



PRAY**40**_{FOR}COLUMBUS

2018 Prayer Devotional

Week 2: January 22 - 28, 2018

PrayForColumbus.org

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, 'Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'" Matthew 18:1-4, ESV

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'" (Matthew 18:1, ESV) It's fascinating to think of the conversation between the disciples that likely led up to this question. Were they each boasting of their accomplishments and faithfulness in following Jesus? Were they busily explaining why they were the number one disciple? Were they anticipating what special job they would have when Jesus set up His earthly kingdom? It's fascinating, but it isn't difficult to imagine because people haven't changed very much in 2,000 years; our hearts are the same. We seek status, we desire recognition, and we want to know that we're number one. That's pride at work in us.

Even as Christians, we must constantly fight pride in our lives. The Apostle Paul warned the first-century Christians in Rome "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought..." (Romans 12:3, NIV) Lack of humility was a problem then and it's a problem now. The temptation of pride and the need to desperately seek humility is timeless.

Graciously, Jesus answered the somewhat ridiculous question the disciples asked and provided a model for godly humility: a child. "And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, 'Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'" (Matthew 18:2-4, ESV)

Is that how you approach our Savior? Do you approach Him with a lowly position? Or do you approach Him feeling pretty good about your religious resume? When we come before our Savior, we must remember that it's only because of His sacrifice on the cross that we can come before Him at all. Remembering the cross should take away any pride. When we remember that Jesus did that work for us all by Himself, we remember that we contribute nothing to our salvation. And we are humbled.

Today, as you come to Jesus, will you remember that He did all of the work? Will you present yourself to Him as a humble servant who's grateful for the gift of salvation He gave you?

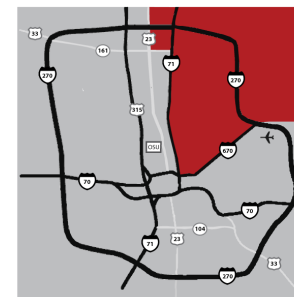


Dear Jesus, teach me what greatness looks like to You. Search my heart and remove seeds of pride. Help me walk in humility by recognizing the work of the Cross and my great need for You.

DAY 8: January 22, 2018

Prayer Focus:

posture



Prayer Region:

northeast

- **Pray for a church partner for Berwick Alternative K-8 and Cedarwood Alt. Elementary.**
- **Pray for the faith partnerships with Alpine Elementary and Avondale Elementary**

Featured Contributor:

Suzy Christopher is a volunteer Teaching Leader in Bible Study Fellowship and an active church member at Jersey Church where she enjoys snuggling toddlers in the nursery. Suzy's life has been radically changed by reading the Bible for herself and is eager to see women throughout Central Ohio transformed by the simple act of spending daily time with God.

Emily Dickinson is quoted as saying: "If you take care of the small things, the big things take care of themselves." Though not a theologian, I would say to Ms. Dickinson, "that'll preach!"

It's true that every "big thing," if deconstructed, is just a number of little things done consistently over time. Our greatest successes and failures rest on the foundation of countless little things. Even the centuries and millennia of human history have unfolded in little, 24-hour segments of time.

The Bible talks much about little things. Jesus said both faithfulness and dishonesty begin as little things (Luke 16:10). That mustard seed sized faith can move a mountain (Mat. 17:20). That just a little leaven affects the entire batch of dough (1 Cor. 5:6). It says that: "little foxes will ruin the whole field" (Song of Songs 2:15) little rudders can steer great ships, and a little spark can set a forest ablaze (James 3:4-5).

Such also is the nature of sincere, faith-filled prayer and worship. Our enemy would love to make us feel like our investment in prayer and worship is just a little thing, especially when compared to the giant things we are praying about. "What can my little investment in prayer accomplish against city strongholds?" "How can my little worship and devotion to the Lord have any effect against dark demonic forces?"

Leviticus 26:8, ESV says: "Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall chase ten thousand, and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword." Every time we unite in prayer and worship, we chase the enemy until he falls. This verse also tells us our prayer and worship is not only cumulative, but exponential! When the church unites and kneels in prayer and worship before the Living God we become an invincible army. When we offer our "little voice" to Him, it is joined with voices all across our city, coming together to make one thunderous, continuous, sound of praise, thanksgiving, petition, and intercession. A sound of prayer and worship that is pleasing to our God. A sound that He will hear and answer.

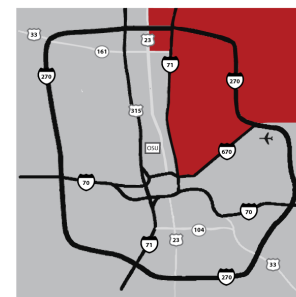


Father, today I join my voice with each one reading these words. Together, we lift our cries for mercy, healing, and deliverance for our city from Your great hand. Our complete hope and trust is in You. Amen.

