solemn Assembly is a corporate and personal call to humbly separate ourselves unto God for a time of Consecration, Prayer and Fasting to seek

His face for a specific purpose. It is humbling ourselves before God in repentance and consecration. It is a time to:

- “Break up the fallow ground” of our hearts before God.
- Repent of all sins and return to God wholeheartedly.
- Totally consecrate ourselves to God as His redeemed people.
- Wait on God to hear from Him and take heed.
- Resolve to obey and please Him alone.

What Is Fasting And Prayer?

Fasting and prayer are spiritual ministries that God responds to. In fasting, abstinence from food (and other things) is an outward demonstration of an inward heart of contrition and repentance towards God. It is a spiritual act of humbling and emptying ourselves before God in submission to His Lordship. Fasting crucifies our flesh and self, enthrones God, and brings us into total submission to Him. We deny all that is of ourselves—our will, needs, appetites, desires, priorities, and motives—to embrace all that is His. There are different ways to fast. Let the Lord lead you at all times. We fast on:

- Food (depending on God’s direction).
- Time (setting aside time to pray and wait on God).
- Priorities (denying personal agendas to make seeking Him our first priority).
- Pleasures (abstaining from things we enjoy to devote that time and energy to God).

How Do We Fast?

We are to fast as the Holy Spirit leads us. Let God show you what He is dealing with in your life. All fasting must be accompanied with prayer. There are three different ways we can fast:

- Partial fast—abstain from certain meals or reduce normal portion sizes (no snacking to make up for meals).
- Total fast—abstain from solid foods and consume only liquids (if you have a health condition, consult with your doctor first).
- Daniel fast—abstain from specific types of foods, beverages and/or pleasures (e.g. internet, social media, television, entertainment, sports, recreation, shopping, etc.).

SUNDAY, JUNE 4—MINISTRY OF THE WORD

MATTHEW 16:15–19 LEB

He said to them, **“But who do you say that I am?”** And Simon Peter answered and said, **“YOU ARE THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD!”** And Jesus answered and said to him, **“Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HADES WILL NOT OVERPOWER IT! I will give you the KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN,** and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will be released in heaven.”

EPHESIANS 6:10–13 NIV

FINALLY, BE STRONG IN THE LORD AND IN HIS MIGHTY POWER. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **THEREFORE PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD, SO THAT WHEN THE DAY OF EVIL COMES, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND YOUR GROUND, AND AFTER THAT YOU HAVE DONE EVERYTHING TO STAND.**

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7–18 NLT

We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. **THIS MAKES IT CLEAR THAT OUR GREAT POWER IS FROM GOD, NOT FROM OURSELVES.** We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are **NOT CRUSHED.** We are perplexed, but **NOT DRIVEN TO DESPAIR.** We are hunted down, but **NEVER ABANDONED BY GOD.** We get knocked down, but we are **NOT DESTROYED.** Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies... **THAT IS WHY WE NEVER GIVE UP. Though our BODIES ARE DYING, our SPIRITS ARE BEING RENEWED EVERY DAY.** For our present troubles are small and won't last... yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

JEREMIAH 29:12–14 LEB

“Then when you call Me, and you come and pray to Me, then I will listen to you. WHEN YOU SEARCH FOR ME, THEN YOU WILL FIND ME, IF YOU SEEK ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART. AND I WILL LET MYSELF BE FOUND BY YOU,” declares Yahweh.

MONDAY, JUNE 5—STRENGTHEN YOUR PRAYERS: INTERCESSION AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

..... JEREMIAH 29:12–14 LEB

“Then when you call Me, and you come and pray to Me, then I will listen to you. WHEN YOU SEARCH FOR ME, THEN YOU WILL FIND ME, IF YOU SEEK ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART. AND I WILL LET MYSELF BE FOUND BY YOU,” declares **Yahweh**, **“and I will restore your fortunes, and I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places to which I have driven you,”** declares Yahweh, **“and I will bring you back to the place from which I deported you.”**

..... ISAIAH 62:1–7 NLT

Because I love Zion, I will not keep still. Because my heart yearns for Jerusalem, I cannot remain silent. I WILL NOT STOP PRAYING FOR HER until her righteousness shines like the dawn, and her salvation blazes like a burning torch. The nations will see your righteousness. World leaders will be blinded by your glory. And you will be given a new name by the LORD’s own mouth. The LORD will hold you in His hand for all to see—a splendid crown in the hand of God. Never again will you be called “The Forsaken City” or “The Desolate Land.” Your new name will be “The City of God’s Delight” and “The Bride of God,” for the LORD delights in you and will claim you as His bride. Your children will commit themselves to you, O Jerusalem ... Then God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride. **O Jerusalem, I HAVE POSTED WATCHMEN ON YOUR WALLS; THEY WILL PRAY DAY AND NIGHT, CONTINUALLY. Take no rest, all you who pray to the LORD. GIVE THE LORD NO REST UNTIL HE COMPLETES HIS WORK, until He makes Jerusalem the pride of the earth.**

..... 2 CHRONICLES 7:14–16 ESV

If My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and **PRAY AND SEEK MY FACE** and turn from their wicked ways, then **I WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN** and will forgive their sin and heal their land. **Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place.** For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever. My eyes and My heart will be there for all time.

..... EPHESIANS 6:18 NKJV

PRAYING ALWAYS WITH ALL PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION IN THE SPIRIT, being watchful to this end with ALL PERSEVERANCE AND SUPPLICATION for all the saints.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16–19 ESV

Rejoice always. **PRAY WITHOUT CEASING**, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.

EXHORTATION—STRENGTHEN YOUR PRAYERS: INTERCESSION AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The Cry that God Hears and Stops For

The Holy Spirit is calling for watchmen who will not be silenced nor cease crying out to God until His will is accomplished.

The Church must be intercessors who, in weeping, interceding, and tra-
vailing, will not give themselves, nor God, rest until His will is done and His
work is finished here on earth. The Church is the vessel the Holy Spirit will
flow through to accomplish what God has already purposed on earth. We
do this by being on our knees, seeking His face, and imploring His mercy
until the gospel is preached throughout the earth and all who believe in
Him will be saved. Now is not the time to be casual, apathetic, or fail to
persevere in prayer.

The Church must repent of lukewarm and perfunctory prayers being
mouthed out of obligation and dive deep into prayers flowing from a heart
broken for what breaks God’s heart. **Our prayers must be marked by
tears of contrite repentance, groanings of conviction, and cries of pas-
sion for God and His kingdom.** We must have a heart gripped by the Holy
Spirit, yielding to Him in loving and holy submission and obedience. **A cry
must arise from the Church like the cries of blind Bartimaeus that God
hears and stops, asking us, “What do you want Me to do for you?”** Mark
10:46–52 ESV gives the account of Bartimaeus’ cries to Jesus:

❖ *As He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road-
side. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” and **MANY REBUKED HIM, TELLING HIM TO BE SILENT. BUT HE CRIED OUT ALL THE MORE, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” AND JESUS STOPPED AND SAID, “CALL HIM.”** And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up; He is calling you.” And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, “**WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO FOR YOU?**” And the blind man said to Him, “Rabbi, let me recover my sight.” And Jesus said to him, “**Go your way; your***

faith has made you well.” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed Him on the way.

Is it possible that Jesus did not pass that way by chance, but through a word of knowledge He already knew that God wanted to heal blind Bartimaeus? Many harshly rebuked Bartimaeus, telling him to hush up, but **HE WOULD NOT BE SILENCED NOR STOPPED**. He called out louder and even “all the more” to Jesus. **OPPOSITION AND RESISTANCE ONLY FUELED HIM TO A LEVEL OF PRAYER OF FAITH THAT COULD NOT BE SILENCED NOR STOPPED**. Jesus heard, stopped for him, and said, “Call him.” Could it be that although Jesus had foreknowledge of Bartimaeus’ healing, He was waiting to hear such a cry of faith that the Father would have Him stop? What if Bartimaeus stopped calling because he allowed others to silence him while Jesus was waiting to hear that ceaseless cry of faith? **It was a cry coming from a heart of relentless and unyielding belief in Jesus that He would hear, stop for him, and heal him.** What if the Church would allow opposition and hardship to stop us from pressing into God in prayer, and we never see the miracles and breakthroughs God has already intended for us? The Church needs to enter into prayers that God hears, especially for such a time as this. **We must cry out to God and not be silenced nor stopped UNTIL HE COMPLETES ALL THAT IS IN HIS HEART.**

The Cry That Will Not Be Silenced

The Holy Spirit speaks of ceaseless and relentless prayer in Isaiah 62:1–7 NLT:

❖ *Because I love Zion, I will not keep still. Because my heart yearns for Jerusalem, I cannot remain silent. I WILL NOT STOP PRAYING for her until her righteousness shines like the dawn, and her salvation blazes like a burning torch ... O Jerusalem, I have **POSTED WATCHMEN** on your walls; **THEY WILL PRAY DAY AND NIGHT, CONTINUALLY.** Take no rest, all you who pray to the LORD. **GIVE THE LORD NO REST UNTIL HE COMPLETES HIS WORK,** until He makes Jerusalem the pride of the earth.*

- Jesus prayed in this manner to the only One who was able to save Him from death and was heard. “Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death and was heard because of His godly fear” (Hebrews 5:7 NKJV).

- Hannah wept, fasted, and prayed earnestly for a son while being relentlessly and grievously mocked and provoked by her rival, Peninnah. Hannah did not let cruelty and hate silence her crying out to God, and God heard and blessed her with Samuel and other children (1 Samuel 1:4–20).
- Esther could not be stopped nor silenced by fear of death through prayer and fasting to stand before the king and intercede for her people. God was with her and gave deliverance for all the Jews, annihilating their enemies and their families.

This is the cry of prayer that moves the heart of God. It is a cry reaching out to God as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is from the depths of a spirit broken by a need for God, overtaken with a passion for His intervention, and filled with faith that He hears and will answer.

The heart of the Church must no longer be diseased with sin, compromise, and filth that our eyes cannot see clearly nor our ears hear succinctly what the Holy Spirit is revealing and speaking. For this reason, the Church has not been able to respond to the trumpet call and warning of the Holy Spirit to awake from the deadness of spiritual slumber, to come out of the unclean, to repent and return to Him with all of our heart; then He would hear us, He would turn His ears towards the Church and choose and consecrate us unto Himself (2 Chronicles 7:14–16).

Unless the heart of the Church is dealt with by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, it sits in darkness and apathy. It is accustomed to the darkness and, therefore, apathetic towards it. There is no cry from such a heart to God concerning the things of God and His kingdom. There is no urgency of spirit and no passion of heart to pursue God and His priorities because God is not the passion and priority of such a heart.

Before there is a cry that will not be silenced nor stopped, the heart must repent in complete contrition and brokenness of how we have treated God, His Word, and the Holy Spirit. **The compromised, hardened, and diseased heart will presume upon God in carelessness but NOT PROSTRATE BEFORE HIM IN CONTRITE BROKENNESS.**

Our Passion For Prayer Co-Relates With Our Passion For God

PRAYER IS A TURNING TO GOD, REACHING OUT for Him, SEEKING Him, and CALLING on Him, be it in WORDS, TEARS, GROANING, AGONIZING, WORSHIPPING, WAITING, OR LISTENING. Those who love God will diligently seek God in prayer. God states in Jeremiah 29:13 ESV, **“You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.”**

WHEN A PASSION TO KNOW GOD CONSUMES US, WE WILL BE CONSUMED WITH A HUNGER TO PRAY because, in prayer, we are seeking and running hard after Him. We will cry out to Him day and night and give Him no rest because our hearts burn with a fire to see, know, love, and please Him. We will be lovesick for Him, convinced that nothing can compare with Him or satisfy us. **This passion is a hunger for Him that will drive us to our knees, cause us to lose all other appetites, and disrupt our life, schedule, and earthly priorities to lay hold of Him.** Moses experienced this hunger when he waited on God for forty days and nights in prayer and fasting, pleading with God to show him His glory.

