

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*



THEALLIANCE

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## INTRO

Dear Alliance family,

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

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

Keep the faith!



Terry D. Smith  
Vice President for Church Ministries



THE ALLIANCE

40 DAYS  
OF *prayer*

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## WEEK 1

### REAWAKENING TO THE GLORY OF CHRIST

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

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

## THE ETERNITY OF CHRIST

MICAH 5:2

This is the story of God's love. A story in which the Heavenly Father stepped down into the limits of time, where a sweet, little visitor from heaven approached Bethlehem, a little town surrounded by crumbling walls.

The visitor was the baby in whom the greatness and glory of the Creator became a mere human. Throughout His life, the love of the Father took this visitor through the difficult trials of humanity. He experienced much pain, loneliness, and rejection. He was despised and cast out. But He was loved. Even more than that, *He was love*.

This visitor is also the Great Judge. He walked to the end of the road with the heavy weight of our guilt on His shoulders, ready to be humiliated, abandoned, slapped in the face, and rejected on a cross for our sake.

This humiliated visitor, resurrected and exalted, later regained control of all things, and as a tender shepherd, took care of His lambs and continues to do so. The greatness of His name leads us to the security of His eternal love that is safe and peaceful.

He came from eternity to humanity and back to eternity, making the great, if at all possible, greater still.

This is Jesus, our Lord. He is a great mystery—not fully understood, but believed and treasured by those who accept such a high-priced gift—unmerited, undeserved, and available only by grace through faith. He was brought by the Father to a decaying world that was and is in need of a touch from beyond time, from beyond humanity.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ask the Lord to help you delight in the unfathomable reality of the Incarnation.
2. Pray that He will lead you to be thankful and worshipful.
3. Ask Him to guide you into a life worthy of such love.

## THE DEITY OF CHRIST

## COLOSSIANS 2:9

I have noticed that most church traditions tend to lean toward an emphasis on either God's transcendence or His immanence. Like some of you, I have walked up the steps of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and the synagogue in Chorazin. The stairs there are purposefully steep and uneven to slow people down and cause them to consider the sacred space they are entering. But most Sundays, I walk into a church building without stairs, where you can grab a coffee and take it into the sanctuary and where most people are dressed casually and have come late.

In Colossians 2:8, Paul alludes to a heresy simmering in the church around the depreciation of Christ. In verse 9, he contrasts this heresy with a bold and vital truth, "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form . . ." While it is right and good to recognize Christ's immanence and accessibility, we are also to honor His transcendence and deity.

Make no mistake, He is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15); in Him all things were created (1:16); and in Him all things hold together (1:17). We follow not merely a good teacher from Galilee but the Head of the Church (1:18), the first to be resurrected (1:20), and the Reconciler of all things (1:20–22).

What a difference this makes in how we approach Him, our posture before Him, our attitude toward His Word, and our lives of worship lived for Him.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Picture yourself slowly climbing steep, uneven steps; meditate on entering the sacred space around Jesus.
2. Picture yourself bowing down before Him in all His majesty—or do it physically; be still and listen for at least five minutes.
3. Express your praise and worship of Him in all His deity.

» by Jen Ashby

## THE SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST

HEBREWS 4:15

For over thirty years, Jesus lived a sinless life before God and mankind so that we could one day stand clothed before Him in the righteousness of His Son. Our sinless Savior never entertained a thought, never uttered a word, and never carried out an act that emerged from an impure or selfish motive. Jesus always obeyed and honored His Father in heaven as well as His father and mother on earth. He never stole, lied, or coveted. He never uttered a single word out of pride or sinful anger. He never gossiped, slandered, or deceived His neighbor. In other words, Jesus Christ submitted to every commandment of God. He loved His Father with all His heart, soul, strength, and mind, and He fully loved His neighbor as Himself.

In living this life of sinlessness as our representative, Jesus faced the same temptations and difficulties we face so that He might know and sympathize with our weaknesses and failures. He walked in our shoes, entered into our affliction, and then did the unthinkable by dying in our place.

When we hunger and thirst to know our Lord in a deeper and more intimate way, it is essential for us to meditate on His glorious perfection. When we struggle with our own sin and failure, we must remember the sinless One who was obedient unto death in order to find true forgiveness, hope, and assurance in Him.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Spend a time treasuring Jesus, the sinless One, and praising God for the spiritual blessings you have in Christ.
2. Ask Jesus to release the power of His sinless, saving, and sanctifying life into your heart by the Spirit so that His very life can become your own.
3. Reflect on any weaknesses, temptations, or difficulties you may need to bring to Jesus today.

» by Tom Myers

## THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST

MATTHEW 17:1-8

Jesus led three of His disciples up a high mountain. There, He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. Such glory the Lord showed His disciples!

Jesus has led us as a family in the C&MA. For the past 140 years, He has shown His glory to the world through us. Countless lost souls have been rescued, and the Kingdom of God has expanded to the ends of the earth through our obedience to His call.

Peter, having seen the Lord's glory said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here" (Matt. 17:1), expressing his desire to stay and remain in the status quo. In parallel, the C&MA, having experienced His glory for so long, might now be tempted to say, "Lord, we have had effective ministry, produced excellent fruits, and thus we want to continue our work with the same strategies and methods that have proven successful."

However, our current reality is unique and challenging. COVID-19 has invaded the entire planet with merciless fury. Churches had already been feeling turbulence prior to the pandemic. Congregations are experiencing sharp declines in attendance. Youth and children are dissipating and the remaining members are aging by the day. These are frightening times!

