

DEVOTIONAL

21 | days of **PRAYER**

Encounter God

A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else. Psalm 84:10

Do you remember the first time you encountered God's presence? The moment that you knew He was real? Maybe your moment was in a church service. Maybe your moment was in your car or even your bedroom. Regardless of where it took place, it was this moment that changed everything for you. One moment in His presence changed everything for me. I remember knowing in that moment that I would never be the same again.

When we experience the presence of God for ourselves, we want others to experience Him as well. The reason we gather and pray like we do at Desperation Church is because we believe prayer attracts the presence of God. This creates an atmosphere where anyone, from any walk of life, with any kind of background can come in the doors of our church and encounter God personally. It becomes a place where anyone can come in and experience one moment in His presence that will change everything for the rest of their lives. It is our desire to create a place that attracts the presence of God so that the presence of God will attract the people.

I love everything that goes into a Sunday worship experience. I love the music, the sermons, the production and everything in between; however, if the presence of God is not there then significant life change will not take place. We are called to be a church that is always desperate for more of His presence because it is His presence that changes everything.

When the presence of God comes, it is followed by salvation, miracles, healing, life change, restoration for marriages and freedom from bondage. When Jesus walks into the room, everything changes. The Bible says, one day in His presence is better than a thousand anywhere else. Maybe as you are reading this you are realizing that you have never had this life-changing moment. TODAY is a great day to start. Maybe it has been a long time since you have experienced the presence of God. TODAY is a great day to encounter Him again. Let's spend the first of the 21 days boldly asking for the Presence of God to be rich and tangible in our church and in our lives.

—Pastor Adam Hicks



Experience Life Change

DAY 2

Don't do life alone.



Today, we have an opportunity for people to experience life change through small groups at Desperation Church. I believe that more times than not we get lost in the motions of church and neglect our personal walks and relationships. We forget that we need others. Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” It is so easy to forget that others need us. Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:11 that we are to encourage one another and lift each other up. We do not make small groups—friendships with people who share our interests and are in a similar stage of life—a priority. We spend time on the rules we believe Christianity imposes and spend less time on relationships. By the way, this makes church unappealing to lost people—we look like we never have fun!

We are always saying things like, “Join a small group, get plugged in, and don’t do life alone!” We spend Sunday after Sunday dropping one liners in hopes that people will grasp hold of a piece of our vision and experience life according to the way it was designed. We spend time saying these things for one simple purpose: to bring people together.

For those of you who are a part of a small group, you know first-hand that what originally was an attempt to do what your pastor asked you to do, quickly became the avenue in which joy returned, hope was restored, healing took place, walls were torn down and friendships became real. It became a place where people knew more than your name. They knew you and you discovered the benefit of having someone you could count on.

I want to invite you to join me in praying for small groups today. First, let’s pray for others. Pray for 100% participation. We want everyone to know they are loved and accepted, have a place among a family of believers and do not have to try to belong—they already do. Secondly, let’s pray for ourselves. Pray that we will allow the Lord to give us favor with the people who are not plugged into a life-giving church. Pray that we can be trusted with the most skeptical people because we live out Christ in front of them. Pray for boldness to invite someone to our small group, start our own group, and even for some of you, attend a small group.

No one should have to do life alone—not on our watch. As the baton for small groups has been handed down to us from the “Acts chapter 2 crew,” let’s also give our lives away by focusing more on others and less on ourselves. When we join, or plug others into a small group, we set them up for a moment when real life change can take place. And just like in your experience, joy is returned, hope is restored, healing takes place, walls come down and friendships become real.

—Linda Stone

Discover Purpose

We get up in the morning, hurry through the usual routine, find our way through yet, another busy day, dinner, homework, whatever sport or activity we must attend and then collapse into bed to prepare for the same routine the next day. To many of us, this scenario sounds very familiar. In these busy days, where time seems to pass as fast as a lightening flash, we can be driven by the demands of life and not realize that God has a greater purpose for our lives.

God is the giver of life and has a purpose for everyone. What does it even mean to discover our purpose? How do we discover why we were placed here on this earth? Something that Pastor Andy says often is that “everyone is a 10 at something.” At Desperation, we believe everyone has gifts and talents that can be used within the local church. The DC Connect Team is our avenue for enabling people to use their gifts to reach people. We are blessed to have people who willingly volunteer their time by greeting people as they walk in the door, checking kids in so that parents can encounter God, parking cars to make sure that people are loved from the parking lot to their chair, and even making coffee so that our church feels like home.

