

**40 Days of Prayer
For
Spiritual Awakening
July 20-August 28**

**Prayer Guide
And
Journal**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 1:40

“Come now, let us consider your options says the LORD” (Isaiah 1:18, NET)

Let Us Consider Our Options

Have you ever been overwhelmed by too many options? They all look good and provide seemingly good insight for the present need we may be facing. But choosing which one to embrace can become burdensome and paralyzing. Or out of desperation, thinking we have to do something right away, we quickly choose one and go our way hoping everything turns out alright.

Isaiah 1:18 helps us to realize a powerful truth about life we either forget or it gets lost in our busyness. Really there are only two options and as we see in the following verses, both options carry with them consequences.

God invites us to spend some time with him so we can consider these two options. Here they are. **Option One:** Embrace God and his way for the day along with his grace to live it. When we do, we find provision for everything we need today – then fresh and new for the next day, the next – everyday! We find the removal of the unnecessary things and sins we struggle with. Then, we find forgiveness so we can extend this forgiveness to those in our lives who need what we have found in God. God promises a life that breaks out in richness, peace, and clarity that we all desire and long for.

Option Two: Refuse what God is offering us for the day and life overtakes us – consumes us. Frustration continues to build in every area of our lives. Uneasiness becomes a daily partner in what we put our hands to. Relationships become strained or continue to grow apart because we become so caught up in the busyness of ourselves.

God promises an awakening in lives that we so desperately need. So where do we start? We begin right now with our willingness to live out what Isaiah 1:16-17 teaches. God has spoken this, therefore, he backs it up with grace, mercy and his steadfast love. Spend some time now and throughout this day with God to consider our options. Let Him awaken you to a brand new height of grace, mercy and love that you are longing for.

What did the Holy Spirit say to me and what options should I consider TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

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Day 2:40

“And your ears shall hear a word behind you saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. Then you will defile your carved idols overlaid with silver and your gold-plated metal images. You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, ‘Be gone!’” (Isaiah 30:21-22, ESV)

The Voice

We will face many challenges today. One of the many challenges will be, how to determine the right voice to listen to or follow. This is not easy and can be very frustrating. There is a very real solution which will powerfully transform our hearing – ASK the Holy Spirit to begin making his voice very clear to our hearing. We need to say to the Holy Spirit, ‘How do we not only hear your voice, but clearly know the voice we hear is yours?’ The reason we want hear and know your voice, is so we can choose to ‘obey’ your voice!

So what will the Holy Spirit say? Before this question is answered, we must first believe that what He speaks to us is ‘True.’ How would we know what He is saying is truth? Because the Holy Spirit always magnifies Jesus to be the Son of God, our Savior and what he desires for his bride. Also, the Holy Spirit always magnifies the glory and holiness of God our Father. Therefore, truth does both and when we choose to follow truth, our lives will magnify both Jesus and God our Father, just as the Holy Spirit does.

First, the Holy Spirit will speak to our hearts and mind the CORRECT turns, stops and direction to bring us into agreement with the purpose and heart of God in Jesus Christ. This is what He will speak today! Every movement has already be mapped out by the Holy Spirit because he knows the heart of God. God desires a fulfilling and productive life today for each of us.

Next, the Holy Spirit will speak to our hearts and mind the INAPPROPRIATE things in our lives that WE need to discard. Those things in our hearts, minds and lives that will hinder hearing, knowing and obeying His voice.

When we hear, know and obey the Holy Spirit’s voice, the results will be phenomenal and transforming (Isaiah 30:23-26). TODAY, we must seek His voice and ask Him to reveal to us what we need to hear. We will find that the Holy Spirit’s voice trumps all other voices. TODAY we CAN live in the riches of His leading in our lives. Now, we can anticipate that the day before us will be filled with complete richness!

What do I need to do to be able to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My commitment to Him IS:

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Day 3:40

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!
And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Psalm 139:23-24, ESV)*

Permission to Scan!

Those of us that use computers know all too well what happens when the computer is not properly scanned for spyware, malware and viruses – They CRASH! What happens next is painful and costly – the computer needs a complete hard drive reconfiguration, the programs and software need to be completely cleansed and the shutdown becomes costly in price and lost time. Here is the really painful part, this cost, aggravation and pain could have been avoided by **giving permission** to a qualified company **to regularly scan** the computer programs, software and internet connections.

Permission to scan. Think about this statement for a moment as we ponder Psalm 139:23-24 again, “*Search me*”, “*try me*”, “*know my*”, “*see if there be any grievous way in me*”, then “*lead me*” to your solution. Our hearts and minds are like a computer. They store most everything we see, hear and touch. Many times we are unaware or oblivious to what has been stored deep within our hearts and minds. So on a regular basis there needs to be a scan done to determine unwanted feelings, emotions, thoughts, passions and pride that have attached themselves like a virus to our thought process. Our will to follow our Lord can become so weighed down with the unwanted and unnecessary fleshly ambitions and prideful attitudes that our obedience begins to slow down. This is the making of our response time to the Holy Spirit’s voice critically slow. There cannot be a more dangerous place to find ourselves, than with the inability to make right choices in those critical ‘moments’, that will affect our lives and the lives of others long term.

So how do we free ourselves from the spyware, malware and viruses of life? We need a regular scanning of our hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit. He is the only reputable authority who can do this correctly, bringing total security to our lives. So what is He waiting for? He is waiting for us to give him permission to scan! The way we give Him permission is to literally pray Psalm 139:23-24 to God our heavenly Father on a daily basis. When we do surrender our hearts and minds to His scan, clarity of truth returns, discernment to judge right from wrong becomes laser like and wisdom ignites the energy we need to live with full confidence.

Are you running slowly? Is the clutter of your heart passions and thoughts clouding your judgment? The solution: Give permission to God to scan your heart and mind. By doing so, you will save yourself much pain and cost later. Go to God now and give him permission to scan – you can trust his expertise!

What areas of my life am I holding back and not letting the Holy Spirit scan TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY my commitment to Him IS:

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Day 4:40

“But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself.” (Daniel 1:8, ESV)

Today and Tomorrow, I Refuse!

Daniel found himself in a situation he had no control over. He was part of the exile to Babylon in 605 B.C. He was one of the young men chosen to be trained and conformed to the courts of Babylon. To be trained in the courts of Babylon, was in effect, to be conformed to the pagan worship and societal lifestyle of the Babylonians. A way of life totally in opposition to what Daniel was accustomed to and one that meant he would have to deny the One True God! But one determined aspect of Daniel's character rises to the surface during this critical decision he must make – worship the living God and deny the false gods of Babylon or worship the false gods of Babylon and deny the One True God. It was the one thing he could control so Daniel *“resolved that he would not defile himself.”* This means he chose God rather than bow down to the courts of Babylon. Because of Daniel's faithful commitment to God, God used Daniel mightily in the years following to point kings to the living God, to inspire three young Hebrew men and show us a vivid glimpse of the future.

Many times we find ourselves in situations we have no control over. Maybe it is someone you work for who is making poor choices. Maybe it is a spouse who has lost their way or a wayward, rebellious child that is bringing heartache and unwanted stress. It may even be the pressure of my circle of friends to conform to a lesser standard than what we are called to live. These are but a few situations we are having to deal with, that we have no control over. But like Daniel, we do have control over whether or not we will cave in to the relentless temptations and pressures to conform.

This one determined commitment not to be defiled brought a confident faith that not only transformed Daniel's life but those around him as well. We have a choice today. A choice that will reach into the many tomorrows of our life – *to make up our mind not to be defiled by the wants, desires and taunts of the courts of Babylon.* So today, make the choice to be holy (1 Peter 1:13-16); pure and honest (Philippians 1:8-11; 2:12-16); to be a person of integrity no matter the situation (Proverbs 3:17-24; 10:9); to be a person of faith (Galatians 5:5-6); to be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2); and choose today as well as each tomorrow that God allows, to refuse to be defiled. This is one choice we do have control over. Choose to serve the One True God and live!

What choice can I make *TODAY* to help me listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit enabling me to live a life undefiled? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

***TODAY* My commitment to Him *IS*:**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 5:40

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27, ESV)

“And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.” (2 Corinthians 3:3, ESV)

New!

Do you ever find yourself in a river of mundaneness? You know, that moment you find that all you have been doing is going through the motions of existence. Existence is the ever raging river that forces its will upon us. It is the force that paralyzes, leaving us totally at the will of life's currents. Yes, we have all been caught in the currents of the river of mere existence – mundaneness! There are really just two reasons for living this way. First, a person's heart has never been made new by the transforming power of trusting in Jesus Christ as personal Savior. The heart is dead. It has no vitality within itself to break the chains that squeeze the life out of one's will to live. Only Jesus can break these chains! In Christ alone can a person find the reason to live today and have hope for a bright future! Has your soul ever been truly awakened out of its deadness and made new in Jesus Christ? Unless a person comes to Jesus by grace through faith in him, the heart will have no true vitality and remains caught in the swift currents of religious existence. These currents are racing toward what Jesus described in Matthew 7:13-14 *“eternal destruction!”* Cry unto the Lord, confess your need for him because you are a sinner and ask him to save you. He has promised to remove the 'old' heart of stone and put His Holy Spirit within you. Then he will do something marvelous. He will rescue you out of the river of conformity and show you how to swim in the river of transformation that makes all things new! If this is you, please stop right now and by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, turn your life over to him and he will save you. That which was dead will be made *new* in Him!