DAY 9: January 23, 2018

Prayer Focus:

prayer



Prayer Region:

northeast

• **Pray for Church partners for:**

Columbus Scioto 6-12, Dominion Middle School, East High School and Eastmoor Academy High School.

Featured Contributor:

Torry Gligora is passionate about equipping and training believers to walk out their destiny in Christ. Serving our city as the Lead Pastor at Christian Assembly, he desires to see the Body of Christ expand godly influence into all segments of culture by training believers to live daily as ambassadors of the Kingdom of God.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5, ESV

Two weeks ago, I had the opportunity to visit the Holy Land during a mission trip. I could see fertile land and infertile land during this trip, vines with large fruit and others with scarce fruit, olive trees producing large harvests of olives and others very few olives. What factors influence these differences? What is it that makes a vine or an olive tree produce an abundant or scarce harvest? These observations reminded me of John 15:3-7, ESV:

"Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."

For a believer, fruit is the symbol of the arduous work of Christ. No branch can remain on the vine without fruit. John challenges us to remain part of the vine all of the time, no matter where we are or in what circumstances we find ourselves. As children of God, we have to remain in Him and He will remain in us. This implies that we must demonstrate our communion with Him in our actions, words, attitudes, and thoughts.

Spiritual growth is not a matter of our own effort, but rather the result of the work of Jesus through His word, and having an intimate communion with God through Jesus Christ in our lives and prayers. The ability to produce fruit is the result of a constant communion with Christ. To bear fruit is the external evidence that we are disciples of Jesus, and above all that we belong to Him - especially bearing fruit that impacts the Kingdom of God and lasts for eternity. "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." (John 17:3, ESV)

The more we love God and experience His love in our lives, the more we want to know Him and have an intimate relationship with Him. We read in Matthew 22:37, ESV: "...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." We partake in the joy of having full and direct access to Jesus through communion with Him and prayer through the Holy Spirit. We move forward despite difficulties, trials, and temptations that we encounter in this life, and we give thanks to God in prayer for His complete provision, His care, and His protection. We belong to Christ!

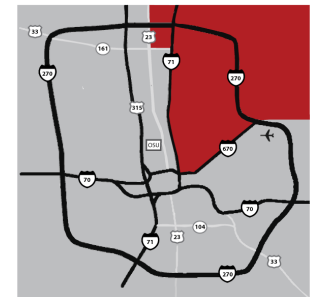


Dear Heavenly Father, we come before you with humble hearts, recognizing that we need you. Apart from you we can do nothing. We want to live in total intimacy and dependence on you. Help us to produce good fruit, everlasting fruit that impacts your Kingdom here on earth. Please Lord, help us to abide in you forever and ever, amen.

DAY 10: January 24, 2018

Prayer Focus:

presence



Prayer Region:

northeast

• Pray for a church partner for
**Huy/AG Elementary and Innis
Elementary Schools.**

Featured Contributor:

Irene Casale-Petrarca serves as the pastor for La Viña, the Spanish-speaking Campus of Vineyard Columbus, launched in October, 2013. She and her family moved to the U.S.A. eight years ago and have been attending Vineyard Columbus for the last seven years. Since 2010, Irene has been involved with International Ministries and has led a Hispanic small group. She also completed the Advanced Certificate of Biblical Leadership from Vineyard Institute (VI) in 2013.

In a Christian society that has become so casual that we say to the Creator of the universe, "hey you," we need to get ahold of ourselves and shake the living tar out of our attitudes toward Jehovah God. He is not our buddy, our Santa in the sky above, our divine bellboy or the man upstairs. What have we done? Do we see Him only as the bigger and larger extension of ourselves? Drop to our knees church! Confess our complacency, our pride, our sins, our lack of respect or acknowledgement of just who this God really is. He commands worship, true worship, not a token handclapping jig around the throne. What have the four living creatures proclaimed out of their mouths for eons upon eons? "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." (Revelation 4:8b, NIV) They can't stop proclaiming this eternal truth.

How do we approach Him who is our unfathomable, and exalted Savior and Lord with no beginning and no end – the One who dares to tell us, His followers, "You shall be holy because I Am holy." But how do we attain to that level? What is He asking of us? It's a consecration of our lives that no matter what happens in our life span, this isn't the end. Trust Him no matter what! We will one day co-exist with the One who formed us from the dust of the earth, forever and ever. How long is that? But within these clay vessels His spark of divinity is there. We have only one life to attain that command from Adonai – "You shall be holy for I Am holy". He shouts those words to us but our ears have become stopped up with the noise of the world. He wants us to be quiet.