Recently, a little boy walked into DC Kidz for the first time with his hands clenched together and head down looking at the floor. A game-changing moment happened when one of the DC Kidz connect team members was standing at the door and immediately got down on his level and began a conversation with him. The little boy’s eyes lit up, hands became unclenched and a smile came over his face. For that moment, the DC Kidz team member’s purpose was breaking down the barrier of fear and uncertainty for a little boy, thus enabling the boy and his parents to encounter God in a real way.

Several years ago, there was a slogan going around that I still will occasionally hear “WWJD: What would Jesus do?” While this may just be a slogan, there is a lot of power in those four words. Purpose extends beyond Sundays. Your purpose may be giving a meal to a family in need, buying toys for children that would not have had a Christmas, visiting someone in the hospital, making a phone call or sending a text that may have been just what someone needed in that moment.

Today as we pray to discover our purpose, ask God to show how He wants to guide our days. Exodus 9:16 says “But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” This does not have to be complicated. Look for moments to let people see Jesus in what we do, how we act, and the things we say.

God, your name is what we want to proclaim. You care about us and have great thoughts of us. Will you show us today how to hear you and take blinders off our eyes so we do not miss the purposeful moments you have in our paths? Show us ways to turn our thoughts from ourselves and allow us to focus on you and those around us. Teach us God to look for ways to discover our purpose.

—Darlene Grace

*“But I have raised
you up for this very
purpose” Exodus 9:16*



DAY 3

Change Your World

DAY 4

When thinking about how to pray for missions, the mind can go in one hundred different directions—juggling the different areas of struggle, poverty, and need. Today, I want us to shift our focus. I would like us to take a journey to see what might happen if our focus was off of this world and on ourselves. Sounds kind of backwards to everything we know here at Desperation Church, right? Let's sideline the urge to focus on the apparent needs of this world and instead focus on the mindset behind why we do it.

So many times, I find myself asking "am I called to reach these people, do I have the ability to impact or influence this situation or do I have the resources to pull this off?" You see, in Mark chapter 16 it takes us post resurrection when Jesus is revealing himself to individuals. Of course, one of His stops was to visit His disciples, beloved friends and companions. If we look in verse 16 Jesus gives them two simple commands to follow. After experiencing His presence, and getting to know the person of Jesus, His command to them was simple: *go and announce*. It was not go to college, learn a bunch of rules, follow a script, do not do bad, elevate yourself in society or wait till it is your time to be called. He said "go," meaning go wherever your "go" is.

I urge you not to sit idle, not to wait until the time is right, not to second guess if you have the ability, not to wait until it is comfortable, not to flounder in your inabilities—just go and announce! Announce everything you know about Jesus. Speak His name in everything you do. This does not mean that you have to be the creepy guy standing at the red light with a loud speaker shouting "turn or burn!" It means do everything with love and when given the opportunity to tell your story, do so! God has given you your story for a reason, he has given you a platform no one else has. If we all had the same platform, we would all reach the same people. Sometimes announcing is as simple as a practical gesture or act of kindness. When we do these acts of love it gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to break down walls in the lives of individuals who otherwise may not have been reached. Some of these acts are as simple as cutting your neighbors grass, paying for someone's meal in a drive through, helping at local nonprofits, volunteering to tutor students, giving up your time to help with a ministry or maybe sacrificing financially so that we can escalate the vision that God has so graciously given us here at Desperation Church. Announcing is anything that points people back to Jesus.

Whether it's here in our community, across this nation in the backwoods of Wisconsin or across the globe in the jungle of Cambodia, go and announce. I want to invite you to join me in praying that our mindsets would be shifted to just that: a mindset that desires to proactively go and announce. I believe if we follow His command we will be highly effective in growing the Kingdom of God.

— Pastor Tyler Dooley



*See the need,
be the answer.*

Heart For The House

“Enlarge your house; build an addition. Spread out your home, and spare no expense! For you will soon be bursting at the seams. Your descendants will occupy other nations and resettle the ruined cities”
Isaiah 54:2-3.

Heart for the House is our church-wide strategy to “enlarge our house.” It unites us as Desperation Church, spread out across multiple locations and venues, and calls into focus the God-size dream of reaching people. It is about spreading out and sparing no expense in three areas of impact: Missions, Desperation College, and Buildings and Campuses.

