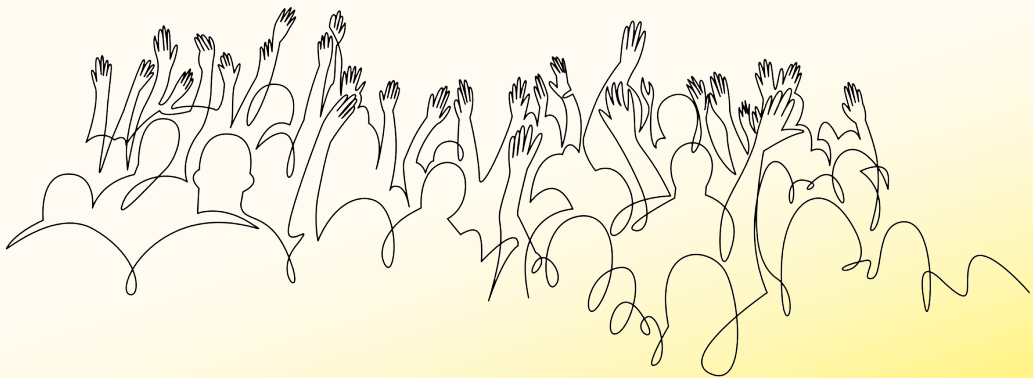


TEN DAYS

OF PREPARATION

UNT O

Pentecost



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS "TEN DAYS OF PREPARATION UNTO PENTECOST"?

The Lord prepared His people for Pentecost over ten days of prayer in the upper room (Acts 1:14). 120 disciples waited for the Promise of the Father and they were unified in expectation (Luke 24:49). Jesus didn't tell them to wait to be endued with encouragement so they could make it through another week. They waited to be endued with power to be witnesses of Christ to the world (Acts 1:8).

"Ten Days of Preparation unto Pentecost" holds a double meaning for us. First, we prepare in prayer to celebrate the historic harvest of souls on Pentecost Sunday two thousand years ago. Second, we prepare in prayer to see a continual Pentecost harvest of souls through our lives today. The 120 were endued with the Holy Spirit's power and became mighty witnesses for Christ. They saw tens of thousands of people saved and discipled (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:7). And the same can be true for us as well. Jesus has not changed. Jesus' mission has not changed. He stands ready to endue us with power to see harvests upon harvests of souls saved and disciples made in this time and through our lives!

DAY ONE | FRIDAY, MAY 15

Waiting for the Promise of the Father

Scripture: And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Acts 1:4-5 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: Jesus had now walked among the disciples and others for 40 days since His resurrection. During his post-resurrection appearances, Jesus spoke to the apostles “things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Jesus was now about to show those in the upper room what He meant when He said, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.” (John 16:7) The promise of the Father was not an idea, or an empty promise, or an “it.” The promise of the Father was the very person of the Holy Spirit sent to help us, comfort us and empower us to do what Jesus intended from the beginning of time.

Prayer: Jesus, we thank You for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit. We thank You that He is the guarantee of all that You have for us. We thank You that Your promise is true and timely so that we might live the life You have for us. Fill us freshly today with Your Spirit. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

Quote: “I venture to suggest that the one vital quality which they had in common was spiritual receptivity. Something in them was open to heaven, something which urged them Godward.” (A.W. Tozer)

DAY TWO | SATURDAY, MAY 16

Waiting with United Prayer

Scripture: "Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers."
Acts 1:12-14 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: The upper room assembly included 120 people of mainly the eleven apostles, women and Jesus' relatives. Luke intentionally names the eleven disciples and in that way establishes the continuity between Jesus' ministry and the apostolic foundation of the church. The scripture says they prayed with one accord, united to see the promise of the Father come. Even though they did not fully comprehend or know that the promise of the Father was the Holy Spirit, they stayed disciplined and determined to see what Jesus had promised come to pass. The unity they experienced in that upper room was a choice they all made. All their preferences, agendas, differences and fears were laid aside to link their hearts and minds together to pray into seeing the promise of the Holy Spirit come.

