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40 Days of Faith

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40 Days of
Faith

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Preface

“After his death Jesus showed the apostles a lot of convincing evidence that he was alive. For 40 days he appeared to them and talked with them about the kingdom of God.” - Acts 1:3

The concept for this book was birthed in prayer during the month of April 2011. I had been praying about my sermon for an upcoming Pentecost Celebration conference in which I was going to be preaching at the following May. I was studying Acts chapters one and two regarding the subject of Pentecost when the Spirit of the Lord began to deal with me to go in another direction. The Lord impressed upon me to not teach on the miraculous events that occurred on the day of Pentecost, but rather to teach on what the disciples *before* Pentecost. The Lord specifically showed me Acts 1:3 where he spent forty days teaching and instructing the disciples about the kingdom of God.

From there, I then began to study the significance of other forty day periods in the bible such as Moses' forty days on Mount Sinai where he received the Ten Commandments. I examined the forty days that Joshua's spies spent searching the Promised Land of

Canaan and Jesus' forty days of prayer and fasting in the wilderness. I eventually came to the conclusion that most every forty day period in which someone spent with God in the bible led them to a time of discovery of God's purpose and plan for their lives. Each time a person spent forty days praying, fasting and seeking the Lord they came out of that time period spiritually stronger and anointed.

In May, I preached about this subject at that conference that I was scheduled to speak at and introduced the 40 days of Faith program to several churches, including my own. The results were phenomenal! During and after the forty day period, most people testified of miraculous events occurring, getting spiritually stronger and seeing Jesus Christ and the gospel in a brand new light. I knew then that this program had the potential to change the lives. I decided to formalize the program and put it into a book format. This book is for anyone wanting a deeper relationship with Christ, a better understanding of the gospel and a more anointed life. The benefit of this program is that it only requires minimum time and effort to see tremendous results. It require daily

faithfulness and a desire to grow in Christ. If you can be faithful to the program, you will see results.

The 40 Days of Faith program is designed to bring individuals, groups and churches closer to Jesus Christ and the will of God. It closely follows the example of the disciples as they talked with Jesus for forty days before the Day of Pentecost. This is a structured program which requires daily discipline and faithfulness that produces daily results. The overall objective at the end of the forty day period is to increase your faith and closeness with Christ. You will greatly enhance your effectiveness in prayer and your knowledge of God's Word. Each day you will gain the necessary faith and confidence to be able to experience the same results that the disciples had on the day of Pentecost.

Instructions

This program is is very simple. You only have to read one passage of scripture each day, pray for 30 minutes and spend one day each week fasting. Study questions have been added to each page to help you remember each lesson. Follow this program for forty

days and you will see a definite change in your spiritual walk with Christ. You should only undertake fasting from food if you are medically able to do so. If you are currently taking medications or are experiencing illness, then you may want to try other alternative methods of fasting such as a twelve hours of fasting from certain foods and entertainment, etc.

Each week of the program has a theme intended to increase your knowledge of certain critical areas that bring about closeness with God:

Week 1 Theme – Prayer

This week will be about learning more about prayer and going deeper into how to effectively communicate with God.

Week 2 Theme – Knowing God

The purpose this week will be to get closer to God and develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Week 3 Theme – The Holy Spirit

You will spend this week getting to know the purpose and workings of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Week 4 Theme – Salvation

The purpose this week will be to understand the importance of biblical salvation. You will see how it impacts your life and the lives of others.

Week 5 Theme – Intercession

You will learn why it is necessary to pray for other people and how to effectively do so. You will also learn why God loves those who pray for others.

Week 6 Theme – Holiness

The purpose this week is to understand holiness and why it is necessary to experience closeness with God and to go to heaven.

**** Tips ****

- The best way to stay committed to the program is to set a regularly scheduled time to read and pray each day, such as 7AM or 10PM.
- If you have trouble sticking to a regular pattern, find a partner to do the program with. This will help you to motivate each other.

Week 1 Theme – Prayer

Prayer is the most underestimated and underused tool possessed by Christian believers. Prayer is easily mastered, extremely effective and useful for all situations. Dr. Miles Munroe in his book *Understanding the Purpose and Power of Prayer*, says that “Prayer is one of the most misunderstood arts of the human experience – yet it is meant to be one of the most exciting aspects of a life of faith.” By spending an entire week studying and focusing on the topic of prayer, you will delve into the most exciting experience in the Christian faith. This week you will examine the critical aspect of effectively communicating with God and having him communicate with you. These lessons will also provide you with a solid foundation for knowing God, understanding the Holy Spirit, experiencing salvation, conducting intercession prayer and living a holy life. You may begin this forty day period as a novice in prayer but afterward, you will find yourself a veteran in God’s most divine art.

Day 1 – The Lord’s Prayer

“Give your contributions privately. Your Father sees what you do in private. He will reward you. When you pray, don't be like hypocrites. They like to stand in synagogues and on street corners to pray so that everyone can see them. I can guarantee this truth: That will be their only reward. When you pray, go to your room and close the door. Pray privately to your Father who is with you. Your Father sees what you do in private. He will reward you. When you pray, don't ramble like heathens who think they'll be heard if they talk a lot. Don't be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him. This is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, let your name be kept holy. Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us our daily bread today. Forgive us as we forgive others.” Matthew 6:4-12

Jesus gave us the Lord’s Prayer as a guideline for making our daily prayers. It contains important aspects that will help to make your prayers more potent and effective. Things to keep in mind when examining this passage of scripture and going into prayer are:

1. Find a private place to pray.
2. Don't pray to be seen or heard by others.
Your prayers should seek to gain the attention of God.