Take a moment to pray that God uses Heart for the House to increase our ability to reach people. Pray that He uses it to challenge us to dream big. Pray specifically that the supernatural power of God is released as our heart is focused on each of the three Impact Lanes. Beyond what God wants to do with us as a Church, pray that God uses Heart for the House to challenge you personally. Pray that He uses it to increase your faith, and opens your eyes to the impact of a generous heart.

—Pastor Cody Miller



Freedom From Religion

The word **religion** in and of itself is not bad. Webster's dictionary says religion is "the service and worship of God or the supernatural; devotion to religious faith or observance." When you hear our church talking about religion we are referencing people who place rules over relationship. Many people measure their relationship with God by rules, and most of these rules are man-made that we take as Biblical truth. In my opinion, it is one of the greatest deceptions in the enemy's arsenal of tricks and strategies to keep people from seeing truth. This form of religion has been taking place since the days of Jesus. Jesus rebuked the religious leaders regularly for putting rules above truth. In Matthew 11:42, Jesus is talking to the religious leaders when he says *"What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things."* These leaders focused on the outward appearances and ignored the inner condition of their hearts.

We want people set free from religion because it produces guilt, shame and condemnation. On another side, it produces a critical and mean spirit, judgmental actions, self-righteousness, arrogance, envy, jealousy and even spiritual gossip! All of these misrepresent the beauty of Jesus and the Gospel: which is good news. When those who are without Jesus see these types of things displayed in so called "believers" it causes them to want to have nothing to do with Jesus.

If I was to narrow down in one phrase what causes people to walk in religion, it would be that people have missed the simplicity of the Gospel. They have missed the beauty of the good news and the purpose of a savior who laid his life down to produce hope and abundant life through his death, burial and resurrection! The enemy works over time to keep us from seeing the power of the cross! Jesus is our only hope! Rules and spiritual hard work will never get you kudos with God! It is only the blood of Jesus. It is only his great immeasurable love for us that will ever make us right and accepted in the eyes of God and through understanding this greatness of the good news and the beauty of Jesus. This is what should propel us and drive us every day to be more like our savior: Jesus. **IT IS ONLY BY HIS GRACE AND MERCY THAT WE HAVE HOPE AND A RELATIONSHIP WITH A LOVING FATHER!**

The main attack of the enemy with religion is to get us to the place that we really believe that God is against us and not for us. If he can do that then he keeps us from being fully effective for the kingdom of God. When we understand that God is for us and is passionate about using us as vessels to make His name famous, then we begin to push back the gates of hell—and the devil hates it. No wonder he wants to deceive us in power of the Gospel. It is called the good news for a reason. There are thousands in our communities who really believe that God is against them more than He is for them. Let's pray that people see the big picture and the GOOD NEWS becomes revelation to many in our cities and they are set free to live life to the fullest for the glory of God. This is our calling as a church: to help people get set free from religion and walk in relationship with God through discipleship and evangelism. Let's rebuild, revive and restore lives together with the TRUTH of Jesus!

—Pastor Andy Heis



Revival Revival Revival

DAY 7



When we allow revival to get personal it becomes an overflow of a group of people with the same heartbeat.

I have heard it said that revival is “personal.” It is almost like God’s finger is pointed right at you. I believe that for some of us, including myself, we ask for revival in the context of waiting on people to experience it so that we can jump in on the wave. However, I believe it is time to shift our mindset and ask to experience revival as if it depends on us (read Psalm 51:10).

As believers, you are the church! It is not a pastor, a staff or someone who has been doing it longer than you. YOU are the church. So what does the church look like if that is the case? Read Acts 2:17-18. What if instead of asking for revival, we let God get personal? How would the church look if everyone prayed like you pray? If everyone worshipped like you worship? If everyone served like you serve? These questions are how we experience revival. Pastor Andy says that revival gets messy. I believe that it is messy because the Lord shows us that it is our pursuit of Him that leads us to personal revival. When we allow revival to get personal it becomes an overflow of a group of people with the same heartbeat (read Ephesians 1:18).

The church is made up of us. Every one of us makes a difference. We either contribute to the strength or the weakness of the church (read Psalm 51:12). It is easy to point an accusing finger and say, “the church needs to do this...” but here is the question: what about you? That is where revival needs to start (read Chronicles 7:14).