Prayer: Jesus, we recognize that the unity of the Spirit already exists in You and we are now called to walk in that unity with each other. As we humble ourselves and choose to walk in unity in the body of Christ, hear our prayers, forgive us our sins and heal our land. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Quote: "There has never been a revival in any country that has not begun in united prayer, and no revival has ever continued beyond the duration of those prayer meetings." (A.T. Pierson)

DAY THREE | SUNDAY, MAY 17

Waiting with Hopeful Purpose

Scripture: Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

Acts 1:9-11 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: Those watching Jesus ascend to heaven must have been both amazed and bewildered. Here He had risen from the dead 40 days ago and now He was seemingly gone again. They went to the upper room to be together, to discuss what had happened, to pray and to encourage each other by remembering Jesus’ words with hopeful purpose and expectation. This is why we, the Church, come together. Not to just do social things or good works, but to align ourselves individually and corporately with His purposes, to glorify Him and to seek and save that which is lost. Ekklesia has come—the Church—to be a light in the darkness for a waiting world.

Prayer: Jesus, You commanded us to never forsake gathering together. We pray that the hope found in You and experienced through and with God’s people (the Church) will again become the centerpiece of our lives and communities. May Your Church be pulsating with the life and vitality of the Holy Spirit and impact all those that enter in. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

Quote: “The New Testament Ekklesia (the Church) is not an it, a thing, an institution, but rather a unity of persons, a people, a communion and a community. Its express purpose is to be a context for the work of the Kingdom to go throughout the earth through God’s people.”

(Emil Brunner)

DAY FOUR | MONDAY, MAY 18

Waiting for Dynamic Power

Scripture: “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.” Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: The promise of the resurrection power of Jesus is for every Spirit-filled believer. God never assigns us to something that He doesn't give us the power to see accomplished. He gave dynamic power through the Holy Spirit to those 120 in the upper room to see the gospel go forth and the Church birthed. And for the gospel to go forth, it cannot be in words only but must be in the transformational power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus essentially said to those with Him to wait there in Jerusalem until they received power from on high. Then, once they received that power, He told them not to stay, but instead, to go and be His witnesses in the power of the Holy Spirit each and every day. And so it is for us as well!

Prayer: Jesus, Your Holy Spirit has already been poured out on us at Pentecost. So, fill us freshly today. You said to the disciples, “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” Jesus, we ask You for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Show us where we must remove mixture from our lives so that we may have the Holy Spirit without measure. In Your great name we pray, amen.

Quote: “The Spirit-filled life is not a special, deluxe edition of Christianity. It is part and parcel of the total plan of God for His people.” (A.W. Tozer)

DAY FIVE | TUESDAY, MAY 19

God with Us

Scripture: “She will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” Matthew 1:21-23 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: We have sinned (rebelled against God’s rule), and the due penalty is death—eternal separation from God. Yet, God came to us. He didn’t come because He needed us, but because we needed Him. Jesus came to us to save us from our sins. He came to us because He loves us and wants to be with us forever. Jesus calls us to go to the world because He came to the world. His coming motivates our going. His love for the world can fill our hearts. His passion for saving sinners can consume us. We go to the world in the love and power of the One who came to us.

Prayer: Immanuel, we thank You for coming to us. You came into the depths of our death from the heights of heavenly life. We know God loves us because You came and told us. We know we can be in God’s forever family because You suffered and died for us, rose for us and granted us the right to become God’s children. The value of something is determined by the price one is willing to pay for it. How highly the Father values us that He considers You, His Son, a worthy price! Fill us with Your love to see that value in those You’ve called us to reach. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

Quote: “Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs, not out of theological arguments, but out of love.” (Roland Allen)

DAY SIX | WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

All Heard the Word

Scripture: And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. Acts 19:10 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: The harvest of 3,000 souls on Pentecost was just the beginning. Not long after, another 5,000 souls were saved in a day. The Lord increasingly added multitudes of men and women to God's family (Acts 5:14). The Apostle Paul and his companions saturated entire regions with the Good News. The aftermath of the atomic bomb of Pentecost was obsessive evangelistic zeal. Love for Jesus was explosively obvious through obedience to His commands to go and preach the Good News. Through going and telling, the early church gives us a blueprint for loving Jesus and seeing Him supremely loved by multitudes of people.