THIS HUNGER FOR GOD CANNOT BE EASED UNTIL IN PRAYER WE SEE HIM FACE TO FACE. Then He speaks to us as a man to a friend, revealing Himself to us in the most profound intimacy. God is seeking such intercessors to stand in the gap before Him for the nations. Samuel Chadwick, a Wesleyan Methodist minister, was a Spirit-filled preacher, revivalist, and author. He was also a mighty man of prayer and intercession who knew how to lay hold of God through prayer. He said,

❖ **THERE IS NO POWER LIKE THAT OF PREVAILING PRAYER, of Abraham pleading for Sodom, Jacob wrestling in the stillness of the night, Moses standing in the breach, Hannah intoxicated with sorrow, David heartbroken with remorse and grief, Jesus in the sweat of blood.** Add to this list from the records of the church your personal observation and experience, and **ALWAYS THERE IS THE COST OF PASSION UNTO BLOOD. SUCH PRAYER PREVAILS. IT TURNS ORDINARY MORTALS INTO MEN OF POWER. IT BRINGS POWER. IT BRINGS FIRE. IT BRINGS RAIN. IT BRINGS LIFE. IT BRINGS GOD.**

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR PRAYER.

We Must Arise To Pray As Jesus Prayed

The *ekklesia* must sleep no more but arise to seek God passionately and single-heartedly. **We must be willing to CRUCIFY THE FLESH, DISCIPLINE, AND STIR UP OURSELVES to pray as Jesus prayed.** Samuel Chadwick said, **“ALWAYS THERE IS THE COST OF PASSION UNTO BLOOD. SUCH PRAYER PREVAILS.** It turns ordinary mortals into men of power. It brings power. It brings fire. It brings rain. It brings life. It brings God.”

We must pray as Jesus prayed to His Father while He was on earth. IN PRAYER, JESUS WAS ONE WITH HIS FATHER—He drew from His

Father's presence, love, power, comfort, and strength. **His prayer life was His lifeline to His Father and the Holy Spirit.** He would not do anything on His own but always depended on the Father, hearing the Father, and obeying the Father. **EVERYTHING THAT JESUS NEEDED FROM HIS FATHER CAME THROUGH HIS PRAYER LIFE.** The Bible teaches of His persistent and powerful life of prayer, zeal, and relentlessness in seeking His Father.

- ❖ *In the days of His flesh, **JESUS OFFERED UP PRAYERS AND SUPPLICATION, WITH LOUD CRIES AND TEARS, TO HIM WHO WAS ABLE TO SAVE HIM FROM DEATH,** and He was heard because of His reverence. —Hebrews 5:7 ESV*
- ❖ *And being in agony, **HE PRAYED MORE EARNESTLY; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.** —Luke 22:44 ESV*
- ❖ *After He had sent the crowds away, **HE WENT UP ON THE MOUNTAIN BY HIMSELF TO PRAY;** and when it was evening, He was there alone. —Matthew 14:23 LSB*
- ❖ *It was at this time that **He went off to the mountain to pray, AND HE SPENT THE WHOLE NIGHT IN PRAYER TO GOD.** —Luke 6:12 NASB 1995*
- ❖ *In the early morning, while it was still dark, **JESUS GOT UP, LEFT THE HOUSE, AND WENT AWAY TO A SECLUDED PLACE, AND WAS PRAYING THERE.** —Mark 1:35 NASB 1995*

Cry Out To God That He Will Give Us No Rest Until We Pray As Jesus Prayed

We must be a follower of Jesus in prayer—paying the price to pray as He prayed. The *ekklesia* must no longer be in a spiritual slumber. We must arise to seek Him in persistent and fervent fasting and prayer until He gives us a desperation for Him. Let us call His Holy Spirit to do such a deep work in us that we are profoundly disturbed and brokenhearted over prayerlessness. **MAY HE GIVE US NO REST UNTIL OUR SOULS BURN WITH A PASSION FOR PRAYING BECAUSE OF A PASSION FOR HIM.** In prayer, His fire purifies and sets us ablaze for Him. His power infuses us that we can do the supernatural naturally. His love consumes us, so we crush fear and prevail over all forces of darkness through faith in Him. In

prayer, God's power, presence, and glory make us Church Strong!

Sometimes Christ's *ekklesia* neglects prayer not because there has been no form of prayer; rather, **the Church lacks the fervent prayer that causes us to lay down our lives to lay hold of God. IN TRUTH, MERELY DUTIFUL, LUKEWARM, AND TOKEN PRAYING IS PRAYERLESSNESS.**

The Discipline And The Cost To Strengthen Our Prayers

We not only need a prayer life, but WE MUST ALSO HAVE A LIFE OF PRAYER. Jesus had a life of prayer, not just a prayer life. We need to choose to have a life of prayer that fills our spirit, soul, and life. **IT COMES WITH DISCIPLINE AND A COST.** God gives us His grace to help us as we discipline ourselves to pray. The essence of discipline and the cost is found in this call from Jesus in John 12:23–26 ESV:

❖ *And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. **TRULY, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, UNLESS A GRAIN OF WHEAT FALLS INTO THE EARTH AND DIES, IT REMAINS ALONE; BUT IF IT DIES, IT BEARS MUCH FRUIT.** Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. **IF ANYONE SERVES ME, HE MUST FOLLOW ME;** and where I am, there will My servant be also. *If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.”**

Death to self is the discipline and cost of learning to pray as Jesus prayed. **When we have Christ's passion for prayer, it will override all other passions. EVERYTHING ELSE IS BEING SWALLOWED UP BY THIS HUNGER FOR GOD** because the Holy Spirit has a grip on us. We then are willing to be that grain of wheat that falls to the ground and dies to lay hold of God.

Discipline requires us to forcefully resist and overcome anything that obstructs prayer. **If necessary, we must be willing to battle until bloodshed against sin and flesh to triumph in prayer.** Hebrews 12:4 NASB says, **“You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin.”** (NLT: **After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin.**) Samuel Chadwick said, **“The school of prayer has its conditions and demands. It is a forbidden place to all but those of set purpose and resolute heart.”** He also said these things about prayer:

❖ *To pray as God would have us pray is the greatest achievement of earth. **Such a life costs. It takes time.***

- ❖ *If prayer is the greatest achievement on earth, **we may be sure it will call for a discipline that corresponds to its power.***

Strengthen Our Prayers: Intercession And Spiritual Warfare

Chadwick also declared, “What is love if it be not fiery? **WHAT ARE PRAYERS IF THE HEART BE NOT ABLAZE? THEY ARE THE BATTLES OF THE SOUL.**” Let the Church awake, and arise to pray as Jesus prayed that prayers surge out of fiery love for God and hearts set aflame for Him.

PRAYING STRONG WITH UNQUENCHING FERVOR

Strong and fervent prayers are prayers of faith. They are filled with boldness to ask, declare, and decree God’s Word and will until they are established.

- ❖ *And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, **there shall not be dew nor rain these years, EXCEPT AT MY WORD.**” —1 Kings 17:1 NKJV*
- ❖ *Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. **THE EFFECTIVE, FERVENT PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILS MUCH.** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. —James 5:16–18 NKJV*
- ❖ *And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. **Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.**” **Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice,** and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. **Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “THE LORD, HE IS GOD! THE LORD, HE IS GOD!”** —1 Kings 18:36–39 NKJV*

PRAYING LONG WITH PERSISTENCE AND PERSEVERANCE

The Church must learn in prayer to keep coming to God over and over again and then again. We must persevere long in prayer and persistently until the “end intended by the Lord” is established.

- ❖ *Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the **perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord.** —James 5:11 NKJV*
- ❖ *Rejoice always. **PRAY WITHOUT CEASING**, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. —1 Thessalonians 5:16–19 ESV*
- ❖ ***Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;** meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. —Colossians 4:2–4 NKJV*
- ❖ *And He told them a parable to the effect that **they ought always to pray and not lose heart.** He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, **“Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.”**” —Luke 18:1–5 ESV*

PRAYER OF FAITH

The only foundation of a prayer of faith is **TRUST IN GOD ALONE.** Faith has no room for doubtful thinking of “if” or “what if.” **Faith overcomes all obstacles and gains the pleasure of God.**

- ❖ *So Jesus answered and said to them, **“HAVE FAITH IN GOD.** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and **DOES NOT DOUBT IN HIS HEART, BUT BELIEVES** that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask **when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.**” —Mark 11:22–24 NKJV*

PRAYER OF PETITION AND INTERCESSION

- ❖ **Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.** —1 John 5:14–15 NKJV
- ❖ **Urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.** —1 Timothy 2:1–4 NIV

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

- ❖ **Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.** —Philippians 4:6–7 NKJV

PRAYER OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Samuel Chadwick said, “**The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying.** He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion. **He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.**”

- ❖ **For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,** casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. —2 Corinthians 10:3–6 NKJV

To Be Church Strong WE MUST STRENGTHEN OUR PRAYER

- ❖ There has never been a **SPIRITUAL AWAKENING** in any country or locality that **DID NOT BEGIN IN UNITED PRAYER.** —Dr. A.T. Pierson

- ❖ *Men may spurn our appeals, reject our message, oppose our arguments, despise our persons, but **THEY ARE HELPLESS AGAINST OUR PRAYERS.** —J. Sidlow Baxter*
- ❖ *What the church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but **MEN WHO THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN USE—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Spirit does not come on machinery but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men—MEN OF PRAYER.** —E. M. Bounds*
- ❖ *To get nations back on their feet, **WE MUST FIRST GET DOWN ON OUR KNEES.** —Billy Graham*

Prayer Focus

A. Pray that the Church Obeys in Being a House of Prayer for Nations.

- Pray for intercessors to be raised up who will not be silenced nor stopped in calling upon God for His kingdom to come and His will to be done.

B. In Humility Repent of Hardness of Heart, Apathy and Prayerlessness.

C. Stir Up Yourself to Pray as Jesus Prayed.

1. Cry relentlessly and unceasingly giving God no rest until He completes His will.
2. Cry out in unyielding faith that God will hear and answer your prayers.

D. Set Your Heart to Diligently Seek and Call Upon God in Prayer.

1. Pray for an all-consuming hunger and passion for God.
2. Pray for a fervor to seek Him until you see Him face to face.
3. Pray to encounter Him in the most profound intimacy.

E. Consecrate and Commit to a Life of Prayer.

- Ask for grace to resist and overcome all obstructions to prayer.
- Prepare to battle until you triumph in prayer.
- Strengthen the following areas of prayer:

1. Strengthen your prayers of intercession and spiritual warfare.

- a. Strengthen your intercession for all the Holy Spirit places on your heart.
- b. Strengthen your spiritual warfare as directed by the Holy Spirit:

- to prevail in pulling down strongholds.
- to cast down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.
- to obtain breakthroughs and miracles.
- to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

2. Strengthen in praying with persistence and perseverance.

- a. Pray unceasingly and with endurance.
- b. Pray until God's will is fulfilled and His work is done.