—Pastor Keith Varden



Favor In Cities/ Communities

DAY 8

“May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the word of our hands for us – yes, establish the work of our hands.” – Psalm 90:17

One of the things that we pray on a regular basis is that God would allow us to have greater influence in our cities. One of the ingredients to greater influence is God's favor. In scripture, it was God's favor that brought Joseph from a pit where his brothers left him for dead to a place of great influence where he was put in charge of the whole land of Egypt. It was God's favor that brought Ruth from being a penniless widow to becoming the wife of Boaz. It was God's favor that made Esther a queen and put her in a position to save the Jewish nation. The favor that God had on these champions of faith is the same favor that we desire for Desperation Church. It is God's favor that will make a way for us to have an even greater impact in Cullman, Walker, and Marshall Counties. As Desperation Church walks in God's favor, doors will open, new opportunities to reach people will present themselves and we will discover ideas, strategies and resources in the most unexpected places. God's favor can even break down barriers between Desperation Church and those who have previously opposed us. Proverbs 14:6 says, *“When the Lord takes pleasure in anyone's way, he causes their enemies to make peace with them.”*

Pray today that God would give us favor with people or groups of people in our cities that might otherwise not be for us. Pray that God would open people's eyes to the fact that He is using Desperation Church to bring hope, love and grace to places where those things do not exist. Pray that God would establish the work of our hands and expand our influence so that we can point as many people as possible to Jesus.

—Cliff Hill



City/State/National Leaders

"I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity." 1 Timothy 2:1-2

All through the scriptures God reassures the ones He has called and appointed that they are equipped and capable of accomplishing the job. Just as each of those leaders had faith that God would carry out his good and perfect plan, we too must engage our faith and trust that He will continue to carry out His plans for our world today. Offering up constant faith-filled prayers for our local, state and national leaders. In this way we begin to tear down the divide and walk in lives of peace and godliness.

As you pray for our leaders across our cities, states and nation, I challenge you to open your heart and pray earnestly for each of them by name. Ask God to help guide them in all their decisions. Begin to intercede on their behalf and thank God for everyone in each position they lead.

Let's call upon the name of the Almighty Lord today and give thanks for who He is and all He has done and yet to do. Let's petition together for our city, state and national leaders for God's presence to surround them. Ask the Lord today to give you a heart for our leaders.

"Lord, we thank you for blessing our nation to be a mighty government on the earth. Thank you for allowing us to call upon your name in times of need as a nation. We are grateful and we bless your name. You are robed in majesty and armed with strength. We praise your name forever and ever. Holy Spirit, we ask that you give our political leaders wisdom, knowledge, discernment and understanding. Grant them favor, draw them near to you and allow them to know and to fulfill your purposes for our world today. Open their hearts so they may be willing and obedient to your will. We intercede on their behalf that they may receive your salvation and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Lord, there is none like you in all the earth. You are subject to no one, yet all are subject to you. May your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus's name—amen."

Scriptural references to pray through: Psalm 105:1-8; Psalm 93:1; Daniel 2:20-22

—Pastor Caleb Jett

DAY 9



Staff/Families

Unless the Lord builds a house the work, the work of the builders is wasted. Unless the Lord protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good. Psalm 127:1

What a privilege I have to serve on Desperation Church's staff! Even after 2+ years of serving, I am continually amazed at the sweet unity among our team. Webster's Dictionary defines unity as follows: oneness, a condition of harmony and accord. Desperation Church's staff is a unified force. We do not operate as individuals but rather with a team mindset. The condition of harmony among us is astonishing. Even with so many different personalities, an array of leadership skills, unique gifts and amazing ideas, a special element of accord exists among us in which we give God all the glory. We absolutely recognize unless the Lord builds our house—Desperation Church and our own families—our work is wasted. Unless He protects our city—the places we live, our own homes—we guard in vain.

Today, please pray specifically for Desperation Church's staff and our families. The enemy is relentless in his attacks and often times he will set his sights on leadership. Pray specifically for our Desperation Church staff to remain in a state of oneness—unified as we together move forward for the Kingdom.

We are all engaged in a great work (Nehemiah 6:3), therefore, we must remain armed and unified at all times (Ephesians 6:10-18).

I challenge you to make sure the Lord is building your "house" and protecting your "city."

—Angie Hopper

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We must remain armed
and unified at all times.



“Listen!” - If you have ever listened to one of Pastor Andy's sermons before you have noticed that he says that word in a way that really can **only** be used by him. It is usually positioned between a joke and a bomb dropping word from God. However small that word may seem in the moment, it serves as a fine illustration for young men and women today.