If you are a child of God because the Holy Spirit is bearing witness with your spirit that you have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, the second reason will best describe you. You are trapped in the current of existence **because** you are dipping your feet or maybe even swimming in the river of conformity of your own will or self-reliance. Your focus has become about you rather than about Jesus who saved you. These deadly currents of conformity have stripped you of the spiritual vitality to follow the Lord and left you spiritually stagnant – mundane! If you will turn from your pride, asking Jesus to forgive you with a repentant heart – he will forgive you, cleanse you and restore your spiritual vitality making all things *new!*

There is only One River that flows from the throne of God with the enriching power of newness – the River is the Holy Spirit who makes all things new! Take the Holy Spirit's hand and he will show you how to swim in *newness!*

What is or did the Holy Spirit say to me TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My commitment to Him IS:

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Day 6:40

“For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5, ESV)

Winning the War of the Mind

They get into our yards, houses, flowerbeds and gardens. They multiply rapidly and in many cases will attack with viciousness. Their sting is filled with poison and when we are bitten, leaves us with great discomfort. You know by now we are speaking of the fire ant. The only way to get rid of the ant hill or colony is to destroy the queen. When she is destroyed, the colony disappears. The war for our space has been won and the ant hill removed.

Paul teaches us in 2 Corinthians 5:3-5 that our minds can be invaded by contentious and arrogant thoughts. These thoughts seek to wreck our faith, deteriorate truth and rob our integrity. These can poison our minds rendering us with an unrealistic view of God’s character and his ability to truly keep his promises. ‘Did God really say that we are to be holy in every aspect of our life?’ ‘Did God really mean what he said about obedience?’ ‘Will God really discipline his children if they disobey him?’ These contentious and arrogant thoughts come from Satan himself! He did this in the garden with Eve and has not ceased his attempt to capture our minds since. What we have here is an outright war of the mind!

Paul also teaches us that it is not in our own strength or skill we win this war of the mind. This war is won by the divine power of God’s Holy Spirit pulling down these strongholds in the mind. We are to take these thoughts captive so that they can be transformed to obedience to Jesus Christ our Lord. When the stronghold is destroyed, the space that was once filled with contentious pride, is then filled with a mindset to obey Christ our Lord.

Today it is time to go to war! We will be attacked by ugly, contentious and prideful thoughts that are attempting to fill our minds with doubt and fear. Raise the banner of Jesus Christ and call to the Holy Spirit, that in the power of Jesus name, this invasion of unwanted thoughts will be pulled down and destroyed. This is so important because a mind left to speculation, is a dangerous and arrogant obstacle to growing in the knowledge of God and having the clarity of mind for proper decision making. We will need that clarity today as we move about the place God has planted us. Determine in the strength of the Holy Spirit to *win the war of the mind*.

What thought process did the Holy Spirit reveal to me *TODAY* that he wants and is ready to wage war against? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

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Day 7:40

“. . . And he brought me to the entrance of the court, and when I looked, behold, there was a hole in the wall. . . So I went in and saw. And there, engraved on the wall all around, was every form of creeping things and loathsome beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel. . . Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his room of pictures? For they say, ‘The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.’”

(Ezekiel 8:7-12, ESV)

God Sees!

Yesterday we learned that the war is either won or lost in our minds. Today’s reading in Ezekiel, teaches us that we must realize that no matter how well we try to fortify our thoughts, our passions, our actions and our intents, God sees with total clarity and certainty. The truth is this, if we have to hide or use deception in what we are doing, planning or saying – these are actions, plans and words that should not be found among us! No matter the reason we give or the opinion we may have regarding these strongholds, they are all unholy in the eyes of God and he sees!

There are two options at this point. The first is spiritually unhealthy and will continue to drain the spiritual vitality right out of us. It is to continue doing what we are doing believing God doesn’t see or worse yet, believing God thinks it is OK and He will let us get away with it!

The second is to acknowledge that God sees, then repent of the unholy things he is seeing. Then start removing the unholy pictures off the wall, the unholy items out of the room and let go of all the unhealthy attachments for the unholy things just removed. We will need a lot of help, so we must call to the Holy Spirit, who is the expert in these cleaning matters. He will show, guide, help and strengthen us in this needed process of spiritual house cleaning.

Something amazing begins to happen. The once musty inner room of our heart is transformed into a place of complete refreshing and delight. The fear of discovery vanishes. The weight of guilt and shame has been lifted. Pretending gives way to honesty and the freedom to live again thrives! The door can be left opened and we know that an open door is an invitation to enter in and see what the rooms hold.

God sees! When God enters through an opened door and sees, he brings the gifts of peace, joy, blessing and renewed purpose. God sees! Is God seeing through the walls or through the invitation of an opened door? TODAY, let us open our heart door inviting God our heavenly Father to come in. When we do, God brings with him all precious and pleasant riches to fill all the rooms of our life (Proverbs 24:3-5). God sees!

What areas of my life did the Holy Spirit reveal TODAY that I have closed off to God? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

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Day 8:40

“Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength! Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness, tremble before him all the earth!”

(Psalm 96:6-9)

The Splendor of Holiness

The oceans cannot be fully appreciated until one goes down underneath the surface. When they go down, they are amazed at the beauty and splendor of the ocean that opens up before them. We cannot truly see nor appreciate the splendor and majesty of God until we go down before him. Simply put, we cannot appreciate, nor experience the greatness and wonder of God until we humble ourselves, go down from our loft, into the presence of God.

David reminds us in this passage, *“Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness, tremble before him all the earth!”* The great offering of our worship of God is our heart humbled before him. A heart that is willing to obey his desires and commands we know he has given to us. Obedience of the heart is where the true splendor and majesty of God is. It becomes for us a place of awe inspiring beauty and experience. But it does not stop there.

When we leave that place with clear minds and pure hearts, we come away with a readiness to take others to the place from which we just came. We extend to those around us an invitation to come and see the beauty of God’s splendor and holiness. This is how we ascribe to the LORD glory and strength and to worship him in the splendor of holiness.

Are you struggling to see the greatness and faithfulness of God? Do you sense the deep longing to experience God’s presence in a fresh new way? Are you struggling to be freed from the dullness that has robbed you from the clarity and beauty of God’s glory in worship? We must choose to *tremble before God* and jump into the sea of the splendor of holiness. When we do, the Holy Spirit will take us to new depths below the surface of this sea of the splendor. It is there in a fresh new way, we will experience the strength, majesty and beauty of God!

What did the Holy Spirit say to me TODAY about God’s splendor of holiness? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 9:40

“Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy for I am the LORD your God. Keep my statutes and do them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you.” (Leviticus 20:7-8, ESV)

“For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.” (1 Thessalonians 4:7, ESV)

“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’” (1 Peter 1:13-16, ESV)

Take Time to Be Holy!

We are called to be holy. Called to a holiness that transforms our conduct to a life of obedience and purity. God has set this pattern of holiness after his character and he expects us to follow that pattern in all manner of life. In our quest to better understand our call to holiness, the words of the hymn, *Take Time to Be Holy* written by William D. Longstaff, will help us.

*Take time to be holy, Speak oft with thy Lord; Abide in Him always and feed on His Word.
Make friends of God’s children, Help those who are weak; forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.*

*Take time to be holy, the world rushes on; spend much time in secret with Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be; thy friends in thy conduct, His likeness shall see.*

*Take time to be holy, Let Him be they guide, and run not before Him, whatever be tide;
In joy or in sorrow, still follow thy Lord, and looking to Jesus, still trust in His Word.*

*Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul; each thought and each motive beneath His control;
Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love. Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.*

Leviticus 20:7 calls us to *consecrate ourselves* to a life of holiness. To consecrate ourselves is to commit ourselves to live in agreement to the holy purposes of God. When we do, we live a life pleasing to Him. We must answer God’s call of holiness. To accept and live the call of holiness, is to live in agreement with God’s pattern of holiness he patterned after himself. *“As obedient children . . . ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’”* Take time to be holy!

What has the Holy Spirit shown to me TODAY that needs my time to be holy? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 10:40

“But you, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”

(Psalm 86:15, ESV)

Myth Busters

Psalm 86:15 is a myth buster. The myth that states God is an angry God, bent on destroying people who do not follow his rules. In one flowing statement, David defies this myth of an unappeased, angry God. David says that God does get angry, but that his anger is slow, meaning it takes a long time for his anger to become all consuming. If God is slow in anger then what is he quick to do? David tells us. God is merciful and gracious, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness!