3. Strengthen your prayer of faith and boldness, expecting answers from God.

4. Strengthen your prayer of petition and intercession. Request by faith and with thanksgiving concerning all needs. **Expect miracles.**

5. Strengthen your prayer of thanksgiving. Give Him thanks in everything.

F. Be United in Prayer for Spiritual Awakening and Revival in Your Nation.

Notes:

TUESDAY, JUNE 6—STRENGTHEN YOUR WITNESS

..... MATTHEW 24:14 ESV

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

..... MARK 16:14–20 NKJV

Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. And He said to them, **“GO into all the world and PREACH the gospel to every creature. HE WHO BELIEVES AND IS BAPTIZED WILL BE SAVED; BUT HE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE WILL BE CONDEMNED.** And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” **So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. AND THEY WENT OUT AND PREACHED EVERYWHERE, THE LORD WORKING WITH THEM AND CONFIRMING THE WORD THROUGH THE ACCOMPANYING SIGNS. AMEN.**

..... MATTHEW 28:18–20 NKJV

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS,** baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

..... ROMANS 10:13–15 NLT

FOR “EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, **“HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF MESSENGERS WHO BRING GOOD NEWS!”**

EXHORTATION—STRENGTHEN YOUR WITNESS

All Believers Are Called To Be Witnesses Of Jesus Christ

A witness has personal knowledge of something (person, fact, or event) through intimate encounters or experiences. His possession of this unique knowledge qualifies him to attest, give a first-person account and provide evidence proving and affirming the truth of his witness or testimony.

The Church is a witness for Jesus Christ and is qualified and empowered to witness, attest and affirm that He is God Almighty and Savior because we know Him personally through experiencing Him in salvation. He is also Lord and Redeemer that all who believe in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. **THE MAIN PURPOSE of being a witness is that we TELL, REVEAL, DEMONSTRATE, AND BE A TESTIMONY THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD AND SAVIOR** and that there is no other god and no salvation outside of Him.

In the days of John, Jesus the Word, Light, and Life had already come, but the world was blind and did not know Him nor receive Him. Like John the Baptist, the Church is saved, called, and sent to the world as a witness to reveal and manifest Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. John declared to all in John 1:29 NKJV on seeing Jesus approaching him, **“BEHOLD! THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!”**

Charles Stanley, a well-known pastor and author, wrote, **“His voice leads us NOT INTO TIMID DISCIPLESHIP but into BOLD WITNESS.”**

There Are Only Two Types Of People: Saved And Not Saved

There are only two types of people in the world, and it has nothing to do with ethnicity or culture. It simply has to do with whether they do or do not believe in Christ Jesus and that He died for their sins. Are they saved, or are they already condemned? Are their names written in the Book of Life or not? Where will they be should their life be taken from them this minute—heaven or hell? Will they eternally rejoice in the presence of God, or will they be tortured in hellfires with no end? Both are eternal destinations with no turning back or second chance to change. All the opportunities to change are while they still live and breathe. The Church must reach all with the gospel so that everyone has an opportunity to hear that Jesus saves and to make a decision to follow Him before each draws their last breath or before Jesus' second return.

The great white throne of God's judgment is inevitable. Those who believe in Jesus have their names written in the Book of Life and are

saved. Those who refused Jesus Christ are not saved, and their names are not recorded in the Book of Life. They will be thrown into the lake of fire for all eternity. This judgment is precisely what Revelation 20:11–15 NLT states:

- ❖ *And I saw a great white throne and the One sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from His presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. **And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were JUDGED ACCORDING TO WHAT THEY HAD DONE, as recorded in the books.** The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. **AND ALL WERE JUDGED ACCORDING TO THEIR DEEDS.** Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. **AND ANYONE WHOSE NAME WAS NOT FOUND RECORDED IN THE BOOK OF LIFE WAS THROWN INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE.***

God Is Not Willing That Any Should Perish, But All Be Saved

God did not send His only begotten Son into the world to save a few, but to save all who would believe in Him. 2 Peter 3:9 NKJV declares, “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but **IS LONGSUFFERING toward us, NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE.**”

The Lord is longsuffering and patient in waiting to allow every single soul an opportunity to hear the gospel and receive salvation.

The projected world population on January 1, 2023, was 7,942,645,086 (8 billion). Of these, an estimated 2.3 billion (about 31.2 percent of the world's population) are adherents to Christianity, and 5.7 billion do not yet have their names written in the Book of Life. These are people of all ages and people groups. **It is up to the 2.3 billion Christians to awake and arise to go and reach the 5.7 billion with the gospel of Jesus Christ that He saves.** There is no way for the Church to be casual, careless, or callous about being witnesses for Jesus Christ—to go where He sends us, to speak what He puts in our mouths, and to bring as many into the kingdom of God as the Holy Spirit empowers us to. **No Christian can in good conscience be indifferent to the command of Jesus to be His witness to the ends of the earth.** Jesus in Mark 16:15–18 NKJV commands His disciples;

- ❖ **GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY**

CREATURE. HE WHO BELIEVES AND IS BAPTIZED WILL BE SAVED; BUT HE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE WILL BE CONDEMNED. *And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.*

After Christ's ascension, **His disciples obeyed and "WENT OUT AND PREACHED EVERYWHERE, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs"** (Mark 16:20 NKJV). This is the same command the Holy Spirit gives all Christ's disciples today. If we believe in Christ, we are called to be His disciples and witnesses.

The Church, the slumbering giant, must awake to make God's priority our priority; that is, the gospel must be preached to everyone so that whoever believes in Jesus Christ shall be saved. Today's Church, compared to the Early Church, has been lulled into a kind of sleep because we have taken our eyes away from the Lamb who had hung on the cross that none should perish, but all be saved. We have become engrossed with life here on earth and forgotten that this is only temporary and that we are citizens of heaven. Our heavenly assignment is to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature that he who believes in Jesus Christ shall be saved and not perish. As a believer, our life does not consist of food, clothing, shelter, and earthly blessings. We breathe and live for what Jesus Christ lived for as the Son of Man—to preach the gospel so that hearers can be saved.

The Church Must Obey Christ's Command To Witness

The Church must obey Christ to share the Good News and strengthen our witness now that the end draws so near. We must no longer marginalize our responsibility or be slack in obeying our call to be Christ's witnesses to all nations. The lost cannot call on Jesus Christ unless they believe in Him. They cannot believe in Him unless someone tells them. Someone cannot tell them unless they are sent. The Holy Spirit cries out in Romans 10:13–17 NLT;

- ❖ *For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved." **But HOW CAN THEY CALL ON HIM TO SAVE THEM** unless they believe in Him? And **HOW CAN THEY BELIEVE IN HIM** if they have never heard about Him? And **HOW CAN THEY HEAR ABOUT HIM** unless someone tells them? And **HOW WILL ANYONE GO AND TELL THEM** without*

being sent? **That is why the Scriptures say, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF MESSENGERS WHO BRING GOOD NEWS!”... So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ.**

Christ’s great compassion for the lost, His overwhelming longing to see them saved, and His passion for reaching them is profoundly shown in Matthew 9:35–38 NKJV,

❖ *Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, **PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM**, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But **WHEN HE SAW THE MULTITUDES, HE WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION FOR THEM**, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, “**THE HARVEST TRULY IS PLENTIFUL, BUT THE LABORERS ARE FEW. THEREFORE PRAY THE LORD OF THE HARVEST TO SEND OUT LABORERS INTO HIS HARVEST.**”*

The Church, Christ’s called-out ones, must hear and heed the cry from our Savior’s heart for the lost, for they are weary, scattered like sheep having no shepherd. We are saved, not lost, and the Chief Shepherd is watching over us. It is time to die to self, pick up our cross, and follow the Chief Shepherd to go, preach, heal, and bring the gospel to many. **ALL BELIEVERS ARE CALLED TO BE WITNESSES, FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD.**

John Wesley, a passionate, relentless, and powerful preacher of the gospel, viewed the world as his parish. During his fifty-three years as an itinerant preacher of the gospel, he traveled on horseback and sometimes by foot over 225,000 miles to reach the lost in England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. He preached an estimated 40,000 sermons. In his open-air meetings, revivals would break out. His passion for the Lord and vision to save the lost burned so relentlessly in his heart that he declared, “**GIVE ME 100 PREACHERS WHO FEAR NOTHING BUT SIN AND DESIRE NOTHING BUT GOD; SUCH ALONE WILL SHAKE THE GATES OF HELL.**” He trained lay people to become itinerant preachers who would travel throughout the countryside, holding meetings and preaching the gospel that Jesus Christ was able to save. It was said that John Wesley’s preaching ministry changed the religious landscape of England and the American Colonies, and his influence is still being felt today.

The Church Must Preach The Power Of The Gospel To Save

Preach the Truth, not the trendiest philosophies or latest ideas. Preach the gospel, not deceptive words that tickle listeners' ears but with no power to save. Preach Jesus Christ according to His Word, not a "Christ" formulated by man's vain imagination. **We need PRAYING men and women ANOINTED IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT with hearts burning with A PASSION FOR GOD and A VISION TO SAVE THE LOST to preach that Jesus Christ has the power to save.** The Church must have more faith in the power of the gospel to turn hearts to God and to save rather than in the power of man's wisdom, the latest technology, the best motivational speeches, or the sleekest and glitziest programs that astound the eyes but do not move the hearts.

IF WE IN THE CHURCH WILL HUMBLE OURSELVES, REPENT, AND BE ON OUR FACES SEEKING GOD WITH TEARS FOR THE LOST, HE WILL HEAR US AND DO GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS. It is the holy obligation and duty of the Church to teach and train all believers to personally pick up Christ's mandate to go and preach the gospel to everyone.

The Church Must Witness In The Power Of The Holy Spirit

1 Thessalonians 1:5 NASB 1995:

❖ ***For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.***

Concerning witnessing in the power of the Holy Spirit, Paul, the great apostle and mighty preacher of the gospel, testified in 1 Corinthians 2:4–5 NASB 1995, "My message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God." The gospel must be preached in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Jesus, Himself, was ANOINTED BY GOD IN THE HOLY SPIRIT AND POWER and went about "doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him,"** Acts 10:38 NASB 1995. His disciples became witnesses to all He did throughout Judea and Jerusalem. The resurrected Christ then commanded His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit and be filled with His power to be His witnesses. In Acts 1:8 NASB 1995, Jesus said, **"You will RECEIVE POWER when the HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU; and**

YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” After being filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples went everywhere and preached the gospel with great power, and many were saved. **The inception of the Early Church was through the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Peter, in Acts 10, preached to the crowd who gathered in bewilderment concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, hearing them speaking in different tongues. Peter, who in fear denied Jesus Christ three times, now preached with unfainting boldness and courage declaring in Acts 10:39–43 NLT,

❖ ***And we apostles are witnesses of all He did throughout Judea and in Jerusalem. They put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross, but God raised Him to life on the third day. Then God allowed Him to appear, not to the general public, BUT TO US WHOM GOD HAD CHOSEN IN ADVANCE TO BE HIS WITNESSES. We were those who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. AND HE ORDERED US TO PREACH EVERYWHERE AND TO TESTIFY THAT JESUS IS THE ONE APPOINTED BY GOD TO BE THE JUDGE OF ALL—the living and the dead. He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in Him will have their sins forgiven through His name.***

Our preaching of the gospel must be in the anointing of the Holy Spirit with the power to pierce the darkest hearts bringing the light of conviction. It must have the power to debunk the most deceptive lies and establish Truth in its place. We do not preach in persuasive words of man but in the pure power of the Holy Spirit and the power of the gospel to save.