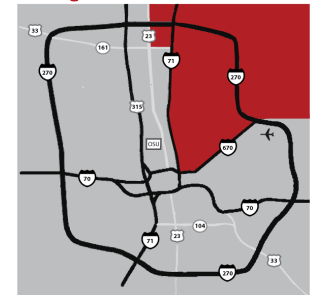
Listen! Don't you hear His voice? Jesus said His sheep would hear Him. He can't lie. The problem is on this end. We must open our spiritual eyes to the grandeur of the artist of the heavens, the only One who could design an eye or an ear or a beating heart. He alone has the blueprints of the human's existence locked up in heaven's vault. No one has access to those plans except Him. See Him enveloped in glory as the emerald rainbow encircles His being. We must come before Him, drop to our knees and fall prostrate. And then He will hold out the Golden Scepter to us as we, His heavenly bride, approach Him. The most important thing we will ever do on this earth is to know Him, serve Him and above all else, worship Him. Let us together fall fast and hard before the One who knows our end from the beginning, who looks into our inner man and knows that without Him our outer self will disintegrate but our spirit will be as far away from Him as we could ever get. But when we walk with this King, we will be transformed into His chaste bride, humbly serving and loving Him forever.



Dear Father in heaven, transform me from a kingdom of self into a bond slave of Yours, always and ever giving You all that I am or all that I could ever be for the furtherance of You. Take my sinfulness and replace it with only the desire to glorify You and Your kingdom. Make me like You in character, in speech and motivation. May my joy originate from You. Don't ever let me stray from Your sight. Keep me close to your bosom as I dedicate myself from this moment through eternity into furthering You and Your kingdom's work. In the name of Your only Son, Jesus. Amen and amen.

DAY 11: January 25, 2018

Prayer Focus: **repentance**



Prayer Region: **northeast**

- Pray for the church partnership with Mifflin Middle School.
- Pray for a church partner for **North Linden Elementary** and **Northland High School**.

Featured Contributor:

Ohio National Day of Prayer coordinator, **Nancy Garver** has been walking with the Lord for 44 years. As a passionate intercessor, she writes: "I agree with the Lord as he declares that we are to pray unceasingly, but most importantly from the point of holiness before him. He commands in Leviticus 20:7, NIV: 'Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the Lord your God' He is the holy one. Then He sent the Holy Spirit to live inside us to guide our way. He requires nothing less than holiness from our end. The Holy God has spoken!"

"All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation."

2 Corinthians 5:18-19, ESV

I grew up in apartheid South Africa where racial segregation was not just acceptable, it was the way society functioned. The church either supported it or gave passive support through silence and inaction. We paid a high price for having this sin in our churches. We missed out on revival and seeing churches filled with His presence. While serving in some of the poor communities, I met a young black man who told me that his mother was still holding bitterness in her heart towards white people for what they had done 20 years ago. I decided to seek reconciliation. I bought some flowers and arranged with the young man for a time when she would be at home. Early in the evening I arrived at her home and knocked on the door. No one came. Eventually she came around the back of the house to see what on earth this white man wanted at her place. I looked her in the eyes and said: "you and your people suffered much from the hands of my people. I am here tonight to ask you to please forgive us and receive these flowers as a sign of how precious you are as God's child." Her first response was "no one has ever given me flowers." That night heaven came to earth, bitterness melted away and forgiveness flowed.

Anguish + anger = Revenge

Anguish + forgiveness = Reconciliation

To us has been given the ministry of reconciliation. That makes us bridge builders. When reconciliation is required, we don't wait. We take out our equipment and get to work building bridges of reconciliation. The amazing thing about the kingdom of God is that I build bridges to reconcile whether I am the victim or the perpetrator. How? GRACE.

I was the perpetrator of breaking relationship with God. He was the "victim" of my rejection. "He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him." (John 1:11, NIV). Yet, He laid down His life to build the bridge so that You and I can be reconciled with God. When I truly understand this, there is no context where I am not willing to build a bridge of reconciliation.



Lord forgive us, Your body:

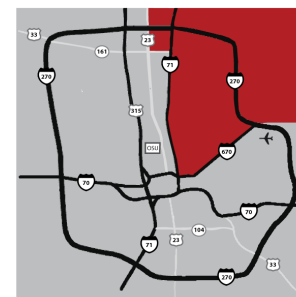
For our own prejudices against others. Show us what is still in our hearts that we may repent.

For not being proactive in being agents of reconciliation in our communities.

Now is the time for us to rise up as your people and take the lead in society as agents of reconciliation, building bridges that ultimately lead people to You the true RECONCILER. Let us not wait for the next incident to move us to action. As we choose to become ministers of reconciliation we ask you to forgive our sin and heal our land. Amen.

Prayer Focus:

reconciliation



Prayer Region:

northeast

- Pray for the church partnerships with South High School 7-12 and Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy.

Featured Contributor:

Andy Sieberhagen is co-lead Pastor of Heritage Christian Church. After growing up in South Africa he has spent the last 15 years on mission with God around the world. His passion is seeing believers walk in fullness with God so that His kingdom can come to the whole world.