

40 DAY  
**PRAYER**  
CHALLENGE

### Day 37: Memorial Offerings

*"Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God." Acts 10:4*

Whenever we doubt God's ability to answer prayer it's a reflection of our limitations, not His. Batterson writes, "Never underestimate His ability to answer anytime, anyplace, anyhow. He has infinite answers to our finite prayers." It means a prayer uttered decades before could be answered time and time again but because we are not prepared to receive it, we don't claim it. The good news is God is patient and faithful and does not give up on us. Acts 10:4 declares that our prayers are memorial offerings. He always answers! Not how you want or when you want, but your prayers are not perishable.

Personal Growth: Dig deeper into your dreams today and don't limit God's ability by assuming God will not answer. How will the dream glorify God; is it a miracle of health, a miracle of a relationship restored, a miracle of new opportunity; when you pray it, God consecrates the desire of your heart.

Congregation Growth; I have learned that there are some people who will offer me opportunities for learning who always seem to show up as an answered prayer. A book suggestion, a ministry perspective, a special gift of wisdom. Pray for our congregation to become a praying congregation. I believe God is calling Bethany to dreams beyond our resources; to become a church which launches people and groups and churches in the name of Jesus to be world-changers!

### Day 38: Get a Testimony

*"...and by the word of their testimony..." Revelation 12:11*

One of the key discipleship strategies for Bethany is our small group ministry. We believe that God uses relationships to point people back to God. That when you think about the times in your life that you have had moments of deep connection with God, chances are someone was there; a caring phone call, an encouraging word, a shared struggle, or a testimony. Batterson speaks to the power of sharing faith in the context of trusted relationships when he explains what it does for him. Mark writes that when a testimony is shared with him it's encouraging because, "If God did it for them, He might just do it for me." And I love this thought as well, "When we share a testimony, we are loaning our faith to others."

Personal Growth: That all being said, we don't live off another's testimony. Secondhand faith is living off someone else's testimony of faith. Some people grow up with their parent's secondhand faith, or a spouse is pulled to church and operates out of a secondhand faith. As Batterson puts it; "don't be satisfied with simply going to church; get into God's presence. Don't be satisfied with hearsay; get a word from the Lord.

Bethany Growth: Pray for a group of people willing to loan their faith to the church. For a group that may want to share their story of the 40-day journey. What part of your prayer journey do you believe God is calling you to share with someone? Let us know!

### **Day 39: Prayer Covering**

*Aaron and Hur held his hands up -- one on one side, one on the other. Exodus 17:12*

How many people are praying for you right now? It's ironic that we are so faithful when it comes to praying for others, yet, how rarely do we ask for prayers from others. IF we are going to intercede for others, we had better be sure that others are interceding for us. We need prayer covering.

Personal Growth: Batterson writes, "When we hit our knees, we pick a fight with the enemy. And the enemy will fight back. Make no mistake, there is a target on our back. The enemy wants to take us out, but he cannot touch us. He has no jurisdiction in our lives because we are covered by the blood of Jesus, we also need prayer covering." We will have times when we lack the clarity and ability to pray for ourselves, be sure to have prayer partners."

Bethany Growth: Pray for our small groups. We constantly invite people who misunderstand the journey of faith as a solo act. Pray our current groups learn to include in their time together elements of study, prayer, care, and encouragement.

### **Day 40: Raise Up a Remnant**

*And the remnant shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. 2 Kings 19:30*

I had awful driving habits when I was young and impatient. There were stop signs rolled through, yellow lights sped through, and too many occasions that I tailgated to push through. My driving habits reflected my youthful restlessness in general. There were moments when the Spirit nudged me to reflect deeper. I recall driving an on-ramp to a highway when God whispered to yield for the oncoming traffic, but what He really meant was to yield to Him.

Prayer is the act of yielding to our heavenly father. When we pray, we allow God to move ahead of us into our day. When we allow God's will to take priority it is beneficial to our overall health. Prayer protects us spiritually because we will sense that God travels the same course we do, we will see the deeper story we belong. Emotionally we have a sense of completeness in our day because God keeps us company all day. Physically, knowing God is for us means we will possess greater patience and we won't ram into each other as much.

Personal Growth: Pray about the one area or need that you worry about. Imagine God's will moves ahead before you today and will be there, between you and that problem. To yield to God's will means letting God take care of the outcomes and therefore freeing you to do what you believe is the right thing to do.

Bethany Growth: Pray for our generosity campaign. As we begin the process of feasibility to learn what God wants to do through Bethany, pray that there are open hearts and minds to hear the Word of God.