According to the Spurgeon Center, Charles Spurgeon, known as the “Prince of Preachers, spoke these words with fiery passion:

❖ ***Let the sun stop shining, and we will preach in darkness. Let the waves stop their ebb and flow, and still our voice shall preach the gospel. LET THE WORLD STOP ITS REVOLUTIONS, LET THE PLANETS STAY THEIR MOTION; WE WILL STILL PREACH THE GOSPEL.***

The Church Must Glorify The Father Through Good Works

The Church is the salt and light of the earth to glorify God through our good works. Jesus instructed His disciples in Matthew 5:13–16 NKJV,

❖ ***You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be***

seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. **LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.**

Many strong followers and witnesses of Jesus Christ spoke these words about glorifying God through good works:

- ❖ Good works are not the cause of our salvation; good works are the evidence of our salvation. Faith in Christ always results in good works. Obedience to God is the mark of true saving faith. —Ibrahim Emile
- ❖ A man who does good works without Jesus Christ is like a man who takes his hard earned money to the bank, drops it at the counter and walks away without a bank account. —Paul Bamikole
- ❖ People will replace you and will forget your good works but the Lord will always remember, He will always do something not for you to be replaced but to be in use for His glory because He made you wonderfully and marvelously. —Jennifer Aquillo.
- ❖ The presence of the Holy Ghost gives power for good works. —Lailah Gifty Akita

The Church Must Go To Nations Declaring The Glory Of God Among Them

May the Church go into all nations and light up the whole world with the glory of God through the power of His Holy Spirit by preaching the gospel and doing good works. 1 Chronicle 16:23–25 NKJV proclaims,

- ❖ Sing to the LORD, all the earth; **PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF HIS SALVATION from day to day. DECLARE HIS GLORY AMONG THE NATIONS, His wonders among all peoples.** For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods.

God's will is for Him to be made known to all nations through His Church. As nations believe and turn to Him, He shall save them. Psalm 96:3–9 NIV exhorts us to;

- ❖ *Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before Him; strength and glory are in His sanctuary. **Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations, ASCRIBE TO THE LORD GLORY AND STRENGTH.** Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bring an offering and come into his courts. **Worship the LORD in the splendor of His holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth.***

Let the people of the Church learn to be effective soul winners because he that wins souls is wise (Proverbs 11:30). As effective soul winners let us be like the Early Church who “daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:42 KJV). Finally, in John 15:16–17 LEB, Jesus told His disciples,

- ❖ ***You did not choose Me, but I CHOSE you and APPOINTED you that YOU SHOULD GO AND BEAR FRUIT, AND YOUR FRUIT SHOULD REMAIN, in order that whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. These things I command you: that you love one another.***

Prayer Focus

A. All Believers are Called to be Witnesses of Jesus Christ.

1. Pray to see the lost as Christ sees them.
2. Pray to be filled with Christ’s love, compassion, and burden to see them saved.
3. Pray for a willing obedience to lay down your life to go, preach and reach the lost.

B. Pray for the Church to be Filled with the Urgency to Reach the Lost.

1. Pray to be gripped with an urgency to be a witness because:
 - a. The time is short.
 - b. The laborers are very few.
 - c. God wants all to be saved and none to perish.
2. Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring revival to all churches.

- a. Many will arise, go and preach the gospel.
- b. Many will baptize and teach others in Christ's name.
- c. Many will make disciples of other believers.

C. May the Holy Spirit's Cry in Romans 10:13-17 NLT Pierce and Convict Your Heart to be Willing to Go and Preach the Gospel.

❖ *For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved." But how can they call on Him to save them unless they believe in Him? And how can they believe in Him if they have never heard about Him? And how can they hear about Him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring Good News!" ... So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ.*

D. Pray to Strengthen Your Witness.

1. Preach the power of the gospel to save.
2. Witness in the power of the Holy Spirit.
3. Glorify the Father through good works.
4. Go to nations declaring the glory of God among them.

E. FAOG Missions—Bring God's Love to the Nations, and Pray for Revival in All Our Mission Churches

1. **Brazil**—Ps. Celina, Bro. Alex
2. **India**—Ps. Prasantha + Sis. Roshika, Sis. Sonika Verma
3. **Ireland**
 - **Dublin**—Ps. Jamie + Sis. Lud Corcoran
 - **Navan** —Ps. Sam + Sis. Sara Corcoran
 - **Dundalk**—Ps. Rebecca Moldovan
4. **Japan**
 - **Hiroshima**—Bro. Gary + Sis. Linda Sasaki, Ps. Lynne Higa, Sis. Michelle Murakami
 - **Kamaishi**—Ps. Keizo + Sis. Mami Yoshioka
 - **Okinawa**—Sis. Miyuki, Sis. Fuji, Sis. Shizuko, Bro. Nakamura
 - **Osaka**—Ps. Atsuya + Sis. Takako Miyashita
 - **Yokohama**—Ps. Kyoko Koyama, Sis. Sayaka + Bro. Victor Groves
5. **Korea (North & South)**—wisdom for Ps. Ko and Ps. Ernie to raise mission teams

6. Marshall Islands

- **Delap**—Bro. Mike Larron
- **Uliga**—Bro. Aichy Hanchor

7. Mexico

- **Huamantla**—Ps. Miriam, Ps. Quechol, Sis. Hudid, Sis. Mimi, Bro. Francisco + Sis. Fernanda
- **Ixtenco**—Bro. Miguel, Sis. Fabia

8. Philippines—Ps. Bill Bannister (Interim), Sis. Natalie Bernales, Sis. Princess Bernales, Sis. Lolet Gambe, Sis. Fe Ulgaran

9. Samoa—Ps. Mila + Sis. Rosie Tongamoa, Bro. Sola + Sis. Peta, Bro. James

10. Timor Leste—Ps. Atama + Sis. Mel Vakalalabure

11. Uganda—Ps. Elijah + Sis. Ruth Mabala, Ps. Moses, Ps. Paul, Ps. Jonathan

12. United Kingdom—Ps. Timothy + Sis. Angela Dorjey

13. United States

- **Hamakua**—Ps. Jacob + Sis. Hoku Fesagaiga, Ps. Maize Luke
- **Marshallese churches**—Ps. Absen + Sis. Sherlina Ebot

F. Pray to Raise and Send Out More Gideonite Church-Planting Teams (Kyushu and Nagasaki).

G. Pray for the Salvation, Revival and the Transformation of United States of America.

Notes:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7—STRENGTHEN YOUR GRIP

PHILIPPIANS 3:12–14 NKJV

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but **I press on, that I may LAY HOLD of that for which CHRIST JESUS HAS ALSO LAID HOLD OF ME.** Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, **I PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

HEBREWS 12:1–2 NKJV

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **LOOKING UNTO JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our faith, WHO FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM ENDURED THE CROSS, despising the shame, and has SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD.**

EXHORTATION—STRENGTHEN YOUR LOVE: SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

What It Means To Strengthen Our Grip

To grip means to seize strongly without releasing, to take and keep a firm hold of, to grasp tightly so as not to let go or give it up. In Genesis 32, when Jacob wrestled with God, he laid hold of God, held fast, and made a commitment not to let go of God unless and until He blessed him. That is strengthening your grip—strong, persistent, steadfast, and unyielding.

The Holy Spirit in the scriptures repeatedly exhorts God's people to hold on and hold fast to their faith and perseverance amid persecution, hardship, and suffering. **To be Church Strong, we must develop the strength and stamina to have a solid and enduring grip on our confidence in God which is essential to our growth, and victory to the end.** We will be severely buffeted and embattled as we face spiritual attacks, testing, and trials. Jesus Christ, our perfect example, had demonstrated to us that we, too, can strengthen our grip to hold fast to the end victoriously. Hebrews 12:1–2 NKJV testifies of Christ's endurance and victory.

❖ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily

ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **LOOKING UNTO JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our faith, WHO FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM ENDURED THE CROSS, despising the shame, and has SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD.**

In Revelation 3, Jesus Christ highly commended the church in Philadelphia for their commitment to His Word and Name in the midst of spiritual battles as they were situated right where the synagogue of satan was located. They were a church with little strength, yet they remained holy and faithful to God when severely tempted and tried. Jesus warned them of “the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth” and that He was coming soon. His instruction to them was, “**HOLD ON TO WHAT YOU HAVE, SO THAT NO ONE WILL TAKE YOUR CROWN.**” The church was told to hold on (*krateō*), meaning to hold fast, not to discard or let go, and to master The Holy Spirit’s exhortation to the church in Philadelphia in Revelation 3:7–13 NIV exemplifies the need and the meaning of strengthening our grip.

- ❖ *To the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: These are the words of Him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What He opens no one can shut, and what He shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. **I know that you have little strength, yet YOU HAVE KEPT MY WORD AND HAVE NOT DENIED MY NAME.** I will make those who are of the synagogue of satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. **Since YOU HAVE KEPT MY COMMAND TO ENDURE PATIENTLY, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. I am coming soon. HOLD ON TO WHAT YOU HAVE, SO THAT NO ONE WILL TAKE YOUR CROWN. The ONE WHO IS VICTORIOUS I will make a pillar in the temple of My God. Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of My God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from My God; and I will also write on them My new name. WHOEVER HAS EARS, LET THEM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.***

Paul, The Apostle, Strengthened His Grip On Faith In Jesus Christ

If there is ever anyone who knew how to have a strong grip on God and

the things of God, it was Paul. He knew how to lay hold of and held fast. No matter how strenuous, strong, and fierce the pressures, pain, and hardships he faced, by the grace of God, Paul's grip on God, and faith never wavered or waned. He pressed forward to the end accomplishing God's assignment for his life and ministry. Whether he was shipwrecked, stoned, imprisoned, beaten, whipped, rejected, hated, persecuted, in pain, hunger, or nakedness, he held fast to God. Paul wrote in Philippians 3 how with focused determination and purpose, he pressed on to **LAY HOLD** of that for which Christ Jesus had also **LAI D HOLD** of him. Philippians 3:12–14 NKJV says,

❖ *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may **LAY HOLD of that for which CHRIST JESUS HAS ALSO LAI D HOLD OF ME.** Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I **PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL** for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Lay hold in Greek is *katalambanō* meaning **TO LAY HOLD OF SO AS TO MAKE ONE'S OWN, to obtain, to seize upon, or TAKE POSSESSION.** Paul was very clear concerning how he firmly held fast to take possession of Christ because Christ had first laid hold of him. Paul (Saul of Tarsus) was on his way from Jerusalem to Syrian Damascus with a decree from the High Priest permitting him to seize Christ's followers and return them to Jerusalem as prisoners to face questioning or death. **The Lord Jesus forcefully intercepted, confronted, and laid hold of Paul in love.** He was converted to faith in Jesus Christ, Whose believers he once pursued to persecute. Grant C Richison, theologian and author, put it this way: "Paul said, '**In my flight toward hell, JESUS TOOK OUT AFTER ME AND HELD ME IN HIS GRIP.**'" Jesus Christ laid hold of Paul for a purpose. Just as Christ had taken hold of him, he was now laying hold of Christ and His purpose.

God's Love Empowers And Strengthens Our Grip On Faith In God

The Bible explains far better than any other writing, teaching, or preaching that the power of God's love can strengthen us to endure, hold fast, and press on to the very end. The apostle Paul epitomizes how God's love made him such an overcomer with stamina and resolve never to let go, but persist and overcome. He wrote in Romans 8:31–39 NLT,

❖ What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? **If God is for us, who can ever be against us? SINCE HE DID NOT SPARE EVEN HIS OWN SON BUT GAVE HIM UP FOR US ALL, WON'T HE ALSO GIVE US EVERYTHING ELSE?** Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for His own? No one—for God Himself has given us right standing with Himself. Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and He is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us. **Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love?** Does it mean He no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") **No, despite all these things, OVERWHELMING VICTORY IS OURS THROUGH CHRIST, who loved us. And I am CONVINCED that NOTHING can ever separate us from GOD'S LOVE.** Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—**NOT EVEN THE POWERS OF HELL CAN SEPARATE US FROM GOD'S LOVE.** No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, **NOTHING IN ALL CREATION WILL EVER BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD** that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOD HAS A GRIP ON US BECAUSE OF HIS LOVE.