Prayer: Lord of the harvest, send us into Your harvest! We desire to love You like Your early disciples did. We ask You to forgive us for the times we've kept back Your Gospel. Your early church grew as You added believers who heard and believed the Gospel. Empower us freshly with Your Spirit to preach Your Good News. Help us to keep souls saved and disciples made our top priorities. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Quote: "The church that does not evangelize will fossilize."
(Oswald J. Smith)

DAY SEVEN | THURSDAY, MAY 21

Woe Is Me

Scripture: For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!

1 Corinthians 9:16 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: Think of the last time you saw people rise from the waters of baptism. There is no joy like that joy. Jesus said there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:10). It was normal for Paul to live in the joy of sinners repenting, believing the Gospel, and being saved. He was so accustomed to that joy, he knew he'd be woefully miserable if he didn't preach the Good News. There is joy to be found in following Jesus. There is perhaps no greater joy in Jesus than to watch Him save sinners (Luke 15:7). There is a joy of our Lord to enter into when we die (Matthew 25:21). There is a joy of our Lord to enter into while we live: the joy of sinners repenting. May we join Jesus in this joy!

Prayer: Lord of joy, we remember the joy of forgiveness. We remember the joy of first experiencing peace with God. We remember the joy of rising from the water into newness of life. We remember that You came to seek and save the lost. We remember that there is extreme celebration in heaven when the lost are found. We desire to experience the joy of salvation. We desire to see sinners repent and be saved. Help us preach Your Good News until we're miserable at the thought of holding it back. Help us search until the lost are found. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Quote: "Everything in Scripture is either preparation for the Gospel, presentation of the Gospel, or participation in the Gospel." (Dave Harvey)

DAY EIGHT | FRIDAY, MAY 22

Unified by Prayer and Praise

Scripture: These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus and His brothers.

Acts 1:14 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: One accord—in complete unity—what a beautiful reality. When we call people to come and see the community of the King walking in love and a holy oneness, they will learn from what they see, love what they see and lean into what they see. There is no culture more prepared for welcoming people into a warm and wonderful world than Christ's followers living in a holy and loving union.

Prayer: Jesus, help us to be a unified community, lovingly devoted to waiting on You for Your will to be revealed and released. We look to You to hear and to heed Your divine desires each and every day. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Quote: "Believers are never told to become one; we already are one and are expected to act like it." (Joni Eareckson Tada)

DAY NINE | SATURDAY, MAY 23

Unified by Word and Spirit

Scripture: And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke to before by the mouth of David concerning Judas who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. Acts 1:15-16 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: When we invite people to come and see the covenantal community of Christ, we invite them into a place and a people dedicated to the Word and the Spirit, and who are always looking to the prophetic purposes of God in everything.

Prayer: Jesus, help us to be a people of prayer and prophetic purpose. Help us to always seek Your will and ways in each and every thing at all times. By Your grace, make us able to follow You fully and obey You completely. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Quote: "Satan always hates Christian fellowship; it is his policy to keep Christians apart. Anything which can divide saints from one another he delights in. Since union is strength, he does his best to promote separation."
(Charles Spurgeon)

DAY TEN | SUNDAY, MAY 24

Unified by Presence and Power

Scripture: When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared on them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat on each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV)

Devotional Thought: A people of Pentecost are a people who draw others into a dynamic encounter with the power of God made manifest in the midst of the people of God. The more we invite people to come and see what Jesus has done among us, the more they will see the transformational power of His presence.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, King of Pentecost, we invite You to invade our lives and our community with the power of Your Holy Spirit. We desire to be a people who are filled with Your power, in order to fulfill Your purpose to reach everyone with Your plans. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Quote: "When you strip it of everything else, Pentecost stands for power and life. That's what came into the church when the Holy Spirit came down on the Day of Pentecost." (David Wilkerson)

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