God is quick to give us mercy instead of judgment. He is quick to give us grace when we don't deserve forgiveness. God is quick to pour upon us his steady, unfailing love. And God is quick to reveal to us his faithfulness in providing everything we will ever need to be fulfilled, satisfied and fruitful daily (Matthew 6:25-34).

As we have already discovered, God fully sees. Every sin, show of pride and the fears we struggle with, God fully knows. Here we have a choice. We can believe the myth that God is seething with such anger that he will not respond to our cries for help and forgiveness, leaving us hopelessly to ourselves to face life. OR we can believe as David has written, God is quick to faithfully hear our cries and faithful to respond to us with quick mercy, grace and faithfulness. This means that we can find strength, wisdom, forgiveness, compassion, peace and hope in great abundance, when we acknowledge God's sovereign reign over us and his creation.

Yes, God does get angry over rebellion and injustice. Yes, He will deal with us through discipline. But remember, God's discipline is always pointing and leading us back to his mercy, grace and abounding steadfast love and faithfulness. Today. Right now. We need to take the step of faith toward God. When we do, we become myth busters to a world desperately in need of Jesus.

What myth has the Holy Spirit revealed to me TODAY that is keeping me from responding to the abundance of God's love and forgiveness? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 11:40

“I sought the LORD and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed!” (Psalm 34:4-5, ESV)

The Look of Peace

In these days of prayer, searching and redirection, we find the Holy Spirit pressing our hearts to draw nearer to God. We have this sense of need or longing for a renewed fellowship with our Lord. But, within this longing, is the truth of the things in our life that pulled us away from the intimacy we now long for. As we approach or think of approaching God, our thoughts are filled with guilt and shame, making us apprehensive and fearful. Fear that God will not forgive or he has lost a little of his love for us because we have drifted from him. This fearful myth creates a *thousand and one negative scenarios* of what God will or will not do when we do approach him.

We realize we are at that moment in our lives that we have to choose to remember God’s great love for us and seek him. Take a step toward God our Father believing he will respond to us in his love. David did this and tells us what he found in God when he did. *“I sought the LORD . . . he answered me . . . delivered me from all my fears.”* David found three responses of God when he took that step of seeking that we will find as well. David found the reality of mercy, grace and steadfast love! The power of God’s character annihilated the fearful myth David felt!

But David discovered something else and we will too! *Radiant Peace!* The radiance that moves our fearful and downcast demeanor to the confident expression of peace on our faces. Joyful radiance that brings that skip back in our spirits. Joyful radiance that lifts up our heads to project for all to see – the look of peace. Focus returns! Smiles return! Hope returns! The attitude, I can’t wait to meet with my Father returns! Why? Because *those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed!* Today. Right now. Seek the Father. The result, the look of peace will radiate!

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me about my approach to God TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 12:40

“The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.”
(Proverbs 8:13, ESV)

When Hate Shows We Love God

In God’s realm of love, where we are taught and commanded to love, we suddenly realize there is conflict with the teaching and command to hate. Maybe a word you would prefer is to loathe. Really, it is the same word, same strong emphasis about disliking something deeply. Proverbs 8:13 teaches us where this hatred or loathing come from – *“The fear of the LORD.”* To fear does not mean to be afraid of but to reverence the LORD, to respect him by loving what he loves and hating what he hates. So as we have set our love for the LORD very high, to hate evil is high on our energy scale as well.

God hates evil, so should we! We are to hate or loathe evil, NOT PEOPLE, but evil! Yes, we dislike what people choose to do, but the focus is not on what we or others are doing, but on what we are to hate, establishing our respect for our LORD. Proverbs teaches that we are to hate first and foremost *arrogant pride*. The flaunting of ourselves, our possessions and our abilities. It also includes thinking we can do anything better or that we know better than God himself! But here is where arrogant pride really manifests itself. When we make what God has already said IS, to be something different to suit our own agendas or our unwillingness to call what we are doing sin, like God does! This arrogance God calls evil. And God hates evil! Can’t water it down, can’t change the meaning – it is plain as day, God says *“Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.”*

One of the major aspects of spiritual awakening, revival or restoration is hating or loathing even the prospect of arrogant pride or speech being a part of our lives. When we are this sensitive to evil, we are being very respectful and loving of our heavenly Father. So it is our great desire to love God supremely today, but it involves the extreme hatred of that evil arrogant pride. As we are loving God, ask him to show us what to hate. We respect God with deep love when we do.

What area in my life has the Holy Spirit revealed to me TODAY that I have considered a light thing when God has already declared it pride or arrogance; evil or a perversion of speech? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 13:40

“LORD you were favorable . . . you restored . . . you forgave . . . you covered . . . you withdrew . . . you turned from . . . Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!” (Psalm 85:1-4, ESV)

The Work of Restoration

Ever found a piece of furniture that was severely worn and tattered. After a few moments you began to see beyond the wear and tear to see clearly its beauty through the required restoration you could do to it? There is something rich and exciting about the restoration process. Whether it is from a picture of what it is supposed to look like or just the sheer personal image of the beauty to come when the restoration is finished. The work of restoration – that which had lost its finish and function restored to marvelous beauty and usefulness once again. Today, as you take a glimpse of your life – do you see a spirit worn and tattered in need of restoration? Do you see a heart that has become dull and insensitive? Do you see a mind that has lost its vision? Are you seeing a lifeless existence filled with the mournful sighs of “maybe tomorrow?” Read again today’s passage of Psalm 85:1-4. The Sons of Korah are looking, as you have, at what their life is at the present. They knew something was wrong – they needed their hearts to be turned on fire again. They revisited what God had done before – His work of restoration! God is the Master of restoration because he knows exactly what we need to look like and knows exactly what needs to be done in removing, stripping, sanding and securing without destroying us!

Remember, He knows what we are feeling and he sees beyond our worn and tattered lives. So what must we do? Cry out for God to do his work of restoration! Do not fear it but embrace it. Why? Verses 10-13 tell us. At the point of restoration where the divine and human meet – *“steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky. Yes, the LORD will give what is good and our land will yield its increase. Deliverance goes before him and prepares a pathway for him.”* O God, restore us again!

What areas of my life TODAY has the Holy Spirit revealed that I need to ask God to restore? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 14:40

“And he said, ‘What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’” (Mark 7:20-23, ESV)

Tuning Our Spiritual Sense of Smell

These words of Jesus give us a jolting reminder that our heart, mind and lives contain the seed of defilement! Jesus leaves no room to guess as to how this defilement can come. This is most helpful to us, because we now know what those things are that make us unclean. Defilement means to fall underfoot of filthiness. Jesus warns us of the potential of the heart to be drawn away to that which will trample underfoot. We must guard our heart. The heart is prone to wander and in its wandering can become vulnerable to that which seems right, but in reality defiles.

So how do we guard our heart? Where do we start? Jesus taught in Matthew 22:37 that we start by *“loving the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our mind.”* Jesus also taught we are to set our heart on the true treasure of heaven who is God. By doing so, we see with clarity what is pure and what is defiling (Matthew 6:19-24). God created us with the sense of smell. A sense that can determine the difference between what is fresh and what is stale. What is pure and what rank. We have to learn how to tune our sense of smell so we know where to go and what to avoid.

We have spiritual senses we must learn how to tune in order to live a pleasing life before God our Father. We could say we have a spiritual sense of smell that helps us discern purity, holiness, righteousness and what is not of these qualities. Today, we need to ask the Holy Spirit to give us an acute sense of smell so we can stir our heart to love God supremely and to love what and who he loves.

TODAY What area of my heart has the Holy Spirit revealed that needs to be guarded against defilement? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 15:40

“But I say, walk in the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh . . . If we live by the Spirit, let us also behave in accordance with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, being jealous of one another.”

(Galatians 5:25-26, NET)

People Behave!

Here Paul speaks on the great contention between Spirit led behavior and cultural behavior. Our behavior says a lot about our lives. Behavior reveals the real us – no matter who we say we are or whom we belong to. Our behavior immediately signals who is at the helm of our lives, the Holy Spirit or culture. Paul makes the characteristic of each type of behavior very clear so there is no confusion. There is the behavior of culture (Galatians 5:18-21), and then there is the behavior that is Spirit led (Galatians 5:22-26).

So what is Paul saying to the Church? He is saying ‘People Behave!’ This behavior is one of response – not reaction. We respond in love because God is love. We forgive because we are forgiven. We show grace because grace has been shown to us. We apply mercy to others because mercy has been applied by God to us. We battle selfishness and ingratitude with hearts filled with gratitude and humility. Spirit led behavior is a behavior that shows the difference Christ has made in our lives. Our behavior that is Spirit led is like Christ – the very same way Christ responded to a lost and misplaced culture.

So what should our response be? We should position ourselves to be led by the Spirit so we will be a people who behave properly. When we do, our light will shine so as to influence others to come to Christ. So Today, People Behave! Today, choose to be led by the Holy Spirit in every manner of life. Today, we have the opportunity to behave properly before a world who needs a behavior correction. So People Behave!