“The difference between a generation that humanity writes off as a joke and a generation that that fulfills the great commission is a listening ear.”

The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” 1 Samuel 3:10

I think there are two types of prayers that we can pray this year for our students:

1. That they (young people) would listen.

Your mind may have immediately pictured a stubborn teenager who is not compliant with adult psychology, but that is not what we are talking about. Our prayer must be that our students do not just “hear” God’s word, but they “listen” to God’s word. To take that a step further, that they would listen to His voice. I love it when you can see a young person walking and listening to God’s Spirit in them. It is amazing seeing pure love, true worship, conviction and refinement all meeting together in this beautiful mess called “discipleship.” Just like in 1 Samuel 3:10 Jesus is calling out to His young sons and daughters. Notice it says, “The Lord came and stood there.” Samuel was lying in a temple when God called out to him. I can picture Jesus standing in high school hallways, middle school football games and college bars crying out for His children. If only their response could be the same as Samuel’s: “Speak, I’m listening Jesus.”

Pray they would have the ears to hear and eyes to see where true salvation and redemption lies—in Jesus.

2. That we (the local church) would listen.

One thing that has always been interesting to me is the names people label the different generations based on when they were born. My father’s generation was known as the “baby boomers.” I am an unapologetic “millennial.” While there is still much debate over the name of our current generation of students, there is one that is very disheartening: “the new, silent generation.” Modern day historians believe that is an accurate name because among other reasons young people today do not take many risks or make much noise in the world. While silence can be an admirable, conservative trait, Jesus never called His children to be silent about their faith in Him. “Go and tell” is a slogan that should be tattooed on our hearts. We should push our young people to be loud about reaching humanity for this great cause of salvation. As long as we are listening, we will hear how to do anything shy of sin in order to reach people. While being silent may be a characteristic, often times people are silent because they feel like no will listen. Call me crazy but I believe the Church can change the name of a generation. Let’s challenge them to speak up! Let’s take the time to listen to how God has called them to reach the world and let’s get behind them and spur them on. Let’s name this generation before the world gets its chance. Let’s believe in and call them a “chosen generation” a “royal priesthood” a “masterpiece created for good works.” Let’s give them these labels—because that is what Jesus calls this generation.

—Pastor Travis Key



DC KIDZ DC KIDZ DC KIDZ DAY 12



If you get a chance today take a second and read 1 Kings 12:1-20. Before you read it, I want you to start thinking about one word: influence. More specifically, start thinking about the power that influence has. Influence can be one of the most powerful things in our lives. On a small scale, it is the extra push in the double dog dare that is accepted and subsequently attempted by the kid on the playground. It is the added weight in the words spoken by a coach that helps lead a team to victory. On the large scale, it is the increased measure of trust needed to call out a friend's potential. It also the very thing that was behind Israel's revolt against King Rehoboam in the story we read today. When we highlight verses 12-15 we can see that Rehoboam chose the advice of the young men he grew up with over the advice of his father's elders. That costly decision led to a rebellion amongst the people of Israel. That costly decision was based out of influence. I would argue that the young men he had grown up with had more influence in his life than his father's elders and that is why he chose to take their advice. Their advice and the effect they had on Rehoboam's choices changed the face of an entire nation. Now that is powerful.

You see, influence describes the amount of impact, say and weight that something can have on us. The more influence something has on us the more it effects our development, character and even our behavior. It is also something that plays a massive part in children's lives. When we stop and think about it we can clearly see a couple of things in regards to influence in kids lives. The first thing is that they are extremely impressionable and the things they are retaining now will have a big impact on who they will become. The second thing is that everything around them is vying for influence in their lives. From the things they see on social media or television to the friends they are making at school, everything is trying to have impact on who they are and what they will become. How a child grows will depend on what or who has a claim and say in their lives.

That is why I think it is so important for us to take today and pray for God's influence for the children we know, we do not know and for every child of Desperation Church. Let us pray that out of all the voices that they hear that God's voice would be the clearest, loudest and carry the most weight. As they grow let us pray that God's presence would have a greater impact than anything else they can see or experience in their every day. Let us pray that the greatest thing to have a say in regards to who they are is none other than Jesus Christ himself. Finally, would you join with me in praying that God would always surround them with people and things that will place his influence in their lives?