Strengthening Our Grip Concerning Spiritual Growth And Leadership Development

Spiritual growth and leadership development are essential to be Church Strong personally and corporately. If there is no spiritual growth or only slow spiritual growth, the Church is either in a spiritual coma or dead; at the very least immature and feeble. There must be intentional, robust, and effective leadership development. Spiritual growth and leadership development never happen by chance. We must have a passion for both and be committed to doing all that is necessary to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and diligently work to see Him produce both in His Church.

We must be intentional and resilient in discipling, mentoring, developing leadership, and bringing growth. **A church cannot be strong if there is a lack of godly, healthy, Christ-appointed, and anointed leadership.** Whether it is a problem of insufficient undershepherds, weak leadership (unwise, lacking vision and faith), or poor leadership (ungodly, compromising, and lacking moral fiber), the Church is weak, unhealthy, and without the strength to stand and grow. There must be strong and

effective leadership development so no matter how many attacks satan may launch the Church does not stay down. We are soon up on our feet by the grace, power, and strength of the Holy Spirit to press on following and serving God with integrity. **When we choose not to be defeated, His grace takes over to help us rebound and persist.**

Five Areas In Which We Must Strengthen Our Grip To Ensure Spiritual Growth And Leadership Development.

GROWTH AS A DISCIPLE

A disciple of Christ is a LEARNER, PUPIL, AND FOLLOWER of Jesus Christ in everything. Christ's disciple watches and hears the Master to learn and imitate Him in living, loving, obeying, and serving God. In this manner, we, His disciples, will grow to be more and more like Him in every aspect, reflecting His glory, doing His will, and continuing His work here on earth in obedience to God, our Father. We follow Jesus Christ in loving, serving, and reaching the lost as we increasingly reflect Him more and more, doing what He did as the Son of Man. Just as He perpetually sought and heard His Father to live and obey, so are we to constantly seek and listen to Him to live and obey. **As He denied Himself, picked up His cross, and followed His Father, we are to do the same in following Him.** Growing as a disciple means we are to succeed in imitating Christ in:

- His relationship of love with God, His Father.
- His passion for the cause of God ("My food is to do the will of the Father").
- His character, virtues, and conduct.
- His love for others as He gave His life to save them.

There are four areas of growth a disciple needs to mature:

- Increase in knowledge of God and relationship with Him.
- Increase in personal growth through character transformation into Christlikeness.
- Grow in prayer and knowledge of the God's Word.
- Grow in love and service to others.

The true evidence of growth is change and transformation. If a baby shows no physical, psychological, intellectual, or overall changes or

transformations, the baby is not growing. The lack of growth in the baby is an abnormality, and it means that something is not going right. So it is with believers; if we do not grow as disciples of Christ, something is wrong. Growth is not automatic. It requires intentionality, commitment, and accountability to learn personally from Jesus Christ and obey Him.

RESILIENCE TO REMAIN STEADFAST OR REBOUND

Resilience is the STRENGTH OR TENACITY to ENDURE OR PERSEVERE, get up again, and push forward by springing back to the original purpose, focus, and priority. It is the strength not to give up but stand and the power to arise again if we stumble. The resilient never gives up. Proverbs 24:16 NKJV aptly describes the resilience of Christ's followers, **"For a righteous person falls seven times and RISES AGAIN."** *Rises again*, in Hebrew *qûm* means to arise, rise up, stand up, or to stand. **To stand particularly means to maintain oneself, to be established, be confirmed, endure, to be fixed, to be valid, to be proven, to be fulfilled, or to persist.** In righteousness and by the grace of God, we must grow in resilience so we can do all things through Christ, who strengthens us and prevail as overcomers. We may be knocked down, but we get back on our feet; we do not stay down. We may trip, but we arise. We may be severely attacked, but we persist and forge forward in obedience to the course God has set for us. We endure and hold fast to doing God's will and finishing His work. **No matter how many times we may stumble in warfare, hardships, or failures, we rise again, press forward and stay the course to the end by faith in God.** Proverbs 24:15–16 MSG aptly explains the resilience of those who love and follow Jesus.

- ❖ *Don't interfere with good people's lives; don't try to get the best of them. **NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU TRIP THEM UP, GOD-LOYAL PEOPLE DON'T STAY DOWN LONG; SOON THEY'RE UP ON THEIR FEET,** while the wicked end up flat on their faces.*

Resilience was a consistent and exceptional strength in many men and women of God in the Bible. These had suffered and endured untold hardships and setbacks but did not lose their faith in God. They were hurt, wounded, and broken, but they bounced back to trust God and persisted in serving Him. David suffered a resounding loss at Ziklag, but he sought the Lord and rebounded in defeating the enemy and recovering everything taken. Others like Job, who lost all his children and possessions, yet in unwavering faith, he worshipped the Lord. Hannah endured the pain of her

barrenness and resolutely prayed and held on to God's goodness. They were resilient, and they never gave up. **The common factor of their resilience was that they sought the Lord and lived. THEY ALWAYS TURNED TO GOD—NEVER TURNING AWAY.** Therefore, they were not bitter or hateful; neither did they give up. They were able to suffer great loss and not blame God (Job), undergo great persecution and not fear (Stephen), and experience untold pain and still trust God (Joseph). Their common strength was unwavering trust in God because of their relationship with Him. **THEY HAD RESILIENCE BECAUSE GOD STRENGTHENED THEM AND GAVE THEM GREAT GRACE.**

INTEGRITY

INTEGRITY is essential to all followers of Jesus Christ. Integrity (*Hebrew tōm*) means uprightness, completeness, innocence, and simplicity. Merriam-Webster says that **INTEGRITY** implies **TRUSTWORTHINESS** and **INCORRUPTIBILITY** to the degree that one is incapable of being false to a trust, responsibility, or pledge. It defines integrity as having these three qualities:

- **Incorruptibility**—referring to firm adherence (faithfulness) to a code of especially moral or artistic values.
- **Soundness**—speaks of an unimpaired condition.
- **Completeness**—identifies the quality or state of being complete or undivided.

Integrity of character means that we are incorruptible in adhering to God's moral standard of values. Our inner being is sound, upright, and unimpaired by anything not right in the eyes of God. Inwardly we have completeness because we possess godly virtues such as righteousness, honor, goodness, sincerity, probity (tried and proven honesty), morality, and uprightness. **Therefore, a character with integrity and faithfulness is blameless, just, above reproach and accusation, and innocent (free from evil or guilt).**

Without integrity, spiritually we are an empty shell, and our works, when tested by fire, will burn up because they are wood, stubble, and hay. We must have truth and wisdom in our inward parts, and we must be led by them. These pillars are an essential foundation for having integrity. **Holding on to truth and obeying it will produce integrity in our inner core.** Proverbs 23:23 NKJV says, "Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding." Integrity continues to grow

as we learn truth, understand and live it.

Integrity is also the strength in which we keep our faithfulness to God and His Word and not compromise our righteousness, uprightness, and moral virtues, even under the most severe attacks or temptations. Daniel chose to keep his integrity rather than compromise to escape challenges or suffering. He upheld his integrity of trust in God. He also kept the integrity of his calling, purpose, worship, and relationship with God. To be Church Strong, we must strengthen our grip on integrity.

PURPOSE IN LIFE

Proverbs 16:4 NLT says, **“THE LORD HAS MADE EVERYTHING FOR HIS OWN PURPOSES**, even the wicked for a day of disaster.” Everything God has created is for His purpose especially humankind. Paul spoke of this in 2 Timothy 1:8–12 NIV.

- ❖ *So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me, His prisoner. Instead, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. **He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.***

Paul taught Timothy that the Lord had created and saved them for His own purpose and grace. God had already given them this purpose and grace in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. Like Paul and Timothy, God has also predetermined our purpose for living before we were conceived in our mother’s womb. Our purpose in life is not what we design for ourselves. It is already set for us by our Creator God. Below are two quotes concerning purpose in life from Gift Gugu Mona, a South African-born passionate follower of Jesus Christ, poet, and philanthropist.

- ❖ *You are valuable on this earth. That is why God in His might, took time to create you. **For you, He has a purpose greater than what eyes can see.** Hence, you need to value the greatness in you.*

❖ ***God is not interested in our excuses, but our ability to unleash our purpose on Earth; regardless of the struggles we find along the way.***

We must know our God-given purpose in life and hold fast to it so we can live, walk and grow in that purpose. Ignoring our purpose in life makes us like ships sailing without rudders to hold them steady and no compasses to chart their path forward. **Our purpose in life is DEFINED AND DETERMINED BY OUR GOD, who created us.** Whatever He has called us to do, our purpose is to fulfill it. **TRUSTING AND OBEYING HIM is the best way to know the purpose of our life and have the grace, strength, and ability to see it to the end.**

Knowledge of purpose in life provides stability and direction for us both in good and bad times. We must hold on to that God-given purpose in life so that even when challenged, tested, tried, and tempted, we will not veer from this purpose nor relinquish it. By prayer and faith in God, we hold fast and move forward. When we do, we will grow spiritually and be able to remain steadfast in raising up leadership—teaching, training, discipling, and mentoring others who will learn to hold fast to their God-given purpose in life. Living and walking fully in the purpose of life will always affect the kingdom of God. Ultimately, God’s will is done and His work completed if the Church knows and persists in obeying God in living out the purpose in life. **The PRIMARY PURPOSE IN LIFE** is not so much concerning vocation, where to live, or what to eat and wear, but it is **SEEKING FIRST GOD’S KINGDOM, OBEYING HIM, LOVING HIM** with all of our heart, soul, and mind, and **PREACHING THE GOSPEL** to the end of the world.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

One area we need to grow in spiritually and also in leadership development is spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are absolutely necessary to edify and build up the Church and make us strong. We need to earnestly seek spiritual gifts and not be indifferent to them. One of the ways the Holy Spirit works through His Church supernaturally to do the will of God is through gifts. We need the power, anointing, and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Early Church operated effectively and abundantly in spiritual gifts, which brought breakthroughs in lives and communities.

Prayer Focus

A. Pray for Spiritual Growth and Leadership Development Personally and Corporately

B. Pray to Strengthen Your Grip in These Areas as Christ's Disciples

1. Your relationship of love and intimacy with God.
2. Your enduring passion for the cause of God.
3. Your growing in Christlikeness—having His character, virtues, and conduct.
4. Your love for others and willingness to give your life to bring them to Christ.

C. Pray for Growth in These Areas so that the Church will be Strong:

1. Growth as a disciple of Jesus Christ.
2. Growth in resilience and tenacity to endure and rebound.
3. Growth in integrity, faithfulness, and obedience to Truth.
4. Growth in purpose in life and the faith and resilience to obey.
5. Growth in spiritual gifts and obedience in using them for His kingdom.

D. Pray for Intentional and Effective Leadership Development

1. Pray for a passion to raise up godly, healthy, and faith-filled leaders,
 - a. Those with a passion for the Lord and a vision for the lost.
 - b. Those with a willing and obedient heart.
 - c. Those with faith, resilience, and integrity.
 - d. Those who will follow Christ with all their heart, soul, and strength.
2. Pray for love, wisdom, and grace to teach, train, disciple, and mentor others.
3. Pray for anointing and enablement to effectively raise leaders.
4. Pray for leaders to be raised from all generations, especially children, youth, and young adults.