What is or did the Holy Spirit say to me *TODAY* about my behavior? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

***TODAY* My Commitment to Him IS:**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 16:40

“I will praise the LORD at all times; my mouth will continually praise him. I will boast in the LORD; let the oppressed hear and rejoice! Magnify the LORD with me! Let’s praise his name together!” (Psalm 34:1-3, NET)

Loosened Lips!

Spiritual awakening loosens our hearts which in turn loosens our lips. One cannot stop speaking about the goodness and greatness of God. One of the fruits of spiritual awakening is that we want everyone to know about the greatness and magnitude of God’s love.

David said, *“at all times; and continually”* he will praise, boast, magnify and then again praise the LORD! Spiritual awakening loosens our lips to where we just cannot say enough about God! Who He is. What He has done and is doing. His provisions, protection and promises are true. *“Let me tell you about them,”* David says.

We need to examine as to when the last time we spoke to God or to others about his goodness – his many blessings. Right now would be a good time for us to begin to tell the Lord how he has touched our lives these past 15 days of our prayer journey. Be specific and with each specific way we give – praise Him joyfully and give thanks. Let today be a day of loosened lips. Loosened lips to God and to those around us. Magnify His name and invite others to do the same.

Loosened lips in praise, gratitude and magnification to God is an exciting time of worship that brings great spiritual blessing. Loosen your lips and count the ways God has blessed you, protected you, spoken to you, forgiven you and healed you. Loosen your lips and thank God for loving and cleansing you.

Loosen the lips and let the praises of our God flow! God is amazing, more than wonderful and his steadfast love is forever! He is our Savior, Redeemer, the Lover of our soul and His faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds into the heavens! Loosen the lips and let the praises flow to the Lord our God! He is God who is for us! Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord! Loosen the lips and give God the praises due his name! *“I will praise the LORD at all times; my mouth will continually praise him. I will boast in the LORD; let the oppressed hear and rejoice! Magnify the LORD with me! Let’s praise his name together!”* Today, determine to have loosened lips!

What one thing will I praise God for TODAY and who will I tell about it? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 17:40

In the LORD I have taken shelter. How can you say to me, "Flee to the mountain like a bird! When the foundations are destroyed, what can the godly accomplish? The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven. His eyes watch, his eyes examine all people. The LORD approves of the godly, but he hates the wicked and those who love to do violence. Certainly the LORD is just; he rewards godly deeds; the upright will experience his favor."

(Psalm 11:1, 3-5, 7, NET)

What Can the Righteous Do In Uncertain Times?

Listen! Do you hear the tone of fear in people's voices? Watch! Do you see the frantic movement in people's steps? Look closer! Do you notice the facial expressions of lost dreams and discouragement? For us, in these days in which we live, the answer to these three questions are yes, yes and yes! One more question – a question David asked, "*What can the godly do or accomplish?*" When established institutions are failing; when social and civil order is deteriorating; when biblical values are under unrelenting attack – "*What can the godly do or accomplish?*"

With great confidence, we can go to the LORD who is in control and aware of everything happening on this earth. But, it does not stop there. What we know and learn about God's 'Total Control', we use to influence those around us. We point them to the Prince of peace, Jesus Christ the Lord. We continue to be faithful in living out the biblical values the Holy Spirit has instilled in our hearts. We show a society of disorder, the order of the powerful peace God has brought into our own lives. With patience, we continue to meet every situation in the power of prayer and the truth of God's Word. We show our society that circumstances do not determine our quality of life – that our quality and strength for living comes from the LORD who is in his holy temple, sitting on his throne in total awareness and control of the situation (Psalm 11:7).

So what can the righteous do in uncertain days? We LIVE! We live in the power of the Holy Spirit under the banner of Jesus Christ our Lord, all to the glory of God our heavenly Father! So what do we do? We live the testimony of heaven in the peace that gives all understanding! Read Psalm 11 and Philippians 4:4-9. In doing so, commit yourself today to LIVE! God is on his throne, in holy temple – the holy temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells within us (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

What has the Holy Spirit revealed to me TODAY that He would have me to accomplish for God's great name? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 18:40

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.” (Deuteronomy 29:29, ESV)

“But, as it is written, ‘What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him’ – these things, God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. (1 Corinthians 2:9-10, ESV)

Telling Us His Secrets

Deuteronomy 29 tells how God renewed his covenant with his people at Moab. He gave Moses what needed to be said to the people so that they with understanding would obey the words of the law he had given them. We learn here of God’s deep desire to renew his people. Why? Because God loves them dearly, which he proved some 1,400 plus years later when his Son, Jesus, the Messiah was born.

The law given to Moses contained the secret things of God, revealed to everyone who heard them. The revelations of the heart of God are not only for edification, but for obedience as well. The reason we know this is written in Deuteronomy 29:29 that we read earlier. It is hard for us to imagine that God is willing to share his secrets with us! God did and he still does! Paul draws from Isaiah 64:4 that we read earlier in 1 Corinthians 2:9. In this passage, Paul helps to move beyond the difficulty we sometimes have in grasping this truth that God still shares his secrets with us through the person of the Holy Spirit.

For today’s time with our Lord, there are several truths we must understand as we are being awakened in our spiritual senses. The first truth, those revelations we already know recorded for us from Genesis to Revelation, we must choose to obey. Do you remember what God told Moses to tell his people? God said, *“but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”* Today we must ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in our obedience to the revelations of purity, holiness, forgiveness, repentance, loyalty, faithfulness, service, worship, harmony, proclamation of the gospel, right attitudes and speech. We are beginning to get the bigger picture. The revelations of God to us are given for us to obey.

The second truth, no fresh revelations will come until we are embracing what we already have and know. When we are wanting more without the disciplined, faithful obedience of what we already have – we are setting ourselves up for great disappointment. Stagnation is waiting at our doorsteps, along with its cousin, frustration. Trying something new is not what we need. Getting back to reading God’s Word with a heart to hear for the purpose of obedience is the step we need to take. Then we will begin to hear the secrets of God fresh and anew! God wants to tell us his secrets. Today, choose to listen with the intent to obey those secrets. This will be transforming for us when we do.

What is the Holy Spirit’s revelation to me TODAY that I must obey? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 19:40

“Indeed, my plans are not like your plans, and my deeds are not like your deeds, for just as the sky is higher than the earth, so my deeds are superior to your deeds and my plans superior to your plans.” (Isaiah 55:8-9, NET)

Going Way Out There with God

Have you ever noticed how *our* plans never quite measure very high on the satisfaction meter? We may think or even argue that we are very satisfied with the way plans have gone. Let’s get honest about this satisfaction success meter, it is a meter we have designed - designed to fit or meet our own standards of success. If this meter is accurate, then we have to ask ourselves why we are constantly having to try something new to raise the bar for our satisfaction. You know, the new gimmicks, the new programs, a new church, a new friend and sadly, a new love. Maybe we just will not admit it, but it seems we are finding ourselves less unfulfilled than we like with our plans and deeds. The reason is stated in the above passage. God is the one stating a truth we may be forgetting and need some refreshing in – God states, *“My plans are not like your plans, and my deeds are not like your deeds, for just as the sky is higher than the earth, so my deeds are superior to your deeds and my plans superior to your plans.”*

There is a very good reason why we are not satisfied. Because we have attempted to put our plans above God’s plans. God’s plans are designed to bring the highest and fullest satisfaction to those who will follow! When we choose our own ways, we have chosen the lesser. When we choose God’s way, we choose the greater! God desires for us to experience the fruit of joyful contentment that comes in following his plan he has established for us. It means we have to go way out there with God.

According to Isaiah 55, we find we are not hitting the mark God has set for us. Read and listen again to what God says to and through Isaiah in verses 8 and 9. God is higher. God’s plans are higher. God’s deeds are higher. God’s plans and deeds are far more superior to what we can even begin to muster up. God’s success and satisfaction rate is way out there ahead of us! This great truth should encourage us to let go of our lesser and take hold of God’s hand, so he can lead us to experience the greater!

Going way out there with God means greater joy, deeper love, stronger faith, exceptional focus, mightier gospel voice, fulfilling service, higher worship and amazing productivity. This is not anything new, maybe to us it is but this has been God’s plan all along. We need a fresh encounter with our Father. The Holy Spirit will take us there. He will take us way there with God and when we do, Isaiah 55:12-13 tells us what we will find. Read it and rejoice in God and his greater plan he has for us! Take God’s hand and he will take you ‘way out there’ where the true satisfaction is.

How did the Holy Spirit speak to me *TODAY* about the value and greatness of God’s plans? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 20:40

“Wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the markets she raises her voice; at the head of the noisy streets she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates she speaks: ‘How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?

If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you. But whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster.’” (Proverbs 1:20-23, 33, ESV)

Listen! A Voice Calls Out!

Voices! Voices! Voices! It seems everywhere we go, there are voices. They are loud and soft. Subtle and not so subtle. There are voices that seek to be heard and there are the passing voices. Who are we to listen to? What voice will give the best counsel or guidance? When we are making those critical decisions concerning right and wrong, which voice will lead us to the true understanding of the situation?

