



# 2019 Week of Prayer

April 14-20, 2019

## ENJOYING GOD

"So why did God create the world when he didn't have to? The answer is grace—uncompelled, unmerited grace. 'He must have created us not to get joy, but to give it'."

(Tim Chester, p. 32)

## 2019 WEEK OF PRAYER Schedule

Sunday, April 14:

*Gather with your growth group and spend time together in prayer.*

Monday, April 15: 5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m.: Men's Prayer (come when you can, leave when you must)

- 11:00 a.m. - Noon: Ladies Prayer meeting. Childcare provided in Helder Hall.

Tuesday, April 16: 5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m.: Men's Prayer (come when you can, leave when you must)

- 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.: Ladies In-Home Meetings...see schedule for home locations

Wed., April 17: 5:30 a.m.-6:30 a.m.: Men's Prayer (come when you can, leave when you must)

- 7:00 p.m.: "Praying Around the World"...prayer stations at the church

Thurs., April 18: 5:30 a.m. - 6:30 a.m.: Men's Prayer (come when you can, leave when you must)

- 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday service in the auditorium. We will spend time reflecting on the betrayal and arrest of Christ and observe the Lord's Table together.

Fri., April 19: 5:30 a.m. - 6:30 a.m.: Men's Prayer (come when you can, leave when you must)

- 3:00 p.m. - "It is Finished!"—We will join together at 3:00 p.m. to reflect on this saying of Christ from the cross and to give thanks together for this indescribable gift! Our time will feature time for public thanksgiving, testimony, and prayer.

Sat., April 20: 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.: Men's Prayer (come when you can, leave when you must)

Sun., April 21: 6:30 a.m.: Sunrise Service at Kline's Run Park (moved to the church auditorium in the event of rain.)

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It is no secret that from time-to-time we all experience a certain spiritual coldness or hardness toward the things of God. Sins of anger, bitterness, lust, and rebellion lie sometimes hidden just beneath the surface. The callousness that they've exposed however cannot be missed. For over 20 years I have seen both the roots and fruits of such spiritual indifference, but I've also witnessed the tremendous outpouring of blessing in times of refreshing revival. Oh, how I long for those times in my life and for our church.

Each year, our Week of Prayer is intended to bring us to a greater love for God Himself. It's during this time that we are praying that we might be enthralled with Him and that we would treasure Him as the Greatest Treasure and most worthwhile Pursuit. Our motivation for prayer is always the glory of God. Prayer is not our way of earning points with God but rather an expression of our utter dependence on Him for all things.

-Pastor Joe Fauth



“How does Christ relate to us now? He sits in heaven on our behalf. He’s our guarantee of a place with God. His work on the cross is complete. ...

We respond by seeing Jesus in heaven on our behalf. We give up our attempts to remove our guilt, establish our identity or prove ourselves.

Instead we rest on his finished work.

We follow Jesus by faith and come before God’s throne with confidence

(Tim Chester, p 84)..

This year we will be using Tim Chester’s book Enjoying God: Experience the Power and Love of God in Everyday Life to help to guide our thinking and praying as we seek the joy of communion with the Lord together.

















Thursday, April 18

Praying with Power

*“One kindness of the Father is that he welcomes us into his presence through prayer. He delights to hear his children talk to him. He rejoices to do us good in repose to our prayer” (Tim Chester, p. 64).*

Reading

Scripture Reading: Psalm 50

Enjoying God: pp.63-74; Chapter 5 “In Every Prayer We Can Enjoy the Father’s Welcome”

Reflection

In Psalm 50:14-15, God calls His people to three things, what are they?

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How do the things for which you pray reveal what is in your heart? Judging by your prayer life, where is your life headed? Are your prayers radically different from the prayer of Jesus in John 17, and Paul in Ephesians 1 & 3? If so, in what ways?

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In what ways must your prayer life change?

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### Praying

John Piper provides what he calls the “I.O.U.S” prayer (When I Don’t Desire God, pp. 150-153), make this the theme of your prayer time today.

Almost every day I pray early in the morning that God would give me desires for him and his Word, because the desires I ought to have are absent or weak. In fact, I follow the acronym myself that I have given to many people to help them fight for joy. The acronym is I O U S. It is very limited and focused. It’s not all we should pray for. But this book (and most of my life) is about the fight for joy. And that is what I O U S focuses on. Here’s the way I pray over the Word in my fight for joy.

**I—(*Incline!*)** The first thing my soul needs is an *inclination toward God* and his Word. Without that, nothing else will happen of any value in my life. I must *want* to know God and read his Word and draw near to him. Where does that “want to” come from? It comes from God. So Psalm 119:36 teaches us to pray, “*Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!*” Very simply we ask God to take our hearts, which are more inclined to breakfast and the newspaper, and change that inclination. We are asking that God create desires that are not there.

**O—(*Open!*)** Next I need to have *the eyes of my heart opened* so that when my inclination leads me to the Word, I see what is really there, and not just my own ideas. Who opens the eyes of the heart? God does. So Psalm 119:18 teaches us to pray, “*Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.*” So many times we read the Bible and see nothing wonderful. Its reading does not produce joy. So what can we do? We can cry to God: “Open the eyes of my heart, O Lord, to see what it says about you as *wonderful*.”