—Pastor Adam Whitley

Desperation College



DAY 13

Fall in Alabama is my favorite for many different reasons—beautiful colors, brisk mornings and the fields of white “snow,” known as cotton. Sometimes I find myself staring out at the lush, bountiful fields getting lost in the sea of white. It reminds me of Luke 10:2 where Jesus says “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field.” Like a lush Alabama cotton field, the Kingdom harvest is plentiful. We all know at least one or more people who are far from the Lord, and have not yet received hope which comes from salvation. With this harvest, comes the need for workers. For people to discover their God-given purpose and help bring each blossom from the field to the Father.

In 2016, Pastor Andy’s heartbeat for the harvest made way for the opportunity to equip and empower workers to fulfill the simplicity of the Gospel. Desperation College is passionate about preparing workers through Bible-based teachings and hands-on ministry training. Today as you pray for Desperation College, pray for the current and future students who are daily discovering God’s will for their lives and their roles in the harvest. The neat thing about each cotton harvest is that two-thirds contain seeds that are used to plant the next harvest. So as one is harvested, it gives way for more seeds to be planted. Let’s pray for the Lord of the harvest to continue to send workers into His harvest field, and that Desperation College will help prepare them.

—Jenny Helton

Leadership U

One of Pastor Andy's heartbeats is to raise up the next generation of leaders. It was this heartbeat that allowed me to discover my purpose. I was nineteen years old when the staff so boldly allowed me to become part of their team here at Desperation. When I felt unqualified, they chose to believe in me. They chose my potential over my experience. They chose my purpose over my past. It is because of the love and support this church has given me and countless other young leaders that we are planted and thriving in the local church today.

Two Biblical examples of raising up the next generation of leaders are Paul and Timothy. In the book of Acts, Timothy is introduced as a young disciple who Paul meets and decides to take on his journey with him. As we read in the New Testament we see that Paul takes Timothy under his wing. He takes moments to teach him, to love him and to father him. Paul even refers to Timothy as his "true son in the faith." My favorite words that Paul writes to Timothy are found in 1 Timothy 4:12, *"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity."*

The vision of Leadership U is to raise up the next generation of leaders. Leadership U is a personal journey of discovery for students. Our desire is to place students in the Presence of God, so that God can place purpose in students. A wise coach once told me that motivation will get you going, but purpose is what keeps you going. Our world needs passionate students who are purpose-driven and desperate to proclaim the name of Jesus. This is where we, as a church, come in. One of my favorite things that Pastor Andy says on a regular basis is that he wants his ceiling to be the next generation's floor. Our desire is to see young leaders go from being nameless to sons and daughters, from sons and daughters to students, and then from students to co-laborers. We spend plenty of time desiring and praying for more laborers, but perhaps not enough time investing in those with the potential to become our partners in the mission. The baton has been passed to us, and it is our job to continually raise up the next generation of leaders until Jesus returns!

As you pray today, I want to encourage you to ask the Lord what your part is in raising up the next generation of leaders. Ask the Lord to give you influence with the younger generation. Ask the Lord to bring students here that we can teach and raise up to change the world. We truly are better together, and we are most effective when everyone plays a part!

—Bree Goodwin



Salvations Salvations Salvations

DAY 15

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I know that it is because of people praying for me and inviting me to church that I was able to experience the presence of God and have my own life changed.

“The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Let anyone who hears this say, “Come.” Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life.” Revelation 22:17

God is calling out to those who are without Him to come into relationship with Him. This verse outlines what our job as the church should be. The church is called to be such a great vessel to be used in helping bring salvation into people's lives and we can help be a part of that as well. Our job is let anyone who is without God come into the presence of God so that they might have their lives radically changed. I know that it is because of people praying for me and inviting me to church that I was able to experience the presence of God and have my own life changed.

So today let's take the time to pray for salvation in our communities, workplaces, schools and our family members. Let's pray those in our lives that are without God will come into relationship and receive God in their lives. I believe we each have those people in our lives that we know do not have a relationship with God—so let's ask God today for salvation to rise up in their lives. Let's decide to believe today that God is truly in passionate pursuit of those who are without Him, and let's join together in praying for those who are without Him today. May we also remember the free gift of salvation that we did not deserve but God so graciously gave us, and pray for the ones who are going to receive this gift as well.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—” Ephesians 2:8

—Jordan Guthrie



Unity

DAY 16



Go with me if you will to a private conversation with Jesus and a small group of twelve men. In Matthew 16:14-19, Jesus asks his disciples a question that requires some honesty. Maybe one that was hard for them to answer. He looks at them and asks, “When the people talk about me, who do they say I am?” They all throw around a couple of answers they feel like Jesus would be happy with. Then Jesus asks a second question that perhaps caused an awkward silence to fall over them for a moment. He asked them, “Who am I to you?”