There is a voice we need to hear. In fact, it is a voice we need to grow accustomed to with great clarity. The voice of wisdom, as Proverbs describes, is always crying out to us in every place and situation we could ever find ourselves in. Wisdom’s voice is the Holy Spirit speaking to our minds and hearts, showing us the way we are to go when we turn to the right and to the left (Isaiah 30:21-22). The Holy Spirit calls out to guide us in every decision being made so we can be at peace that the best decision has been made. The Holy Spirit’s voice pours out knowledge, understanding and discernment with amazing clarity, so that we have no fear of disaster (Proverbs 1:20-33).

John recorded Jesus’ words concerning the Holy Spirit in John 14 where we begin to understand the magnitude and depth of wisdom available to us every day. Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit comes he will teach, remind, convict and lead us in the way we should go.

So how do we know the wisdom that the Holy Spirit speaks? How do we distinguish His voice from all other voices? First, we believe the Holy Spirit is always speaking, even in the noisiest places. Second, we stop and with great sincerity, ask the Holy Spirit to make his voice very clear to us. Third and very important, when we do hear and know the Holy Spirit’s voice – we thank Him and follow what he has said in obedience. The more we seek to hear, the more we will know His voice. The more we hear His voice, the more we obey. The more we obey, the less stress we have in the everyday matters of life. Today. Listen. His voice calls out!

What do I need to hear from the Holy Spirit *TODAY* and how will I position myself to listen? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 21:40

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its flavor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by people. You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand, and it give light to all in the house. If the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13-16, NET)

Healing, Spice and Everything Light

As followers of Jesus Christ, we know without doubt or reservation who he is to us and what he does in our lives. We know that Jesus is the healer and strengthener of our lives. He brings the vitality we need physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally – Jesus fills us up with himself! Jesus is our joy giver. Our relationship with Jesus brings the deep contentment to our hearts when happiness has long worn off. Jesus is the light – enabling us to live with laser-like clarity that removes the guess work of knowing how to respond in every situation and circumstance we face. The bottom line truth – Jesus is the transforming impact upon our lives. He is everything we will ever need! Jesus is our all-in-all!

With that being said, Matthew reminds us of what Jesus said we are to be to a world that has lost its way – ‘Healing, spice and everything light.’ Do what? Yes, Jesus gave us the command to be “*salt and light*” in this lost, broken world. When we stop long enough to cast our eyes upon those around us we see broken hearts, shattered dreams, destroyed virtues and the decaying foundations of family and morality. A world out of order and desperately in need of the compass of truth.

Everything Jesus is to us, he says we are flavor this world with. We are to cast His light upon this world’s darkness, so those groping their way through life, can see the great Light of Jesus. We are to be Jesus’ vessels of contentment and truth that he uses to bring people to him that they may find true healing through salvation. Jesus said that everything this dark world needs to find their way to a personal relationship with God is already present in us. We are His agents of healing, spice and everything light to those around us, no matter their sin or chosen way of life. Awaken to the call to be salt and light to a world needing Jesus, the Savior, Joy Giver, the Way, the Life and the Truth.

Who has the Holy Spirit shown to me *TODAY* that I need to be an agent of healing, spice and light to? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

***TODAY* My Commitment to Him IS:**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 22:40

“Do not accumulate for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But accumulate for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. For where you treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21, NET)

Treasures of the Heart

There are people who spend a life-time treasure hunting and many times lose their lives trying to protect the treasures they find. Treasures are the accumulation of wealth, valued possessions or even people we put great value on. We invest in treasures, we build our treasures and spend much energy to keep them glittering and shiny.

Jesus said that we are not to spend our lives investing in the accumulation and holding onto these earthly treasures. He teaches us why. *“Moth, rust and thieves destroy, invade and take away these treasures.”* The sad fact is this, the heart that has chased, clung to and loved these treasures in an instant suffers the tragic reality that these treasures gave them a false sense of security and happiness. Jesus then gave us the most important reason for not pursuing these earthly treasures – our passion or loyalty that easily steers us away from the True Treasure. God our heavenly Father, his love for us and our relationship with him is the truest treasure of all! (Matthew 6:24). We cannot serve or cling to both. Jesus said we will choose one or the other, but not both.

When we pursue God our Father, we accumulate heavenly treasures that never perish. Treasures like the fruit of the Spirit, serving others so as to bring them to the love of Jesus Christ. When we pursue God our heavenly Father we discover his rich blessings he pours upon our lives daily. These blessings never fade away – they are eternal blessings, the very best from God himself!

Jesus taught us that these are the true riches that our hearts are to be passionate for. We must ask ourselves what our hearts are racing after. Are they the treasures of this world that are fading away? Or, is our heart pursuing the unfading glory of God our heavenly Father? Our hearts can only be strong when we pursue the True Treasure – God our heavenly Father. Anything or anyone else is a fading imitation with no eternal value whatsoever. Today, we must choose for God to be the treasure of our heart.

What has the Holy Spirit said to me TODAY about wrong treasures of my heart? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 23:40

“But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” (Galatians 5:16, ESV)

Controlling My Appetite

We have all heard the expression, “He sure has a healthy appetite!” But the reality of this statement is that most of us battle our appetite every day. This is especially true when we are trying to cut back on our food consumption only to see certain foods that revs up the appetite. The battle begins to control our appetite. What is a person to do? We can go online or to the nearest pharmacy to see what the most recent fad is today. Or, we can just bear down with some good old fashioned grit.

In the passage we read above, Paul is not just talking about the stomach here. He is speaking to the flesh and its powerful appetite. This is the appetite we really fight every day. Reading further down in Galatians 5, Paul gives us a list of the great appetites of the flesh. John speaks to this fleshly appetite when he says in 1 John 2:15, *“For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions – is not from the Father but is from the world.”* Let’s face it, this is many times hard to overcome, or to resist and overcome. But we must! But how?

We ask the Holy Spirit to empower Psalm 119:37 to become our daily battle cry which says, *“Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things and give me life in your ways.”* This is one of the ways we walk in the Spirit, therefore, not gratifying the desires of the flesh as Paul teaches. The Holy Spirit is all-powerful and very capable of empowering and enabling us to control our appetites. He knows better than we the dangers of the fleshly appetites and how they will destroy our lives if left uncontrolled. The Holy Spirit knows that fleshly appetites, if not kept in check, will thwart our passion to faithful obedience to God our heavenly Father. He also knows they will strip away the spiritual sensitivity we need to discern right from wrong – making good decisions compared to poor decisions.

To walk with the Spirit means to agree with him in all things. We agree with His leading, removing and convictions. We agree that by walking with Him we will be able to control all of our fleshly appetites and so honoring our Lord in the way we live. We do not need a pill. We do not need good old fashioned grit. We need to yield to the filling presence of the Holy Spirit and walk with him. We must choose to do so today – it is the only way to control our appetites.

What appetite is the Holy Spirit showing to me TODAY needs better control over? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 24:40

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.’” (Daniel 3:16-18, ESV)

Stand!

In revisiting this powerful story of faith and courage, we remember this story being taught to us in Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. It is a story we have revisited many times as adults, being reminded of the powerful truths of faith in God. It is a story of when the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, demanded all his kingdom to bow down to his image and worship him. A time when three young Hebrews made the choice to stand and not bow down to the value system of the pagan Babylonian culture. They decided not to do what everyone else was doing, bowing down to the Babylonian cultural ideals and ways. Three Hebrews willing to take the risk to go against the grain of culture by making their allegiance to God whom they followed. It is truly a story of faith, courage, honor and a powerful testament to ultimate faithfulness to God, even if it cost them their lives.

What then happened we already know – God came through in such a way showing he was greater than Nebuchadnezzar and proved his faithfulness to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Wow! What a story! Now we must immediately ask ourselves – does this story shine through us? Is it a story of courage and faith that can be declared of each of us as followers of Jesus Christ? We live in the same culture, not a Babylonian culture, but an American culture that has the same mindset – bow to our ways, our approval, our definition of morality and truth. A culture that says embrace us and be your own person. Bow to our life of pride and arrogance – be like us!

Let’s make this personal. “Are we bowing?” Am I bowing to the pressure and threats of a pagan society not interested in Jesus Christ who is my Lord?” Or, am I standing as did these three young Hebrews? Who are we desiring to look like – Jesus or our world?

Today, we will be tempted, tested, taunted and told to bow down in submission to many ways and things God our Father has told us not to. We must remember the Word of God in Exodus 6 and Matthew 22:37, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*” The Word of God is to be set in our hearts (Deuteronomy 6:6-9) so that today we choose with faith and courage to STAND!

What area(s) of life has the Holy Spirit shown to me *TODAY* that I have bowed to the world’s cultural standard? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

***TODAY* My Commitment to Him to regain lost ground IS:**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 25:40

“LORD, who may be a guest in your home? Who may live on your holy hill?

Who is allowed to ascend the mountain of the LORD?

