

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

YOUTH DEVOTIONAL



THE ALLIANCE



ALLIANCE YOUTH

40 DAYS OF *prayer*

INTRO

Dear Alliance family,

Welcome to 40 Days of Prayer! This prayer guide features daily devotionals and prayer prompts that are designed to lead you into the presence of God, to cry out to Him in prayer, and to listen for His still, small voice. It's not enough to hear about prayer, read about it, or even just learn about it. During these 40 days at the beginning of 2022, we need to engage in prayer—to perhaps do so with a frequency, fervency, and focus that is not normal for us. This year's theme is **Reawakening to Christ**. The aim of this 40-day focus is to fix our gaze on Jesus: remember who He is, what He has done, what He has given us to do, and what He will do in the future.

Look around at all that is happening in our nation and world. It is time to pray and to surrender to Jesus! Could it be that this 40 Days of Prayer could change us, change our prayer lives, change The Alliance, and even transform our nation and world? Let's step into this prayer experience with the anticipation that we will encounter the living God and fix our eyes upon Him. Let's pray with a spirit of expectancy that the Spirit of God will do great things in, among, and through us to the glory of Jesus Christ.

Keep the faith!



Terry D. Smith
Vice President for Church Ministries



THE ALLIANCE

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WEEK 1

REAWAKENING TO THE GLORY OF CHRIST

During His Incarnation, the glory of Christ is often veiled, and we see His humility. But His glory has existed from eternity past and will continue into eternity future. Even during His Incarnation, His glory is seen from time to time. This week's devotionals unpack various aspects of the glory of Christ so that we will find ourselves caught up in worship.

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THE ETERNITY OF CHRIST

JOHN 1:1-4, 14

Have you ever thought about the fact that Jesus didn't just come into existence when He was born? He existed from the very beginning, and He has continued to exist even after His physical death—Jesus is eternal!

If you've ever played peek-a-boo with a young child, you've witnessed a developmental theory at work called object permanence. This is the ability to know that an object still exists even if it cannot be seen. Infants who haven't yet developed object permanence will become upset when an object is hidden from sight because they think the item has vanished.

In the same way, if we are not developed enough in our faith to know that Christ is eternal, we can become upset when bad things happen in life because we think that He's vanished, that He's left us. But Christ is eternal, and it is a glorious promise to know that He has always been there and He will always be there with us. We can rest and confidently live life knowing that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (see Hebrews 13:8). He is worthy of all our affection!



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ask Jesus to show you moments where He's been beside you in the past and the present. Does Jesus' presence change anything? Spend time praising Him for this revelation!
2. Have Jesus show you where He desires to be beside you in the future. Does His presence change anything? How? Journal your thoughts, and date the page. Commit these moments to Him so you can look back on it later.
3. Find a way to declare/express Isaiah 9:6—through calligraphy, art, writing poems or songs, declaring truth, dancing, journaling, etc.

» by Abi Arkawa

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

COLOSSIANS 2:8-9

Pray before you read: *Holy Spirit, help me understand Your Word. May this time together be glorifying to You—draw me closer to You. May I see Your work in this passage and in the day ahead of me.*

I have often wondered when the grumpy, old people in my church started being grumpy. What started them down the grumpy path? Why would they get so upset about a new song on Sunday morning? Then, one Sunday, the Holy Spirit convicted me. We were singing “Reckless Love” again, and I couldn’t do it. I mean, come on. How many times are we going to sing this song? I heard the Spirit say to me, “You’re not the one they’re worshiping.”

Oof, it’s true. I had lost the purpose of why we worship. I became a grumpy, old person caught up in the belief that I was the point and that my enjoyment of worship was the purpose. Verse 8 warns us of being taken captive like this by tradition rather than Christ.

Is there a tradition in your life that may have started out as something good but lost the purpose of bringing Christ the glory? It could be the reason you go to youth group, read your Bible, or the way you treat your friends.

Verse 9 talks about Jesus, in full deity, taking bodily form. The all-powerful being who created life with a breath bound Himself to the squishy human body—a body that is easily changed and damaged but also a body that couldn’t stop Him from miraculously healing the blind, the bleeding, and the dead or bearing the weight and pain of the cross.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Thank Jesus for being worthy of all your glory, honor, and praise.
2. Ask God to show you more of His goodness.
3. Pray that He will reveal to you more of how you can better worship Him and Him alone.

THE SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST

HEBREWS 4:14-16

For this devotional, begin outside. Look around at the environment that surrounds you.

In the Old Testament, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year to burn incense and sprinkle animal blood to atone for his sins and the sins of the people of Israel. The high priests in the Old Testament sacrificed but could not fulfill nor provide the sacrifice all mankind needed.

Jesus—God in the flesh—walked, lived, worshiped, wrestled, and overcame the issues of this life while being with people. Jesus was familiar with temptation and the struggles of man. In His life, He did not sin. He was, is, and forever will be the great High Priest, the ultimate sacrifice to atone for our sins.

You may be wondering, “What does this have to do with me? I am not God. I cannot live a sinless life.” What you do have is Christ living inside you.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. What do you believe about God? Pray that He will reveal to you the truths from His Word you can hold firm to.
2. How do you make it through the temptations and struggles of this world? Ask the Lord to help you seek after Him before all else.
3. What do you do when you fail or don't feel good enough? Pray that the Lord will show you His goodness and grace and help you trust in His promises and His love for you.