Peter breaks the silence with a truth so deep that Jesus knew at that moment that he was ready for the revelation of his purpose. “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” answered Peter. Jesus’s response to Peter lets us know that Peter truly understood that Jesus was the Messiah, the one that they had waited on for centuries. This revelation proved that Peter was ready to fulfill his calling in launching the first local church.

Jesus then gave some instructions and set some boundaries for Peter and the local church. See Jesus blessed Peter and declared that the only way Peter could truly understand this truth was through a relationship with God the Father. Jesus then reminded Peter that he knew who he was by saying, “And I tell you that you are Peter.” This works both ways. Peter knows fully who Jesus is through a relationship with God the Father and Jesus knows Peter personally through that same relationship. Then the Lord revealed an important truth about the local church that so many of us have forgotten. He said THIS is what I will build the foundation of my church on and it will be so sound that nothing can overpower it. The local church is more than Desperation Church. It is hundreds of thousands of churches across the globe. All with one common goal built on the same foundation. The goal is to reveal the truth of who Jesus is and the foundation is through the building blocks of a personal relationship with God the Father.

Jesus continues by releasing his authority here on earth to the local church. He said, I will give you all rights in and out of my kingdom and whatever you speak into existence on earth will come to pass by the commands of heaven. And what you declare must stop will halt with the support of heaven.

The problem today is that many see the word “local church” as plural, “local churches”. Jesus said he was building one church with one vision on one foundation. But we have some churches speaking into existence what other churches are declaring to halt. Many foundations are weak while others cannot clearly respond to the question, “Who am I to you?” Today let’s petition the Lord for unity within the local church. Ask him to help you confidently answer who Jesus is in your life. Examine your heart for places you have created division inside the local church, repent and then ask him to heal old wounds so that we can truly be one.

—Molly Hardin

Unchurched/ Dechurched

*“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won’t she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she will call in her friends and neighbors and say, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost coin. In the same way there is joy in the presence of God’s angels when even one sinner repents.’”
Luke 15:8-10*

Today our prayer focus is the unchurched/dechurched; the people around us and the ones we have not met. Even though all of us can probably think of many who are unchurched or dechurched, today let's think of them as the one.

“So Will I” by Hillsong UNITED says “You’re the One who never leaves the one behind.” Aren't you so thankful that Jesus came for the one? The one who was lost? Hurt? Disillusioned? Disconnected? Do you remember when you were the one?

Today as we pray for the unchurched/dechurched let's reflect on the time that was us. What a perfect opportunity to thank God our Father who sought us out individually and then rejoiced with all of heaven when we came to Him. As we reflect on how He restored us to who He called us to be—let's pray those same things for others. The lost. The hurt. The disillusioned. The disconnected. The unchurched and dechurched. Let's pray for them to be rebuilt, revived and restored just as the Lord has done for us. Let's ask the Lord as we pray for them to give us eyes to see those around us that are in need of Him.

Father God, today we ask in Jesus name that you give each of us eyes and a desire to search for the one. Just as the woman searched her entire house for the lost coin because it had value may we search for the lost and hurting ones and then rejoice as we find them, knowing Lord that you have made each one you created valuable. Let us be a people with a heart for others to know You as we do and to be people who do not/will not leave the one behind. In Jesus Name, amen.

—Lisa Stewart

DAY 17



Brokenness



DAY 18

Brokenness can be defined as weakened in strength and spirit, or it could simply mean under emotional strain. But what does it look like to be spiritually broken over our sins? Have you ever felt brokenness? Our Heavenly Father is seeking to produce humility in us, and He can do that through our brokenness. We must recognize, lay down our pride and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to us where we might be failing. It is not easy seeing the ugly within ourselves and the process can sometimes be painful, but what comes out of it is truly beautiful. We want to recognize our sins, but we cannot stop there. The enemy is always on the prowl and he wants you to feel shame and he wants you to think that your sins are too big to bring before the Lord. But he loses his power when you push past the shame and condemnation. When you seek and accept forgiveness you will see a deeper more intimate relationship with Jesus. Brokenness brings repentance and allows us to be one step closer to our Savior!