Who may go up to his holy dwelling place?” (Psalm 15:1; 24:3, NET)

Holy Access

We live in a world of usernames, passwords and access codes. When we open our accounts, whether financial, Google, Facebook, Tweeter and many other accounts we use each day, our username, password or access code is required. There are security questions we have to give proper answers to, especially if we forget our username, password or what our code is. When we are unable to access our accounts, our lives come to a grinding halt until we either remember, look it up or are given the necessary information to open those accounts. One of the realities we face is that there are some accounts we do not access enough, therefore, we forget our username, password or code for that account.

David asks four questions, two in Psalm 15 and two in Psalm 24. What we find David asking is how do we get access into the holy presence of Almighty God? Undoubtedly, David asked God these questions because what we read in Psalm 15:2-5 and Psalm 24:4 is the divine response for holy access. It would do well to read them throughout the day. These are the code of ethics – a lifestyle lived that pleases God. This way of life unlocks God’s holy presence for us to enjoy the benefits of our personal relationship with him. This also means we have access into His presence anytime, anywhere and in every situation of life.

We need to understand this so we can wrap our minds around what God said to David and to us concerning this holy access into his presence. We must realize that for us to enjoy a personal relationship with God we have to have the proper username. Jesus Christ is the only proper username and redeemed is our password. The security question that we must give the answer to is, “Does the Holy Spirit bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”

There is holy access into God’s presence. When we come in the name of Jesus as the redeemed who are sealed by the Holy Spirit, we will always find holy access. This is a username and password we will never forget! What a privilege! What freedom! Today, we must choose to frequent our eternal account that grants amazing access to sweet fellowship with God. His holy access will change and transform us to live out the responses God gave to David’s questions. In Jesus, holy access is granted!

TODAY recount the moment you gave your heart to Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you fine tune that moment? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 26:40

*“What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good?
Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.
Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.”* (Psalm 34:12-14, ESV)

Embracing the Day and Loving Life

In our reading today, David asks his readers two questions that most, if not all of us would answer with certain affirmation. Do I really want to live? No brainer – “YES!” Would I love to experience a quality of life that includes true happiness? Again – “YES!” Where do we go to sign up? The answer is not complex but yet astounding. Don’t speak evil words and don’t use deceitful speech! Turn from evil which does not promote purity, holiness and goodness! Make your determination to strive for peace and to tell everyone where it comes from!

Do you notice that David is speaking about a quality of life here? A life that even when we are weak; when things are not going our way; and even when there is a type of uncertainty about today’s end – we can still embrace with a strong love to live it in the full!

You mean happiness and quality are not dependent upon how much we accomplish or have? The answer – yes! You mean we can experience a life of joyfulness even in days filled with struggles, difficulty and seemingly insurmountable challenges? Yes we can!

Being able to embrace the day and love life has everything to do with the pursuit of God our heavenly Father. It is spending time hearing what He has to say about what brings true quality to our lives. It means as the psalmist said, *“This is the day the LORD has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it”* (Psalm 118:24).

Our tendency is to complain about circumstances. To speak evil or have a negative speech about how life is not going well for us. We also have the tendency to give in to the pressure to fit in, in hopes of success and happiness. None of this pleases God. None of this adds any quality to our day. Really, it makes the day harder. Why? Well, we have forgotten whose day it is. It is the Lord’s and he can be trusted to fulfill his promises and the promise of peace. Today, a question and its response rings loudly before us. In light of Psalm 34:12-14, we must choose to embrace the day and love life.

What has the Holy Spirit said to me TODAY about embracing and loving life? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 27:40

“I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. Through these things he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire.” (2 Peter 1:3-4, NET)

Fitted for Excellence

We are a people who desire properly fitting clothing. We want tools and equipment to be fit for the tasks that are at hand because we know the right tools means work done correctly. We are always looking for the right stuff – we want to be fitted to make a difference. The desire is to be on top of our game in everything we do.

When we entered into a personal relationship with God our Father through Jesus Christ our Lord, Peter said we have been fitted for excellence. It is a divine fitting of a unique design guaranteed never to be unfashionable or underachieving in its function. Our old garments were stripped away making way for our new garments of righteousness given to us by Jesus Christ. The old garments do not fit anymore and Peter reminded us they are garments corrupted or stained with unfitting ways of the world (Ephesians 4:17-24).

We have been fitted with the divine nature that come with the guaranteed promise of excellence! Not failure but success! Not incompetence but excellence! These are not hand-me-downs, these are garments fitted by the Master for excellence and godliness.

We do not win our society to Christ by fashioning ourselves to look like they do. We win our society by being transformed through the power of the Holy Spirit into Christ-likeness. We win our world looking like Christ not by looking like the world.

We must look carefully to make what Peter says here applicable to our lives. First, we must ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in our response to this question. “Am I attempting to fit myself with any garments of the world? The reason we need the Holy Spirit help here is that he fully knows what our fashion statement is to be – Christlikeness! He will help us take off what needs to be taken off and put on what he knows we need to put on (Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 4:30-32). We can know this for sure, the Holy Spirit will make sure we are fitted for excellence (2 Peter 1:5-8).

What areas of my life has the Holy Spirit revealed to me *TODAY* that I have not fitted for excellence? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

***TODAY* My Commitment to Him IS:**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 28:40

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy, think about these things.”

(Philippians 4:8, NET)

Thinking Excellence

We are a multi-generational people who spend much of our time filling our minds with input. The input to be as knowledgeable as we can in those areas that interest us the most. We for the most part have heard the word ‘whatever’ on many occasions and in many different circumstances. The word basically means “anything and everything.” For us as followers of Jesus Christ, we know there are many things that are not advantageous to set our minds and hearts on. We should never allow ourselves to get into the mindset that everything and anything is alright to pursue.

Paul does use ‘whatever’ when he explains our quest for everything and anything excellent or praiseworthy. These things we are to make a priority for input for our minds and hearts, for these things honor God. There is a truth in this passage we need to understand – we choose the input! We have a choice. The choice of excellence for living on a higher plain with Christ. Or, we can choose to engage a worldly mindset that breaks the continuity of peace in our lives. Choosing anything or everything no matter the consequences will create havoc upon our lives. Paul says whatever is excellent and praiseworthy that we are to think upon. He tells us in verse 9 that what follows thinking on these things is doing these things. Practicing these things that are excellent and praiseworthy brings the blessing of God.

Excellence means we rise out of where we are to go to a higher level in our relationships, family, work and in following Christ. Thinking on the higher, more worthy things always leads us to a higher level of spirituality and peace. Today, think excellence! Tomorrow, think excellence! Every day we are to make the practice to think excellence! And the God of peace will be with us!

**What did the Holy Spirit say to me *TODAY* concerning my reluctance to go to a higher level of excellence?
(Hebrews 3:7-8):**

***TODAY* My Commitment to Him IS:**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 29:40

“I will listen to what God the LORD says, For he will make peace with his people, his faithful followers. Yet they must not return to their foolish ways.” (Psalm 85:8, NET; See Also Psalm 19:7-14)

Listening with the Intent to Obey

To experience revival or renewal is to be at peace with God. He is the one who makes peace when we yield and obey the Holy Spirit’s voice. When we lose sight of what pleases God, we are no longer at peace with God. Why? Because fellowship has been broken by our acting foolishly or in a prideful way. Without peace, our burdens become heavy to unbearable. The reason being, we are trying to live in our own strength, believing our way is the right way. When we live like this, we have broken away from peace. The peace of God that strengthens us with understanding of his power, faithfulness and ability. Without peace our life becomes a continual feast of frustration and uneasiness. Simply put, without peace our life has no rhythm. No rhythm of energy, trust, faith, work, prayer, worship, passion – NO RHYTHM AT ALL!

So what will bring peace’s rhythm back to our lives? Obedience to the Word of God. That continuing habit of the reading of, meditating upon and following the Word of God. The psalmist declared in Psalm 119:92-93 that which needs to become our declaration as well. *“If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life”* (ESV). Faithful followers are faithful in the Word of God. Being faithful followers in the Word of God makes for peace.

We cannot afford to break away – to disengage from the Word of God. If we do – we have broken away from peace. When we have broken away from peace, we become a people in desperate need of revival – an awakening to fresh obedience to the Word of God.

Today, every day, we must choose to read and listen to the Word of God with the intent to obey. To follow the way of truth, to live lives of purity and holiness. As God’s Word speaks to us, we become clear of how we are to forgive, give grace, show mercy and be faithful in righteousness. We can and we must choose right now that we *will listen to what God the LORD says*. If we do, *God will bring peace to his faithful followers*.

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to me about my desire to listen and my will to obey TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 30:40

“Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.” (Psalm 86:11, ESV)

The Teachable Path of Life

Our yearning for purposeful productivity is a good and honorable thing. God created in us the desire to be productive in our work. Like many things, there can be a down side to this yearning. It is a two-fold down side. One side is possessing all knowledge and know how, then simply do nothing with it. Sounds crazy, but it happens quite a bit. When we do this, we are not being true nor obedient to that which will help embrace the best in life. These become lost opportunities, we could have seized in excellence that can never be reclaimed!