E. Pray for Church to be Strong, Especially in These End Times

THURSDAY, JUNE 8—STRENGTHEN YOUR LOVE AND SERVICE TO OTHERS

..... ISAIAH 49:5 NKJV

The Lord says, **WHO FORMED ME FROM THE WOMB TO BE HIS SERVANT**, to bring Jacob back to Him.

..... PHILIPPIANS 2:5–8 NKJV

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, **but made Himself of no reputation, TAKING THE FORM OF A BONDSERVANT**, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.**

..... NIV

In your relationships with one another, HAVE THE SAME MINDSET AS CHRIST JESUS: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, **HE MADE HIMSELF NOTHING BY TAKING THE VERY NATURE OF A SERVANT**, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!**

..... MATTHEW 20:28 NKJV

Just as THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED, BUT TO SERVE, and to give His life a ransom for many.

..... MATTHEW 12:15–21 NKJV

And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. Yet He warned them not to make Him known, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: **“BEHOLD! MY SERVANT WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles.** He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; and in His name Gentiles will trust.”

..... ISAIAH 52:13–15 NLT

See, MY SERVANT will prosper; He will be highly exalted. But many were amazed when they saw Him. His face was so disfigured He seemed hardly human, and from His appearance, one would scarcely know He was a man. And He will startle many nations. Kings will stand speechless in His presence. For they will see what they had not been told; they will understand what they had not heard about.

EXHORTATION—STRENGTHEN YOUR LOVE AND SERVICE TO OTHERS

Jesus Christ Was Formed And Called From The Womb To Be God's Servant

THE CALL TO SERVANTHOOD IS A CALL TO LAY DOWN OUR LIVES TO LOVE AND SERVE OTHERS JUST AS JESUS DID. Kingdom servanthood is a privilege and blessing belonging only to sons and daughters of God. Jesus Christ understood very well that He was formed and called from the womb to be His Father's Righteous Servant. In Isaiah 49:5 NKJV, the Holy Spirit prophesied of Him, "the Lord says, **WHO FORMED ME FROM THE WOMB TO BE HIS SERVANT**, to bring Jacob back to Him." For this reason, Jesus states in Matthew 20:28 NKJV, "**JUST AS THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED, BUT TO SERVE, AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY.**"

God sent Him as His trusted and obedient Servant to love, serve, help, and save a hurting, broken, and lost world. As His Father's Servant, Jesus was consumed with an unstoppable passion, unquenchable zeal, and absolute obedience to serve others so they could encounter God and the power of His love to save. He went where His Father sent Him, spoke what His Father told Him, and did what His Father showed Him. **HIS WHOLE LIFE'S MINISTRY WAS A MINISTRY OF SERVICE TO OTHERS—THE LOST, SICK, BROKEN, BOUND, AND DEFENSELESS.** With His whole heart, He loved, gave, touched, healed, set free, and showed the Father to all who met Him. **Ultimately, His greatest service to the whole world was giving His life as a sacrifice to provide salvation for all.** In John 4:34 NIV, Jesus says, "**My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.**"

As His Father's Servant, Jesus was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins, beaten to make us whole, and whipped so we could be healed. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and He said not a word (Isaiah 53). **CHRIST'S PASSION WAS TO SERVE.** May we, His Church, understand just as Jesus was called to be a Servant, so are we. **May the Holy Spirit fill our hearts with the same passion and zeal to obey God in loving and serving others.** We must be strong in our service to others and not shy away or become slack. Instead, we must seek out the weak, needy, and vulnerable to love, help, provide and save.

Being Christ's followers, we will not think of the cost of servanthood, but we will be thankful and filled with great joy for the opportunity to demonstrate Christ's love to others in serving them. May we faithfully,

excellently, and generously represent Christ in our service to others. **True servanthood is always thinking about what can be done for others to benefit, bless, and minister by GIVING THEM OUR BEST ON BEHALF OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD.**

No one is too sick, poor, or sinful that Jesus did not die to heal, enrich and forgive them. Just as Jesus came to serve and not to be served, He has called us to serve. Isaiah 53, known as the “Song of the Suffering Servant,” is a Messianic prophecy concerning Jesus Christ. It describes Christ, the Servant, who, through His atoning suffering and victory, has provided the way of justification to save those who believe in Him. Isaiah 53:11 NKJV prophesies of Him, “He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. **By His knowledge MY RIGHTEOUS SERVANT SHALL JUSTIFY MANY, for He shall bear their iniquities.**” Bill Johnson, the senior leader of Bethel Church, correctly said, “**Royalty is my identity. SERVANTHOOD IS MY ASSIGNMENT. Intimacy with God is my life source.**”

The Servanthood Of Christ—He Came Not To Be Served But To Serve

The Lord Jesus, as God’s righteous Servant, came not to lord it over all as an earthly king but to serve by obeying His Father in laying down His life to redeem all who would believe in Him. To be Church Strong, we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, our Lord. We are saved to serve and not to be served. As our Lord Jesus gave His life as a ransom to serve many, we must also give our lives to serve many. **It is about giving all and not withholding anything that will help others.**

Jim Elliot, a martyr for the gospel, said, “**HE IS NO FOOL WHO GIVES WHAT HE CANNOT KEEP TO GAIN WHAT HE CANNOT LOSE.**” Everything in this world is temporal, and there is nothing materialistic that we can eternally keep for ourselves. **True wealth is eternal and gained by giving all,** even laying down one’s life to love and serve others. What we give to serve is translated into eternal treasures in heaven.

Jim Elliot gave his all and laid down his life when he went to Ecuador to reach the Quichua and Auca Indians with the gospel, and the Auca took his life. The truth was that Jim sowed his life, which he could not keep, to serve the Auca Indians that they might have eternal life in Jesus Christ. Later, his wife, Elisabeth Elliot, with their child, returned to the same place to reach these Indians. Many came to the Lord and were saved because the Elliots gave their all.

WE ARE CHRIST’S OUTSTRETCHED ARMS OF LOVE, KINDNESS, AND HELP TO THE WORLD AND HIS CHURCH. When we serve, we always meet a need; be it giving a cup of water to the thirsty, providing food

for the hungry, visiting those in prison, comforting those in sorrow, setting the captives free, healing the sick, taking care of the vulnerable and defenseless (like widows and orphans), and preaching the gospel to the lost. **WHEN WE SERVE, GOD IS GLORIFIED, AND JESUS CHRIST, THE SAVIOR, IS MADE KNOWN TO ALL.** Those who believe in Him are saved and brought into His kingdom. **This service pleases God.**

The power of servanthood is manifested when the Church follows Christ's loving example by humbling ourselves and laying down our lives to serve others. Then the love of God will be manifested and experienced by many, changing the atmosphere, cultures, hearts, lives, and even communities. In the Church, there will be unity in the spirit of love, humility, and service as we esteem others better than ourselves. **In this spirit and environment of servanthood, there is nothing God cannot do through His Church. WE NEED TO REMEMBER THE POWER, IMPACT, AND EFFECTIVENESS OF CHRIST'S SERVANTHOOD MINISTRY.** The Church must strengthen our service to others as the world becomes more self-absorbed and selfish. We can do this in the following ways:

- **Caring for the weak.**
- **Giving.**
- **Loving to do what is right.**
- **Imitating God's helpfulness.**
- **Seeing the holiness of helpfulness.**

Strengthen Our Love And Service To Others By Caring For The Weak

The weak are those in need and lack the power, ability, or resources to lift themselves out of their condition. Some are weak physically because they are hungry, sick, or homeless. Others being vulnerable in their souls are oppressed, distressed, and fearful. Some others are weak spiritually because they are lost. The Church must spare nothing to reach out and minister to them. **We must be willing to overcome what may seem to be obstructions so that ministry can reach those in need.** In Luke 5:18, four men reached out to serve a paraplegic man. They brought him on a mat to Jesus to be healed, but they could not enter the house because of the crowd. Nothing could deter these faithful servants of God from helping their sick friend. They opened a hole in the roof and lowered the sick man into the crowd right before Jesus. Luke 5:20 NLT says, "Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man, 'Young man, your sins are forgiven.'" He not only received forgiveness of sins but he was also healed.

Elie Wiesel, a survivor of the Holocaust and world-renowned author

and champion of human rights, said, **“OUR LIVES NO LONGER BELONG TO US ALONE; THEY BELONG TO ALL WHO NEED US DESPERATELY.”** Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish priest and theologian, powerfully stated, **“If our church is not marked by caring for the poor, the oppressed, the hungry, we are guilty of heresy.”** Just as Jesus’ life did not belong to Himself, neither do our lives belong to us. The Lord repeatedly exhorts His Church to serve others.

- “If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.” —Isaiah 58:10 ESV
- “For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat; for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall.” —Isaiah 25:4 ESV
- “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.” —Matthew 10:8 NIV

Strengthen Our Love And Service To Others By Giving

Amy Carmichael, an Irish missionary to India and Japan, said, **“You can give without loving, but YOU CANNOT LOVE WITHOUT GIVING.”** The most potent and profound example of reckless and unconditional giving because of love is recorded in John 3:16–17 NIV:

❖ ***For God so LOVED the world that HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.***

God gave His best, Jesus Christ, to save because He loved. Winston Churchill once said, **“We make a living by what we get, but WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.”**

David Livingstone, who gave his all to reach Africa, believed and said, **“The NOBLEST THING a man can do is, just HUMBLY TO RECEIVE, AND THEN GO AMONGST OTHERS AND GIVE.”** We must grow in our giving until we give as Jesus gave, and the Church must learn to excel in servanthood imitating the Righteous Servant of God.

We give knowing that nothing belongs to us but to God. Nothing that we have achieved or amassed comes from ourselves. They all come from God, the divine and eternal Giver. When we give, we are returning to God what we first received from His hands. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 10:6–8 NIV,

❖ *Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: “The kingdom of heaven has come near.” **Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. FREELY YOU HAVE RECEIVED; FREELY GIVE.***

We give because we love Jesus and others. We give in unity with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We give without expectations because we give selflessly, humbly, and freely as we have freely received from God. Jesus said in Luke 12:21 NLT, “**YES, A PERSON IS A FOOL TO STORE UP EARTHLY WEALTH BUT NOT HAVE A RICH RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.**” When we give selflessly out of love, we are rich in our relationship with God.

Mark 10:21 ESV speaks of Jesus’ counsel to a young man about giving: “And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, ‘You lack one thing: **go, SELL ALL that you have and GIVE TO THE POOR, and you will have TREASURE IN HEAVEN; AND COME, FOLLOW ME.**’”

The Bible consistently speaks of giving.