As we pray for brokenness today, pray that the Lord would gently show you where your flesh is failing. Ask for forgiveness and watch your relationship with the Lord become more intimate.

"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death." 2 Corinthians 7:10

—DeAndra Latham

God Stories

Stories have a way of connecting people. Reading the words of another person and feeling like they could be talking about **your** life—like they have walked the same road as you—can be comforting. When someone tells **you** about **their** life and you have that “you too?” moment, it can be relieving. Stories can break through the barrier of isolation. When you realize you are not the only one going through a particular situation, you are not the only one feeling alone, you are not the only one struggling, then you somehow find the strength to continue on fighting--even if you were about to give up.

Revelation 12:11 says “They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.” So we see that stories have power as well. They can inspire and create life change to those who hear them. They can encourage those walking along the dark paths you once traveled yourself. They are a picture of grace to those who are ashamed of their past and do not see how God could use them. Stories can reach across culture and religion to make an impact. So what’s your story? God has beautifully written each one of us a story. While every part may not seem beautiful, every part has purpose.

In 2018, let’s embrace the power of our own God stories. *2 Corinthians 1:4-5 says “God of all healing counsel! He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us.”* Be authentic, be vulnerable and watch what God can do through your story. Pray that God gives you the courage to share and encourage someone else through what He has done in your life. Let’s also pray for even bigger God stories in the lives of others this year. Let’s pray for God stories of prodigals coming home, addicts being set free and religious walls being broken down!

—Cali Tidwell



Buildings/ Current Campuses

DAY 20

We are not seeking for what we can do for God but what God will do through us. Never underestimate what he is able to do through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Ephesians 3:20

A little over 7 years ago, Desperation Church started with the vision to “Capture God’s Heartbeat,” with the hope of rebuilding, reviving and restoring lives in Cullman. At the time, Cullman seemed and was something that was unknown. A task so big that some even told us would not work. Truthfully, that statement in itself was correct. We were unqualified, unaware of what a church plant looked like and understaffed because there was no finances coming in. However, we learned very quickly that God loves when He can truly work through an empty vessel. Fast forward 7 years later: we have 3 campuses, we are embarking on our first of many building projects and reaching a global community through our online campus. God has taken a bunch of people who are unqualified and through His spirit He (God) has created a revival that is infinitely more than we could have ever asked.

When you look at this verse in Ephesians it is easy to look at what is written above and say that God has done incredible things—and that is true. However, I am asking you to dig deep again and realize that He wants to do even more through us as a Church and most importantly you as a person. We are not seeking a result that can be measured by us or by others. We are seeking a kingdom ending. A vision that does not stop with us, but leaves a lasting impact on eternity. Something that can only be explained by the power of God through us. Our prayer today is that we are a vessel for God to use to shake not just our current campuses, but our future campuses and buildings all over the world. Ask God to show you areas that you are trying to do for God and not allowing Him to work through you.

1. Pray for the future cities and countries that God wants to take us as a church.
2. Pray for how you can be part of Heart for the House in 2018.
3. Pray for God to work through you infinitely more this year for His Glory.

—Pastor Keith Varden



Future Campuses

Joshua 1:3 “I promise you what I promised Moses: ‘Wherever you set foot, you will be on land I have given you.’”

That is the promise God made to Joshua as He began to lead the nation of Israel into the Promised Land. He made the same promise to Moses as well, and that is our prayer today.

It is our belief that God has not called us just to the three cities that we are in currently. We believe God has called us to other cities. If you are reading this you have most likely experienced Jesus at Desperation Church in a way that has changed your life. That experience has probably shaped your family and your entire sphere of influence.

Today we pray for our future campuses because there are cities that need to be REBUILT. There are families that need to be RESTORED. There are lives that need to be REVIVED.

Begin to pray now that:

1. God will lead us to the perfect building for us to meet in.
2. God will grow our launch team.
3. God will give us favor in these cities.
4. Jesus would open doors that no one else can open.
5. He would give us influence in the cities and that people would find hope and freedom here.
6. God will bring the right staff for each of our campuses.
7. God will provide what we need for our campuses not just to exist, but to thrive.

Ephesians 3:20 tells us that we worship a God of abundance. A God that does more than we can even ask or imagine. Let's believe today for things we think are impossible, because with God nothing is impossible.

—Pastor Jake Hendon

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God has not called us just to the three cities we are in currently.