» by Joe Oliver

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST

MATTHEW 17:1-8

Have you ever gone on a long hike with friends or family? There's just something special about being in nature away from our sometimes- hectic everyday lives. This passage starts off with Jesus and a couple of the disciples doing just that—hiking up a mountain.

This seemed to be a normal hike for Peter, James, and John, an opportunity to relax and spend some quality time with Jesus. But within minutes of finally reaching the top of the mountain, some crazy things happened. Jesus' face shone like the sun, Moses and Elijah appeared, the voice of God spoke to them from a cloud, and the disciples fell on their faces in fear.

By the time it was all over, the disciples were left with a new understanding of Jesus. They were able to see just a glimpse of His glory and were given a command: "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy. Listen to him."

Much like the disciples, sometimes we need a reminder to listen to Jesus. It can be easy for us to focus on what we want rather than what Jesus is saying. It can be easy for us to turn our relationship with Jesus into a one-way street where we make requests but don't listen to what He has to say. Today, set aside intentional time during prayer to listen to what God has for you.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Think about a time when you have seen God move. Praise Him for the ways He's worked in your life in the past.
2. Pray that God will give you a deeper understanding of His glory today.
3. Find a quiet place away from distractions. Put your phone on airplane mode. Set a timer for eight minutes and put it facedown or across the room from you. Pray that God will speak to you, and then listen to Him until your timer goes off. Keep a notebook and pen handy to write down what He says.

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

ACTS 1:9-11

Have you ever encountered something difficult that left you saying, “I don’t get it. Why is this happening?” Often, it’s hard to grasp what God is up to when things happen that leave us wounded or when life is overwhelming and we can’t help but feel anxious.

Jesus’ closest friends spent years with Him—walked with Him, heard Him teach, watched in awe as He performed miracle after miracle. Think about the fun you have with your best friends. That’s what the disciples had with Jesus. And then Jesus told them He was going to die.

Jesus died to pay for the sins of the world and defeated Satan and darkness forever. His friends and followers didn’t understand, and they were devastated. But Jesus didn’t stay dead. Conquering death, Jesus came back to life! He returned! And then He told them He had to leave again. The disciples watched as Jesus disappeared into the sky.

“Why is He leaving? He *just* came back,” they must have thought.

Little did they know, this was a launching pad for the explosion of Jesus’ ministry. Jesus had told them it was better for Him to leave so that “the Helper” could come. Ten days later, the Holy Spirit came in their midst and filled them.

Even today, we receive the Holy Spirit when we come to faith in Jesus (see Acts 2:38). Jesus physically left the earth, but now inhabits His people by His Spirit.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. The glory of Christ is displayed in His power, His love for us, and His goodness even when we don’t understand what He is doing. Ask God to reveal Himself to you in new ways today.
2. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you place your trust in Him.
3. Ask that the Lord will help you place all of your hope in Him and nothing else.

THE COMING OF CHRIST IN GLORY

MATTHEW 24:30-31

If you're like me, you read the passage and thought, "This is a little scary." I mean, the passage says that "there will be deep mourning among all the peoples of the earth." Does it really mean *all* people?

The mourning described in the passage is for people who have rebelled against and rejected a relationship with Jesus. However, for those who know Him and are in relationship with Him, this is the moment our souls have been longing for—the time where Jesus finally comes back to earth to gather His children and bring us home. This passage of Scripture is one of hope in the power of Jesus and His love for us. It's something to look forward to, a time of eternal rest with our Father.

I can't help but be reminded of vacation and the hopeful excitement I feel as I await its arrival. Oftentimes, when my wife and I have a summer vacation scheduled out, and it's been a hard winter at work in Pennsylvania, my heart smiles knowing that a restful time in Florida is right around the corner. Like the return of Jesus, I have not experienced it yet, but the hope of vacation provides rest for me even before it happens. It's a hope not only for the future but for my present life.



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ask the Lord to reveal to you what resting with Him looks like.
2. Pray that He will give you a better idea of what it means to find your rest in Him.
3. Ask God to help you rest in His love today and build hope for His coming tomorrow.

» by Devonte Thorne

THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

Exaltation is the action of elevating someone in rank, power, or character. It is a feeling or state of extreme happiness.

Exaltation of anything brings excitement. Think of a time when you or someone you know was given an award. They stood up on a stage or platform and were handed a certificate or medal or gift to honor their work, their character, or their strength—what a great feeling. The crowd went wild and cheered, joining in the celebration.

Jesus' exaltation was even more glorious than that except it occurred only in the unseen world of heaven. To the human eye, His "exaltation" was anything but—it was dirty, bloody, tiresome, lonely, and discouraging. The emotions He had when He humbled Himself in obedience were nothing celebratory or exciting. The time for His exaltation was moments away in heaven.

Can you think of a time when you did something wonderful, but nobody saw? For Jesus, heaven saw. Serving others is the sum of what Jesus dedicated His life to on earth. He came to serve—He served meals, healing, and forgiveness for all. How can you humble yourself to that of a servant today?



PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that the Lord will give you a posture of gratitude for showing you His goodness.
2. Pray for strength to follow in the service of Jesus.
3. Pray for others to experience the deep love of God.

» by Annie Banceu