- “In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”
—Acts 20:35 ESV
- “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will reward them for what they have done.” —Proverbs 19:17 NIV
- “They also will answer, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?” He will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.”
—Matthew 25:44–45 NIV

❖ **GIVING IS NOT JUST ABOUT MAKING A DONATION. IT IS ABOUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE.** —Kathy Calvin

Strengthen Our Love And Service To Others By Loving To Do What Is Right

In serving others, **WE NEED TO LOVE DOING WHAT IS RIGHT** just as **God loves it**. The Lord spoke to His people concerning this through His prophet in Micah 6:6–8 NLT saying:

❖ *What can we bring to the LORD? Should we bring Him burnt offerings? Should we bow before God Most High with offerings of yearling calves? Should we offer Him thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? **No, O people, the LORD has told you WHAT IS GOOD, and this is WHAT HE REQUIRES OF YOU: TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT, TO LOVE MERCY, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD.***

In those days, God’s chosen people were not doing what was right in the eyes of God, and they had profoundly grieved Him by their rebellion, idolatry, and unrighteousness. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Micah admonished the people concerning what the Lord required of them. It was not the burnt offerings of yearling calves, thousands of rams, rivers of olive oil, or even the sacrifices of their firstborn children to pay for their sins that God required. It was their **REPENTANCE** and **OBEDIENCE** to Him in:

- **DOING WHAT IS RIGHT.**
- **LOVING MERCY.**
- **AND WALKING HUMBLY WITH THE LORD.**

More than sacrifices, God wants His Church to obey Him in doing what is right in His eyes. Jack Hyles, a leading figure in the Independent Baptist movement spoke “The reward that outdoes all others is the peace of knowing that you did right.” **Indeed, the more we do what is right—especially in helping others—the more we love to do what is right.** The Bible speaks of ways to do what is right.

- “Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.” —Isaiah 1:17 ESV
- “The LORD is more pleased when we do what is right and just than when we offer Him sacrifices.” —Proverbs 21:3 NLT
- “And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD,

that it may go well with you, and that you may go in and take possession of the good land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers.” —Deuteronomy 6:18 ESV

- “So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.” —James 4:17 ESV
- “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” —Ephesians 2:10 ESV

❖ **DOING THE RIGHT THING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN DOING THE THING RIGHT.** —Peter F. Drucker

Strengthen Our Love And Service To Others By Imitating God’s Helpfulness

God is the ultimate and eternal Helper. He wants and, therefore, commands His Church to help others as He does. Moses, the deliverer of the children of Israel from 400 years of slavery, unfailingly called on God for help, and God never failed to respond in kindness and love to his cries. Moses fulfilled God’s call as a deliverer because God was his Helper. He named his son Eliezer, which in Hebrew means, “God is my Helper.” God is called our Helper throughout the Bible.

- “The helpless commits himself to You; **You are the HELPER of the fatherless.**” —Psalm 10:14 NJKV
- “So we may boldly say: ‘**The Lord is my HELPER, I will not fear.** What can man do to me?’” —Hebrews 13:6 NKJV
- “**Behold, God is my HELPER;** the Lord is with those who uphold my life.” —Psalm 54:4 NKJV
- “And I will pray the Father, and **He will give you another HELPER, that HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOREVER.**” —John 14:16 NKJV

God’s helpfulness is not like man’s. We must strengthen our service to others, not by helping according to our natural understanding or the world’s standards. **IT IS BY WATCHING AND IMITATING HOW JESUS CHRIST HELPS OTHERS.** 1 Peter 2:21 NASB says, “**For you have been**

CALLED FOR THIS PURPOSE, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to FOLLOW IN HIS STEPS.” In John 13:12–14 LSBV, after He washed the disciples’ feet, He said to them:

❖ *Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. **If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.***

He was telling His disciples to follow Him and help others just as they saw Him help them.

- In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. — Matthew 5:16 NIV
- **He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, SO THAT YOU BY HIS POVERTY MIGHT BECOME RICH.** —2 Corinthians 8:9 NIV

Just as Jesus did, we must be willing to become poor by giving all to help others so that they might be made rich in Christ Jesus.

Strengthen Our Love And Service To Others By Seeing The Holiness Of Helpfulness

HELPING OTHERS IS NOT JUST A GOOD THING TO DO; IT IS A HOLY THING TO DO. Holiness is expressed not just in preaching, praying, or worshipping but also in helping others by showing God’s love. When we give of ourselves to help others as Jesus gave Himself, the Lord is manifested in His beauty, glory, and holiness. The selfish in heart will focus on the cost of helping, but the Christlike will see its holiness. **WHEN WE HELP, WE ARE THE EXPRESSION OF CHRIST AND HIS HOLINESS ON THIS EARTH.** Godly and selfless helpfulness sets the Church apart in this self-centered, self-loving, and self-elevated world. When the Church selflessly gives all to help, we will shine and reflect God’s glory and holiness, and this will draw men unto Him. David Jeremiah says, “Every time we deny ourselves to serve someone else, we grow in Christ.”

Finally, strengthen our service to others because the Lord says:

❖ *We are **His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* —Ephesians 2:10 NKJV

- “Do not forget to **do good** and to **share with others**, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” —Hebrews 13:16 NIV
- “**Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.**” —John 15:13 NIV

Prayer Focus

A. Ask the Holy Spirit to Reveal the Condition of Your Heart Concerning Loving and Serving Others.

B. Pray to Understand and Believe You Are Called to Love and Serve as Jesus Christ Did as God’s Servant.

C. Pray to Have the Heart of Love and Servanthood of Jesus Christ.

1. Pray for the Holy Spirit to remove all hardness, selfishness and self-centeredness.
2. Pray for the Holy Spirit to remove the scales from your eyes so that you see others as Christ sees them.
3. Pray for Christ’s love to fill your hearts to love others as you love yourself.
4. Pray for eyes to see the needs of others and be filled with compassion and generosity to reach out and help.

D. Pray to Strengthen Your Love and Service to Others by Caring for the Weak:

1. Those who are unable to lift themselves out of their condition.
2. Those who are poor, hungry, afflicted, and in distress.
3. Those who are sick, bound, hurting, and wounded.
4. Those who are rejected, abandoned, and without home or family.
5. Those who are lost and needing salvation.

E. Pray to Strengthen Your Love and Service to Others by Giving.

1. Pray to love others as God loves and to give to others as God gives.
2. Pray to give your life wholly to God so that He can use your life to give to others.

3. Pray to be willing to give what is needed to meet the needs around you.

F. Pray to Strengthen Your Love and Service to Others by Loving to Do What is Right.

1. Understand that you are God's workmanship and created for good works.
2. Pray to love and obey God in doing what is right in His eyes.
3. Pray to love and give mercy in relationship to others.
4. Pray to walk humbly before God and in relationship with others.
5. Pray to seek justice, correct oppression, defend the fatherless, and plead the widow's cause.

G. Pray to Strengthen Your Love and Service to Others by Imitating God's Helpfulness.

1. Pray to understand God's helpfulness and have a desire to imitate Him.
 - a. Be a helper to all those in need: the fatherless, widows, abandoned, elderly, homeless and defenseless.
 - b. Be willing to always do good to others; feed the hungry, offer shelter to the homeless, and share what we have by giving to those who are in need.
2. Be willing to imitate Jesus Christ according to 2 Corinthians 8:9 ESV, "He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich."

H. Pray to Strengthen Your Love and Service to Others by Seeing the Holiness of Helpfulness.

1. Pray for a passion for showing the glory and holiness of God in being helpful and doing good works.
2. Pray that many will see the glory and goodness of God through your helpfulness and believe in Jesus Christ.

FRIDAY, JUNE 9—STRENGTHEN BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

..... 1 CORINTHIANS 4:20 NKJV

FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT IN WORD BUT IN POWER.

..... ACTS 1:8 NKJV

BUT YOU SHALL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

..... EPHESIANS 3:20 NLT

Now all glory to God, who is able, THROUGH HIS MIGHTY POWER AT WORK WITHIN US, TO ACCOMPLISH INFINITELY MORE THAN WE MIGHT ASK OR THINK.

..... 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6–10 NIV

For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ. **BUT WE HAVE THIS TREASURE IN JARS OF CLAY TO SHOW THAT THIS ALL-SURPASSING POWER IS FROM GOD AND NOT FROM US.** We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

..... ACTS 4:33 NKJV

And with GREAT POWER the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.

..... ZECHARIAH 4:6–7 NLT

Then He said to me, “This is what the LORD says to Zerubbabel: It is not by force nor by strength, **BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAYS THE LORD OF HEAVEN’S ARMIES. NOTHING, not even a mighty mountain, WILL STAND IN ZERUBBABEL’S WAY;** it will become a level plain before him! And when Zerubbabel sets the final stone of the Temple in place, the people will shout: ‘May God bless it! May God bless it!’”

..... ISAIAH 40:25–31 LEB

“And TO WHOM YOU WILL COMPARE ME, AND AM I EQUAL?” SAYS THE HOLY ONE. Lift your eyes up on high, and see! Who created these? The one who brings out their host by number. He calls all them by name. Because He is great of power and

mighty of power, no man is missing. Why do you say, Jacob, and you speak, Israel, “My way is hidden from Yahweh, and my judgment is passed over by my God?” **Have you not known, or have you not heard? YAHWEH IS THE GOD OF ETERNITY, the Creator of the ends of the earth! HE IS NOT FAINT, AND HE DOES NOT GROW WEARY! There is no searching His understanding. HE GIVES POWER TO THE WEARY, AND HE INCREASES POWER FOR THE POWERLESS.** Even young people will be faint and grow weary, and the young will stumble, exhausted. **BUT THOSE WHO WAIT FOR YAHWEH SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH. They shall go up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not grow weary; they shall walk and not be faint.**

..... JOHN 14:15–18 NKJV

If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and **He will give you another Helper, that HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOREVER—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you KNOW Him, for He DWELLS with you and WILL BE IN YOU. I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU ORPHANS; I WILL COME TO YOU.**

EXHORTATION—STRENGTHEN BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

No Other But The Holy Spirit Makes All Things Possible

ONLY ONE PERSON can save us, revive the Church, and turn the heart of every tongue, tribe, and nation back to Jesus. He alone can bring a nation to its knees to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord. God’s will is done on earth by His power, and His work is finished. There is no substitute for Him. No flesh, power, authority, organization, method, or influence can take His place. **HE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD.**

The Church must awaken to the truth that it is not man’s ingenuity, invention, or innovation that can bring transformation and salvation to man. **It is the Holy Spirit, the Almighty God,** as Zechariah 4:6 NIV proclaims, **“NOT BY MIGHT NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT,” SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY.** The Holy Spirit, the third Person in the Holy Trinity, is utterly essential to the birth, existence, and ministry of the Church.

WHERE IS THE CHURCH’S THIRST FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT? WHERE IS THE DEPENDENCY ON THE HOLY SPIRIT? One of the most significant errors of the Church is marginalizing the person of the Holy Spirit. Have we forgotten how to thirst for Him and seek Him with all our hearts? Are we caught up with pursuing His power, anointing, and miracles but

neglecting His person and presence? Have we been enthralled more by what He can do through us than who He is to us? Is the Church lacking in the thirst for Him, which we so desperately need, especially for such a time as this? Maybe we have replaced thirsting for Him with pursuits for many other things—power, influence, effectiveness, worldly success, and man’s acknowledgment. Have we pivoted from trusting the Holy Spirit to trusting in talents, giftings, training, strategies, networking, and the right connections? None of these are bad. They are all good, but they cannot replace the preeminence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. It is time to repent in contrition and brokenness for our spiritual negligence and presumption against the Holy Spirit. **THERE IS ONLY ONE RIVER AND ONE SOURCE OF LIFE, THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

The Holy Spirit Is To Be Loved, Honored, Feared, And Obeyed

God, the Father, Jesus Christ, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three Persons in one Godhead. They are co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal. They are precisely the same in Their divine nature, power, authority, and lordship over all. The Holy Spirit is not a representative of God, He is God Almighty. He is not just a force or power, He is the all-powerful God, and neither is He an agent on God’s mission. He is the Lord God and Sovereign overall—just as the Father and the Son are. The Holy Trinity all exist, function, and move together in perfect unity. As we love, honor, and tremble at the presence of God the Father and the Son, so should we with the Holy Spirit.