**U—(*Unite!*)** Then I am concerned that my heart is badly fragmented. Parts of it are inclined, and parts of it are not. Parts see wonder, and parts say, “That’s not so wonderful.” What I long for is a united heart where all the parts say a joyful *Yes!* to what God reveals in his Word. Where does that wholeness and unity come from? It comes from God. So Psalm 86:11 teaches us to pray, “Unite my heart to fear your name.” Don’t stumble over the word *fear* when you thought we were seeking *joy*. The fear of the Lord is a joyful experience when you renounce all sin. A thunderstorm can be a trembling joy when you know you can’t be destroyed by lightning. “O Lord, let your ear be attentive to . . . the prayer of your servants who *delight to fear your name*” (Neh. 1:11). “His *delight* shall be in the *fear of the LORD*” (Isa. 11:3). Therefore pray that God would *unite* your heart to joyfully fear the Lord.

**S—(*Satisfy!*)** What I really want from all this engagement with the Word of God and the work of his Spirit in answer to my prayers is *for my heart to be satisfied with God* and not with the world. Where does that satisfaction come from? It comes from God. So Psalm 90:14 teaches us to pray, “*Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*”

## I O U S ADMITS GOD IS OUR ONLY HOPE FOR JOY

This acronym has served me well for years. This is frontline warfare for me. I know the agonizing experience of Robert Robinson's hymn "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing." What makes this hymn so relevant for me is that it acknowledges God's absolute right to bind my heart to himself, and then it turns that right into a prayer.

*O to grace how great a debtor Daily I'm constrained to be! Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, Bind my wandering heart to Thee. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love; Here's my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.*<sup>8</sup>

"Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee." A "fetter" is a chain. I pray this—oh, how I pray this with all my wandering heart—"Grant me, O God, to see the surpassing value of your goodness so that it binds me, as with a chain, to you." It's the same prayer that George Croly (1780-1860) prayed in his well-known hymn, "Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart."

*Spirit of God, descend upon my heart; Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move; Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art, And make me love Thee as I ought to love.*<sup>9</sup>

I have heard people object to that last line. They say love should be free, not forced. True. But there are two kinds of forcing. One is against our will. The other is by changing our will. The first results in coerced action. The second results in free action. My own suspicion is that those who object to this prayer have never seriously confronted their own hardness of heart. They have not taken seriously enough the biblical diagnosis of our condition found in the word *cannot* in Romans 8:7-8: "The mind that is set on the flesh . . . does not submit to God's law; indeed, it *cannot*. Those who are in the flesh *cannot* please God." And I wonder, have those who object to this hymn ever come to terms with why the psalmist prays so urgently and repeatedly, "Incline my heart" (Ps. 119: 36, 112; 141:4)? For my part, the only hope I have to love God as I ought is that he would overcome all my disinclination and bind my heart to himself in love. That is the grace I must have to be a Christian and to live in joy.

Hence I pray to God repeatedly: Incline my heart! Open the eyes of my heart! Unite my heart! Satisfy my heart! Prayer is, therefore, not only the measure of our hearts, revealing what we really desire; it is also the indispensable remedy for our hearts when we do not desire God the way we ought.



*Praying*

What issues of sin, spiritual apathy, wrong thinking, or coldness have been revealed to you this week? List them here and seek a repentant, humble, and pliable heart in dealing with those issues. Is there a godly friend that you can share these with and pray together about them?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_



There are many evils in this world that would threaten to separate us from the love of God in Christ. Even as Martin Luther testified in the classic hymn *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*

And tho this world, with devils filled  
Should threaten to undo us  
We will not fear, for God has willed  
His truth to triumph thru us  
(Martin Luther)

Yet, as Chester says, “Jesus is not up in heaven uninterested in your life. He didn’t abandon us. He’s the same person he was 2,000 years ago” (p. 89). He doesn’t love you because you impress Him!

### *Praying*

Use Romans 8:31-39 as your prayer guide and prompter today. For instance, we read “What shall bring any charge against God’s elect.” And you would pray, “Father, thank you that there is absolutely no condemnation or rightful accusation that can be brought against me that would ever sever me from your love in Christ. I thank you that you have chosen to set your love on me from before the foundation of the world—to conform me to the image of Christ. Now, I pray, help me to live in line with what you have done!”



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What bold actions have you been called to this week?

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*Praying*

What does God desire from our church? What biblically-motivated, God-centered dreams do you have for our church family? Maybe you'd like to see our Missions Budget doubled this year. Perhaps you are longing for a movement of revival in our church. Or maybe you'd love to see 10 new families come to faith in Christ this year. Whatever it might be, would you record those things here? Write them down and commit to praying for these things this year...and let's be ready to share how the Lord moves in our midst!

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Church Ministries

- C2C Youth Group
- Kids Treasuring Christ (KTC)
- Hospitality Team
- Building Team
- Finance Team
- Council of Elders
- Body Builders
- CBC Biblical Training
- CBC Missions Team

Church Missions and Missionaries

- Ron and Barb Chivers
- Dave and Joyce Hilt
- York Rescue Mission/LifePath
- Human Life Services
- Doug and Faith Clark
- Misiker and Meaza Kebede, Spread of Grace Ministries
- David and Winnie Otema, Spread of Grace Ministries, Uganda
- Wes and Lori Tabor
- Rhys and Becky John
- John and Ronda Lennon
- Luann and Suzanne Goosen
- Tim and Sue Shirey
- Jack Douglas
- Linc and Kaye Myers
- Mark and Charity Borisuk

Additional Burdens

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