3. Understand that God will reward you when you pray
4. Don't ramble when you pray. Think about what you are going to say before you speak to God.
5. Give God reverence at the beginning of your prayer.
6. Pray for God's will to be done in the earth.
7. Prayer for your daily needs.
8. Ask God for forgiveness and be sure to forgive others.

Study Questions

1. Where should you try to make your prayers?

2. _____ what you are going to say before you speak to God.

3. Pray for _____ to be done in the earth.

4. Ask God for _____ and be sure to
_____ others.

Reflections after prayer

What did you learn today?

Day 2 – Never Stop Praying

“Never stop praying.” -1 Thessalonians 5:17

One of the greatest challenges for Christians is building a consistent prayer life. Finding the time to pray is not always easy. Satan tries to get us to doubt the results, power and effectiveness of prayer so that we will not pray. He will try to cast doubt on what we are trying to do in the spirit. Remember, you are building faith for these forty days that will last a lifetime. **DON'T GET ROBBED OF YOUR FAITH BEFORE YOU BEGIN!** Each day you pray will give you the faith to continue to pray another day. Think about what you are trying to achieve each day as you enter into prayer. Set in your mind that will not give up and pray for perseverance.

Study Questions

1. Why is it important not to give up during this time?

2. What must you keep in mind as you start this program?

Reflections after prayer

What did you learn today?

Day 3 – Know that God is Faithful and Righteous

“A psalm by David. O LORD, listen to my prayer. Open your ears to hear my urgent requests. Answer me because you are faithful and righteous.” Psalms 143:1

David was a great king and accomplished miraculous things because of his prayer life. He often found himself in dire situations and had to make urgent prayers which required quick responses. He never doubted God's ability to answer prayer. David knew that since God was faithful and righteous, his prayers would be answered at some point in time. A key component in building a great prayer life is knowing that God is faithful when it comes to answering prayer.

Sometimes our impatience causes us to doubt whether or not God is listening our prayer and will answer us. Learn to be patient and faithful. God has waited on you so learn to wait on him. His answer may not always come when you want it, but it will come on time and when you need it if you remain faithful.

Study Questions

1. "Answer me because you are _____."
2. A key component in building a great prayer life is knowing that God is _____.

Reflections after prayer

What did you learn today?

Day 4 – Pray in Every Situation

“Never worry about anything. But in every situation let God know what you need in prayers and requests while giving thanks. Then God's peace, which goes beyond anything we can imagine, will guard your thoughts and emotions through Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:6-7

It is very easy to become overwhelmed by life's worries and concerns. The benefit of prayer is that it guards our thoughts and emotions against becoming overburdened, depressed and worn out. We should feel free to let our heavenly Father know what we need in every situation and circumstance. There is nothing too big or too small to bring before God in prayer.

When making your request, remember to give God thanks. Thanking him for answering your prayers before they are answered shows Him that you believe that He will answer everything that you are asking for. It will also to uplift your spirit, remove doubt from your mind and shift your focus to praising God for what you know he will do. God will give you a peace of mind that goes beyond what you can imagine. Your prayer will take away earthly concerns and put you in

fellowship with the divine Creator. Today's focus should be on turning anything that is causing you worry over to God's control. Focus on having peace of mind and spirit.

Study Questions

1. But _____ let God know what you need in prayers and request with giving thanks.

2. God will give you a _____ that goes beyond what you can imagine.

Reflections after prayer

What did you learn today?

Day 5 - Effective Prayer

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16 (KJV)

Today you should understand that your prayers have an effect. Your prayers affect those who you pray for and they affect God. In fact, the fervent prayers of righteous people greatly affect God more than those who are not righteous. Sometimes we think that our prayers are not having much effect because we don't see the immediate results in our natural world. We have to remember that although we may not see the effects right now, our prayers have an impact on the spiritual world. The impact that our prayers are having in the spiritual world will one day manifest themselves in the natural world. Prayer combined with righteousness and fervency will greatly increase the effect and potency of our prayers.

Study Questions

1. Your prayers affect _____ and they affect _____.

2. Our prayers have an impact on

_____.

Reflections after prayer

What did you learn today?

Day 6 – Just Keep Praying

“Keep praying. Pay attention when you offer prayers of thanksgiving.” Colossians 4:2

Continue to pray even when you don't feel like it. If you feel discouraged...just keep praying. If you feel weak...just keep praying. Keep praying especially when you don't think that your prayers are being heard. Satan wants to trick us into thinking that we don't have to pray or that our prayers aren't working. Prayer is like work. You keep going until the job is finished. Don't stop praying until your prayer has been answered. Whether it takes one day, one week, one year or many years...just keep on praying until your prayer gets answered! God hears all prayers and answers them in his own perfect time:

“Dear friends, don't ignore this fact: One day with the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.” 2 Peter 3:8

What we think of as a long time a mere moments to God. Many months to us are just a few minutes to God. Ask the Lord to give you patience in prayer. The more patient you become with God and yourself, the greater your faith will increase.

Study Questions

1. Continue praying even when
_____.

2. What we think of as a long time is
_____.

Reflections after prayer

What did you learn today?

Day 7 – If God’s People Will Just Pray

“However, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves, pray, search for me, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear their prayer from heaven, forgive their sins, and heal their country.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

If we will humble ourselves and pray, God will do miraculous things. God is waiting on us to find the time do these simple things:

1. Humble ourselves
2. Pray
3. Search for Him
4. Stop doing evil things

When we do these four simple things then God will:

1. Hear our prayers
2. Forgive our sins
3. Heal our countries

This is a very simple exchange. What God is asking from us in minor in exchange for what he is offering in return. Focus on doing your part so that God can begin doing his.

Study Questions

1. What four things is God asking us to do?

2. What three things is God offering in return?

Reflections after prayer

What did you learn today?