The other downside is unceasing activity without knowing the why, what or where all this activity is taking us. Life becomes a lot of wasted energy producing frustration and disappointment. In the end, we scratch our heads with a deep sigh because we have realized we have done so much to go absolutely nowhere. The truth is, knowledge without obedience is wasted opportunity that could have gone somewhere. Activity without knowledge is wasted energy going nowhere. This can be called the unteachable path of life.

These is a solution. A solution found in David’s request and commitment to God. What we find in this one verse is the ‘Teachable Path of Life.’ It is a life filled with embraced opportunities and fulfilling accomplishments. Psalm 86:11 brings focused perspective to our yearning for success and fulfillment.

First, David requests from God to be taught how to truly live. If there is anyone who knows how to live, it is God. David knew God had a better way. He knew God brings to life the compelling wisdom to make life full and meaningful. A life that goes beyond existing day by day. There is a reason David wanted to know from God how to live life – it was to obey what God taught him. But David did not stop there. He then made another request from God – one he found God delights in. *“Make me wholeheartedly committed to you”* (Psalm 86:11b, NET). Not the plan he would commit to, but God he would be wholeheartedly committed to. It is never the plan before God, it is God before the plan. The plan for life is not what brings life. God is who brings life and Jesus taught recorded in John 10:10, *“to the full.”*

The personal application for us is this – we must choose to be teachable and committed to obey. When we choose the teachable path of life, we will find ourselves rising in excellence in what we do. Rising in excellence is the energy that fulfills and never exhausts. Today, we must choose the teachable path of life.

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me TODAY about being teachable? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 31:40

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, ESV)

Confidently Competent

We see it in people’s eyes. We see it in the way people carry themselves. We hear it in their voice – ‘I can’t’ because I have no confidence. We may even admit this is me being described. But according to our reading, we really cannot say those words ‘I can’t.’ The reason becomes clear. We are taught that as long as we position ourselves under the instruction of God’s Word, we become confidently able to do and be all that God desires. As Proverbs 1:33 teaches, *“but whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster.”* Our confidence comes from reading, listening and then doing what we have heard from the Word of God. The Word of God gives husbands and wives confidence to be to each other what the other needs in them. It gives parents confidence to lead their children in the matters of life and growth. It gives the employer confidence to make the best choices for their employees and it gives employees confidence to be the best at what they do. For the teenager and single adult, the Word of God gives them the confidence to say ‘yes’ to a pleasing life to God. The Word of God will give amazing confidence to the local church body to impact their community for Christ no matter what the tide of public opinion may be.

The Word of God eliminates all the excuses of saying ‘I can’t!’ It opens doors to become far more than we ever thought we could be! The Word of God transforms our minds to be laser-like in our focus. It empowers the heart with incredible passion to live for Christ.

The Word of God is the undergirding power that enables us to live confident, no matter what the tides of our world are doing. A confidence that draws an unstable and disorderly world to take a second look as to why we are able to be so confidently competent in the way we live. We must learn to embrace the *“full’ Word of God that is able to make us competent, equipped people for every good work.”*

How has the Holy Spirit spoken to me TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 32:40

“The highway of the upright is to turn away from evil; the one who guards his way safeguards his life. Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:17-18, NET)

Watch Out! You May Be Falling!

We have signs that warn us of impending danger. Signs that read boldly “WATCH YOUR STEP – FALL HAZARD!” The urging to watch, look, listen and heed surround us daily. Everywhere we go, everything we do and every plan we make are all met with these warnings. The Bible says that if we ignore these warnings, we are on the sure path of destruction. No matter who we are, what skill we may possess or what experience in life we have had – LISTEN! ARE WE LISTENING? – We are always in the ‘FALL ZONE!’ If we choose to believe otherwise, the Bible says we are living a life of arrogance and pride.

We are always susceptible to sinful living. Always having to guard and safeguard where we go, do and say! To do otherwise, is foolish pride. We always have to guard our morals, values, integrity, focus and thoughts. To think we can relax and still be OK is to have a haughty spirit about ourselves. When we are prideful, arrogant, haughty and careless, we are already falling and if we do not catch hold of something solid, the destruction will be tragic and loud!

How do we avoid this fall? Do what Psalm 16:17 teaches, *“The highway of the upright is to turn from evil. The one who guards his way safeguards his life.”* We must LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY HERE. WE NEED TO REALLY GET THIS. We make the diligent and disciplined choice every day to turn away from every form of sin and guard our way. We can do this. The Bible teaches that we must and the Holy Spirit speaks to our heart that we can! Therefore, there is no excuse or reason for our lives to be dismantled, destroyed or the life zapped out from us.

Today, we must commit ourselves to yield to God our Father. Cry out to the Holy Spirit to give us laser-like clarity to the dangers around us. When we yield, watch, listen and heed the warnings – we are avoiding the fruit of pride which is destruction. So, “watch out!” Make sure you are not falling!

What has the Holy Spirit said to me TODAY about my watchfulness? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 33:40

“But above all things pursue his kingdom and righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. So then, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Today has enough trouble of its own.”
(Matthew 6:33-34, NET)

First Thing First!

Driven! That is what we are. We are a driven people by the pursuit for the security of plenty tomorrow. Having enough to pay our bills and debts. To provide for family needs and excursions. Yes, we are driven to make sure what is done today, will be there tomorrow. Or, at least the fruit of what was done yesterday. Driven by three haunting words. Yesterday, today and tomorrow. Pushing, striving, protecting, rising, stretching and it just seems never ending. And if we are not careful with the way we approach life, every day becomes the vicious cycle of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Anxiety escalates and the drive becomes overwhelming.

Jesus knew this truth about us when he was teaching on the mount. He knew then and he knows now, how easy it is for us to get caught up in this cycle. So, Jesus gave us the formula for success or our get out of jail free card when we are drawn to be so driven about life.

First, Jesus never said the habits of providing for our family’s needs or futures was wrong. Jesus never condemned being fruitful with the work we do each day. He never did. But here is what Jesus did say. He said that these things should never be the priority. The ‘these things’ Jesus called them, should never draw us away from what really matters most – seeking God, his kingdom and his righteousness. Instead of being driven people, Jesus said we are to be a people in pursuit of God. Seeking God to grow in our relationship with him. Getting to know God in a deeper way so we can learn to trust him. Then we will begin to hear His heart of touching lost, broken and wayward people by being “*salt and light*.” This will then grow into the pursuit of being a holy demonstration of God’s righteousness in us.

Finally Jesus teaches that when God becomes our priority of pursuit, all ‘these things’ will be given to us by our heavenly Father. God removes the stress and anxiety and replaces it with everything we will ever need, which we are able to enjoy and use with praise from a grateful heart. Jesus teaches us that tomorrow will get here soon enough – but it is taken care of if we make our priority the pursuit of God, his kingdom and his righteousness. So, today, ‘FIRST THING FIRST.’

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me about my pursuits and worries TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 34:40

“The person who does not love does not know God, because God is love. By this the love of God is revealed in us, that God has sent his one and only Son into the world so that we may live through him. In this is love; not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, if God so loved us, then we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God resides in us, and his love is perfected in us.”
(1 John 4:8-12, NET)

Love Says It All!

One of the hardest things for us as followers of Jesus Christ is to wrap our minds and hearts around what John teaches. God’s character, his presence and his amazing love is seen the clearest when we love one another. If we will remember, this is not a casual type of love. It is a love given to others in the very same way Jesus Christ gave us love (John 13:34-35). God is revealed in us when we love the unlovable, show mercy and give grace to others in the strength of love.

Why then does love reveal God more clearly than anything else? Because God’s love gave us Jesus Christ his Son. God’s love was clearly proved through Jesus’ dying for and forgiving us of our sins. God’s love was clearly seen when Jesus took on himself our shame and bearing for us our judgment. All so we could become the righteousness of God in Him (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21). The more we understand the love of God, the more we will love one another! It breaks God’s heart to say that we love him, then not be willing to love one another. Here is the truth, if we want God to be seen in us, if we want God to be seen in our worship services and if we want God to be seen in our homes – we first have to love one another. To do otherwise is sin, because it gives a distorted view of God and his love.

God loves us even when we are unlovable, when we sin and make a mess of things. If this is true and it is, then as John so fittingly wrote, *“We ought to love one another.”* Everywhere we go, in everything we do and to everyone we meet. Love says it all about who God is, who His Son Jesus is and who we are in him! *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him”* (John 3:16-17). LOVE SAYS IT ALL!