From Genesis to Revelation, the Holy Trinity is in perfect unison and identicalness in person. There is no variance in Their will, purpose, and power. We are to seek to know, love, and relate to the Holy Spirit just as we do with Jesus Christ. The Church must not marginalize the Holy Spirit in any way.

We understand more about who the Holy Spirit is by learning how God the Father and the Son relate to the Holy Spirit. They protect the Person of the Holy Spirit and severely warn of not sinning against Him. In fact, God will forgive all sins except the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

- “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.” —Matthew 12:31 NKJV
- “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will

not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.”

—Matthew 12:32 NKJV

- “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” —Ephesians 4:30 NIV
- “Yet they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit. So He (God) turned and became their enemy and He Himself fought against them.”
—Isaiah 63:10 NIV

If God puts such a weight on how we ought to relate to the Holy Spirit, the Church must awake to give the Holy Spirit the utmost honor, priority, preeminence, and devotion. God, the Father and Son, love, respect, and fiercely protect the Holy Spirit against human rebellion, stubbornness, vexation, and blasphemy.

The Church must not turn to the Holy Spirit and **JUST PRAY** for power, anointing, and giftings. **WE MUST NO LONGER SEEK HIM JUST FOR WHAT HE CAN DO BUT FOR WHO HE IS.**

The Holy Spirit And Jesus Christ, The Son Of Man

The Holy Spirit was Jesus Christ’s inseparable Helper, Comforter, Advocate, and Companion in His earthly ministry as the Son of Man. Christ, in His humanity, had the utmost need for the Holy Spirit. He was Spirit-conceived, Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, and Spirit-empowered to wholly obey and serve His Father as the Lamb slain to redeem the world. Christ did nothing on His own concerning the Father’s will but was always trusting and entirely dependent on the Holy Spirit for all things. As a man, Jesus was not omniscient, omnipotent, or omnipresent. He believed, trusted, and depended on the One who was the Holy Spirit. He could only be in one place at one time. His power was limited like any other man. He was not all-knowing, as He had to depend on the Holy Spirit for revelation and understanding. He did that which was told, revealed, and shown to Him by His Father through the Holy Spirit. **WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR JESUS, AS THE SON OF MAN, TO BE ABLE TO OFFER HIMSELF UP AS A SACRIFICE FOR THE REDEMPTION OF ALL MEN.** The Holy Spirit testifies in Hebrews 9:14 NKJV, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, **WHO THROUGH THE ETERNAL SPIRIT OFFERED HIMSELF WITHOUT SPOT TO GOD,** cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Acts 10:38 NKJV states that the Holy Spirit anointed Jesus Christ for good works. **“How God ANOINTED Jesus**

of Nazareth WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH POWER, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.” **Isaiah 42:1 NLT testifies that Jesus was strengthened by the Holy Spirit. “Look at My Servant, WHOM I STRENGTHEN. He is My Chosen One, who pleases Me. I HAVE PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM. He will bring justice to the nations.”** Luke 4:17–19 NKJV details the Holy Spirit’s anointing upon Jesus Christ for ministry.

❖ *And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: “**THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME to PREACH the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to HEAL the broken-hearted, to PROCLAIM LIBERTY to the captives and RECOVERY OF SIGHT to the blind, to SET AT LIBERTY those who are oppressed; to PROCLAIM the acceptable year of the LORD.**”*

In verse 21, Jesus said, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

The Church Must Thirst, Seek And Love The Holy Spirit

Do not just seek the Holy Spirit’s power, anointing, and miracles; seek Him—to know, experience, and encounter Him personally, affectionately, intimately, and devotedly. We must have an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, our Lord, Comforter, Helper, Confidant, and Advocate. Unless the Church learns to pivot from only seeking His power, anointing, and gifts to seeking Him personally to know and love Him and be in holy intimacy with Him, we will not be Church Strong to walk in God’s will. We will also be unable to complete our God-given assignment and be all God has called us to be in these last days. **THE HOLY SPIRIT MUST BE THE CENTER OF OUR FAITH, LIFE, AND MINISTRY.** He is the One who teaches us to know God and reveals the Father’s will. The Holy Spirit speaks in Galatians 4:6–7 NKJV:

❖ ***And BECAUSE YOU ARE SONS, God has sent forth THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON INTO YOUR HEARTS, CRYING OUT, “ABBA, FATHER!” Therefore YOU ARE NO LONGER A SLAVE BUT A SON, and if a son, THEN AN HEIR OF GOD through Christ.***

Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot be born again. Through the Holy Spirit, we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we are children of God and not slaves. We are also co-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. The Holy

Spirit is also the seal of our salvation, and He indwells and communicates with us—Spirit to born-again spirit. There is no surer witness of truth than such a witness. There is no other way to be Church Strong than to be strengthened in the power of the Holy Spirit.

- “Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.” —Ephesians 2:18 NLT
- “Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?” —Galatians 3:3 NKJV
- “Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” —Galatians 3:5 NKJV

Hear, Trust, And Obey What The Holy Spirit Is Saying To The Church

The days we are living in are evil, fierce, and dangerous. These are tricky, deceptive, and spiritually corrosive days we are facing. The only Person who has all the wisdom, understanding, power, and anointing to indwell us and enable us to powerfully, victoriously, and wisely walk through these days is the Holy Spirit. The instruction of God to His seven churches in the Book of Revelation remains the same for the Church today—he who has an ear, let him hear what the Holy Spirit says to the churches. We are to hear the Holy Spirit and obey.

- **“To the church of Ephesus—‘HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.** To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.” —Revelation 2:7 ESV
- **“To the church of Smyrna—‘HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.** The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.” —Revelation 2:11 ESV
- **“To the church of Pergamum—‘HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.** To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.” —Revelation 2:17 ESV

- **“To the church of Thyatira**—‘The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I Myself have received authority from My Father. And I will give him the morning star. **HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.”**
—Revelation 2:26–29 ESV

- **“To the church of Sardis**—‘The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. **HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.”** —Revelation 3:5–6 ESV

- **“To the church of Philadelphia**—‘The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from My God out of heaven, and My own new name. **HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.”**
—Revelation 3:11–13 ESV

- **“To the church of Laodicea**—‘The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also conquered and sat down with My Father on His throne. **HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.”**
—Revelation 3:21–22 ESV

How Can The Church Be Strengthened In The Power Of The Holy Spirit?

- Live in the Holy Spirit and be filled with His power.

- ❖ *“I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it,” says the LORD. —Ezekiel 37:14 NKJV*

- Trust and obey the Holy Spirit always.

- ❖ *I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and*

you will keep My judgments and do them. —Ezekiel 36:27 NKJV

- Depend on the Holy Spirit, Whose power makes all things possible.

❖ *And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.” —Luke 1:35 NKJV*

Prayer Focus

A. Hunger and Thirst After the Holy Spirit.

B. Pray and Seek to Know, Love, Trust and Obey the Holy Spirit.

C. Repent and Remove All Obstructions to the In-Filling of the Holy Spirit.

1. Eradicate lack of hunger, thirst or desire for the Holy Spirit.
2. Eradicate ignorance and indifference towards the Holy Spirit.
3. Eradicate apathy and lukewarmness in relationship with the Holy Spirit.
4. Turn away from failure to honor, respect and love the Holy Spirit.
5. Turn away from grieving the Holy Spirit in:
 - a. Disobedience to God’s Word and the Holy Spirit’s conviction.
 - b. Presumptuousness towards the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Defiling of His holy temple, your body.
 - d. Sins and trespasses especially against Him.

D. Rededication and Re-commitment to the Holy Spirit.

1. To give Him first place in your life.
2. To love, honor and obey Him always.
3. To be filled and never to presume on Him.
4. To be sensitive to Him and not ignore or grieve Him.
5. To treat His gifts with care, honor and respect.
6. To operate in the gifts through faith and obedience.

E. The Church to Live, Move and Serve in the Power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY FOR OUR PASTORS & CHURCH PLANTS

SENIOR PASTOR & FAMILY

Klayton + Sharon Ko

Christalyn + Emmanuel Orupabo, Joshua + Kimberly Ko, Jason Ko

STAFF PASTORS & SPOUSES

Bill Bannister

Francine + JR **Cabbab**

Horace + Talei **Chee-Manuia**

Ernie + Siew Peng **Chow**

Sam + Lorna **Cockett**

Mel + Jennifer **Corpuz**

Absen + Sherlina **Ebot**

Jacob + Hoku **Fesagaiga**

Frederick + Sandra **Harris**

Joshua + Kimberly **Ko**

Trenton + Courtney **Oshiro**

Chizuko + Tyrone **Peoples**

Shyju + Reena **Sathyanesan**

Raymond + Eva **So**

Scott + Debbie **Sonoda**

Atama + Melanie **Vakalalabure**

Andrew + Karen **Yasuhara**

CHURCH PLANTS & MISSIONARIES

BRAZIL

First Assembly of God Brazil

Ps. Celina Takahashi, Bro. Alex

INDIA

National Overseer

Ps. Prasantha + Sis. Roshika

First Gomti Nagar Fellowship AOG

Sis. Sonika Verma

IRELAND

Lighthouse Community Church

Dublin: Ps. Jamie + Sis. Lud Corcoran

Navan: Ps. Sam + Sis. Sara Corcoran

Dundalk: Ps. Rebecca Moldovan

JAPAN

Aloha Assembly Kirigaoka Christ Church

Ps. Kyoko Koyama,

Sis. Sayaka + Bro. Victor Groves

Amazing Grace Center Kamaishi

Ps. Keizo + Sis. Mami Yoshioka

Hiroshima Gideonite Team

Bro. Gary + Sis. Linda Sasaki, Ps. Lynne Higa,

Sis. Michelle Murakami

Okinawa City Church

Sis. Miyuki, Sis. Fujii, Sis. Shizuko, Bro. Nakamura

Osaka Bible Church

Ps. Atsuya + Ps. Takako Miyashita

MARSHALL ISLANDS

First Assembly of God Marshall Islands

Delap—Bro. Mike Larron

Uliga—Bro. Aichy Hanchor

MEXICO

First Assembly of God Huamantla

Ps. Miriam, Ps. Quechol, Sis. Hudid, Sis. Mimi,

Bro. Francisco + Sis. Fernanda

First Assembly of God Ixtenco

Bro. Miguel, Sis. Fabia

PHILIPPINES

First Assembly of God Bohol

Ps. Bill Bannister (Interim),

Sis. Natalie Bernales, Sis. Princess Bernales,

Sis. Lolet Gambe, Sis. Fe Ulgaran

SAMOA

First Assembly of God Faleua

Ps. Mila + Sis. Rosie Tongamoa,

Bro. Sola + Sis. Peta, Bro. James

TIMOR LESTE

East Timor Assembly

Ps. Atama + Sis. Mel Vakalalabure

UGANDA

Mbale City Church

Ps. Elijah + Sis. Ruth Mabala, Ps. Moses,

Ps. Paul, Ps. Jonathan

UNITED KINGDOM

London Family Center

Ps. Timothy + Sis. Angela Dorjey

UNITED STATES

First Assembly of God Hamakua

Ps. Jacob + Sis. Hoku Fesagaiga, Ps. Maize Luke

Marshallse Churches

Ps. Absen + Sis. Sherlina Ebot

**AND I ALSO SAY TO YOU THAT YOU ARE PETER,
AND ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH,
AND THE FORCES OF HADES WILL NOT
OVERPOWER IT.**

MATTHEW 16:18 HCSB



First Assembly of God