Does my life say it all about God’s love? What is the Holy Spirit saying to me TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 35:40

“but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15, ESV)

The Testimony of Hope

Young children have this one word that moves us to tears and frustration – “Why?” It’s difficult sometimes to give a proper response so we resolve to give our one word that moves them to tears and frustration – “Because!” In this brief verse Peter presents a challenge to us. He says, *“In your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks us why (emphasis added), we have the hope that is in us.”*

When we regard Christ to be holy, our lives transform into the holy hope of his return. Our lives become so different in the way we live. We think differently. We don’t panic, but stay steady when everything seems to be crumbling around us. Then someone will come like a little child asking the question – “Why?” When they do, we will have the perfect response – “Because my life has been entrusted to Jesus my Savior and Lord.”

It is here we make our testimony of what Christ has done and is doing in our life. It is our testimony of hope. Hope that is established in the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus our Lord. Hope that sets our life on a course to be holy like He is holy. A hope that brings the powerful peace that comes from knowing Jesus will return to take us home to be with him.

Today we must commit ourselves to regard our lives as holy as our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ is holy. We must do so in hopes that someone will come to us and ask that marvelous question – “Why?” It is there our response will be our testimony of hope.

Do I have a life that peeks the interest of others to ask the question ‘Why?’ What has the Holy Spirit revealed to me TODAY? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 36:40

“For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.” (Galatians 6:8, ESV)

It's All in the DNA!

Remember the commercial where the question is asked, “What’s in your wallet?” There is a similar question that can be asked of us that goes like this, “What’s in your seed pouch?” We know this all too well, that whatever seed we have in our pouch, when it is sown, the plant and its fruit will be of the nature of the seed planted. Simply put, “The fruit is what the nature of the seed is.” The DNA of the two are one in the same. This is so simple that we may be asking why even bother repeating what is so evident. Well, Paul did and for a very good reason. This is not just an agricultural fact, it is an everyday we live, everything we do and everything we say fact! It is what it is and the fruit will be just like the seed sown. It cannot be changed nor altered. Whatever we sow, Paul said, we will reap! Then he reminds us that God designed it exactly to be this way. He built this truth into the DNA of life and there is absolutely nothing we can do to change it!

But this is what Paul is saying we can do – we can choose the harvest we want by planting the same type seed. We can choose a seed with a corrupt DNA or we can choose seed with the Holy Spirit’s DNA. It is our choice. If we want to have a friend, be a friend. Want to know love, love. Want to experience the presence of God, be present with God. Want to be recognized as a person of quality, do and say everything as you would do it unto the Lord. Want to be blessed, be a blessing. Want to gather a good harvest, plant a good seed. Want to know grace and mercy, give grace and mercy to others. Want to get something out of the songs and sermon on Sunday mornings, prepare the mind and heart to receive the seed of truth. It is what it is! This truth, this life principle cannot be changed. So the question we must again embrace – “What’s in your seed pouch?” And remember as you are going about planting your seed – ‘It is what it is.’

What DNA is showing up in the fruit I bear? What has the Holy Spirit revealed to me *TODAY*? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

***TODAY* My Commitment to Him IS:**

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 37:40

“A person’s pride will bring him low, but one who has a lowly spirit will gain honor.” (Proverbs 29:23, NET)
“But whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
(Matthew 20:26-28, ESV)

Getting On Top the Right Way

What is the follower of Jesus Christ to do or respond to a society driven by the ‘dog eat dog’ mentality? A society that has been taught the only way to succeed and get to the top is to knock down as many people as one can along the way. It is brutal and it’s difficult to swim against this strong current every day. For us, right when we sense we are about to give in to the feeling to turn and go with the current of public opinion, Jesus comes along to tell us that *“whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave.”*

This just does not seem fair! We may plead our case saying “This is not right!” We read this and think, “I will never get anywhere in this world if I have to be a servant or a slave!” Here, Jesus definition of honor and success is so different from ours. Jesus’ life was an example of this. Jesus broke the cultural boundaries to give the true Living Water to the Samaritan woman at well and then spent extra days in a Samaritan village teaching them what it means to follow him. He spent time eating with and teaching the publicans and sinners. Our Lord washed the feet of his disciples and said happy are you if you follow my lead in being a servant and a slave. Jesus’ life as a servant and a slave took him straight to Calvary where he died as a sinner who knew no sin. But then something remarkable happened, he conquered death and the grave as the resurrected Lord and now is highly exalted by God! This means Jesus was highly honored by God his Father! God put Jesus next to himself as the glorified Son of God!

Believe it or not, when we obey Christ by being servants and slaves, God will put us wherever he desires. When God does that, we are in the greatest place of honor known on this earth! It is getting to the top the right way! The path to greatness and being first, is the way of a servant and slave. Today, we may need to turn our complaints of not being where we think we ought to be, into praises unto our heavenly Father for placing us in the place he desires for us to be – This is the place of honor and greatness. It is getting to the top the right way!

What did the Holy Spirit say to me TODAY (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 38:40

“As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects the man. Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, and never satisfied are the eyes of man.” (Proverbs 27:19-20, ESV)

“Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.” (Psalm 119:37, ESV)

Lord, Correct My Vision!

We start a project, only to see another unfinished project nearby. We go to that project and along the way, we discover another unfinished project which draws us away from the unfinished project we have started. The day is over and the first project we started remains unfinished along with all of the other unfinished projects! A day of distractions left us with not finishing anything we started! We walk away unfulfilled and discouraged.

The fact about all of this, we cannot help it. We are attracted or distracted by the smells, glitter, shine, feel and sounds of everything around us. We fight staying focused to stay on the straight path, so we don't end up on the paths of distraction.

The writer of Proverbs knew this most likely because he had been there and done that as well. It seems so many times that we just are never satisfied. What we have is never enough or just doesn't work for us like we thought. Life is no fun when we are living this pattern of distraction or fatal attraction. How do we focus? How do we maintain our walk on the straight path? We commit ourselves every day to cry out to the Holy Spirit what the psalmist cried out, *“Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.”*

God's ways are worthwhile ways! God's ways have eternal value and never fade away or lose their value. God's ways always are fulfilling and productive! God's ways ALWAYS SATISFIES! Not our way, not what we think, not our opinion – GOD'S WAY IS THE LIFE-GIVING, LIFE-REWARDING WAY! Today, Yes again, we must choose to cry out every day to God Psalm 119:37. God will then correct our vision with strong and clear focus on all the worthy things! Cry out to God and say, “Lord, Correct My Vision!”

What has the Holy Spirit said to me TODAY about my vision? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

Day 39:40

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”
(Romans 12:1-2, ESV)

“Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:12-14, ESV)

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”
(Colossians 3:1-4, ESV)

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions – is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” (1 John 2:14-16, ESV)

Renewed!

Something has been happening to us in our prayer journey for spiritual awakening. Our desires are changing. Our desire for Christ is growing while they are diminishing for the fleshly, worldly things! Our desire for prayer has increased and our hunger for the Word of God has brought God’s will sharper into focus in our hearts.

We are realizing how the things of the world are empty, temporary and fading away. Our heart now treasures time with God our Father above all other activities, things and people. These days we have had with God our Father, have renewed us. They have refreshed us. The Holy Spirit has revitalized us with a renewed energy to finish strong the race we started with Jesus Christ.

We realize we are growing spiritually and there is a deeper joy than before. Each new day has become the potential for excellence and the opportunity to impact a person’s life for eternity.

Praise be to our God, who is reviving us, renewing our strength and restoring our spirits! Celebrate the goodness of God throughout this day! Give thanks unto the Lord, our God with a grateful heart and bless His name!

What has the Holy Spirit been saying to me *THESE PAST DAYS* of this prayer journey? (Hebrews 3:7-8):

TODAY My Commitment to Him IS:

40 Days of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening
Day 40:40

“And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.” (Colossians 1:18-19, ESV)

“To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery which is Christ in you the hope of glory.” (Colossians 1:27, ESV)

Christ’s Story – Christ in Us the Hope of Glory!

Here we are, day 40 of our 40 day journey of prayer for spiritual awakening. This has been a challenging, but a life changing journey. These 40 days, believe it or not, the Holy Spirit has cleared the window of our life. The reason He has done this is so the world may see Jesus in us! You see Jesus is the Head of the body, his church. Jesus is the beginning or author of life. Jesus deserves all praise and deserves our commitment to follow him. More than anything else, this world needs Jesus to save, cleanse, empower and give them a hope of eternal life in heaven. A mystery that needs to be revealed.

The Holy Spirit knows this, so he has been cleaning the window of our life these past 40 days, so that *“he can make known the riches of this mystery which is Christ in us the hope of glory.”* The Holy Spirit has been working in us through his power to transform us into a holy people. Everything we have learned, been challenged with, corrected and cleansed of, has been to bring an awakening to the spiritual things of God!

Look back and see where the Holy Spirit has taken you from, to where you are now. Celebrate the Holy Spirit’s work and commit to him a life of excellence until you cross the finish line of your faith walk here on this earth.

You see we have been awakened to the truth – the truth that our life is to be Christ’s story in us. Jesus is the hope of glory! The story is not over until we draw our last breath or if Jesus should come before then. These 40 days mark a place in our journey that is not over. From here we must choose to LIVE CHRIST’S STORY – CHRIST IN US THE HOPE OF GLORY!