These times demand that we get up and move boldly toward the world with a new paradigm. "Listen to Him!" (Matt. 17:5). Let's listen to Jesus for a new paradigm and follow His Spirit's guidance toward greater revival. Yes, His glory is near!



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that the Lord will let you see and experience greater revival in your time.
2. Ask Him to shower you with His Holy Spirit and anoint you with holy oil.
3. Pray that He will equip the C&MA with a new paradigm to rebuild and renew our churches.

## THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

ACTS 1:9-11

Have you ever caught yourself just ‘standing around?’ At times, standing around is purposeful. You might be waiting for the bus or train. Perhaps you’re waiting for the person in front of you to place their order so that you can place yours. These few examples alone should be enough for you to recognize that this kind of standing around is not in vain.

But what about when you find yourself standing around in an emotional, mental, or spiritual state of paralysis? Life is happening all around you, and though you are physically moving, you feel . . . stuck. Again, I ask you, have you ever caught yourself ‘standing around?’

Two angels ask the disciples why they are standing and looking up toward the sky. Isn’t it obvious? They are staring up toward their hope. Jesus is leaving again; yet this time, no one is running or hiding for their lives. Jesus ascends to heaven, and though I would imagine the disciples experience a bit of grief, they also have hope. This is an example of actively standing and waiting. Their eyes are transfixed on their King who is leaving; but this time, He is leaving in victory, not breathing out His final breath on the cross. Their beholding will not be in vain—Jesus will one day return in the same way they saw Him ascend.

Our standing and waiting need not get in the way of our active participation of Jesus’ will for this world. The disciples beheld and got to work. We are challenged to do the same.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that the Lord will reveal to you areas that you might be standing around and not trusting in the victory of Jesus Christ.
2. Are you lacking in beholding or in actively participating? Ask God to give you strength and wisdom to become an active participant.
3. What would change in your life if you truly believed He will return in the same way He ascended? Ask Jesus to grow your faith.

» by Omar Niebles

## THE COMING OF CHRIST IN GLORY

MATTHEW 24:30-31

The glorious return of Christ will be terrible and wonderful. His sign in the heavens will appear at the apex of tribulation on the earth followed by His visible return on the clouds. The glory of Christ the King will become evident to all peoples of the world without exception.

For too many, the vision of His coming will trigger the mournful recognition of a lost opportunity for salvation. But for the elect—that great crowd from every tribe, tongue, and nation who have hoped in Jesus (see Revelation 7:9)—it is a rescue unto eternal life.

Christ's wonderful salvation, made available for all peoples, will be beautifully displayed as he dispatches angels to gather to Himself believers from every direction the winds blow.

May the wonder of this dramatic scene-to-come draw us deeper in devotion to our Savior and King. May that devotion draw us deeper into our commitment to His purpose of preparing a people for Himself from every nation.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that your heart will be captivated anew by the glory of salvation.
2. Pray fervently for the thousands of people groups that are without believers or witnesses to Christ among them.
3. Pray that a great harvest will be reaped as workers are sent to all peoples.

» by Tim Crouch

## THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

## PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

The glorious, majestic One who was with the Father before the world existed emptied Himself so that He might rescue us from sin and restore us to God. As He labored in Gethsemane under the crushing weight of what He was about to endure on our behalf, He prayed for us. He asked that we would be one with each other, as He is one with the Father, so that the world might know that He is the Son of God. It is the commandment that He repeatedly gave us: *love one another*. The most evident way to display that love is by treating others as more important than ourselves.

Jesus didn't just tell us to do this, He lived His life as the very example of sacrificial love. He had every right to assert Himself and claim His rightful place, but He flipped conventional wisdom on its head by going low in order to be high.

We sing songs about wanting to see Jesus exalted and lifted high, and He loves and deserves the praises of our lips; but He is also glorified by the obedience of our lives. Let's go low by loving one another well so that we might lift Him high; then, the world might smell the sweet fragrance of Christ in us!



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and reveal places of pride and selfishness. Repent.
2. Ask the Father to grant you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the deep and intimate knowledge of Him so that you might catch a glimpse of His glorious majesty and brilliant beauty. It is as we gaze upon Him that He transfigures us into His image.
3. Thank Jesus for the freedom and privilege you have to speak His name with power and authority, the Name that is above every name!

» by Mary Petty

# 40 DAYS OF *prayer*

## WEEK 2

### REAWAKENING TO THE LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

This week, we will focus on various aspects of Christ's Incarnation—from birth to death and Resurrection. We will turn our eyes to focus on the person of Jesus in all of His glory and continuously pray for deeper understanding of who He is.

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

DAY

## THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

LUKE 2:1-20

The word “potential” finds its Latin roots in “being able” and “power.” It begins with what seems to be small and insignificant. Yet, when released, it causes a chain reaction exponentially altering all that it touches. An atom is minuscule; but when split, it has the potential to release enormous amounts of energy that can be terrifying; yet, that same power has the potential to light up a city for years.

Consider the potential riddled throughout Luke 2:1–20. Life-changing potential is gifted to a young, insignificant couple betrothed to one another. The nameless shepherds are caught up in a glorious acapella worship session led by angels. When the show is over, they band together, go to a tiny town, and find themselves in awe of a small new life with great potential.

Notice how the potential of Jesus’ entry extends in two directions—deep and wide. It goes wide as the shepherds experience Jesus. As good extroverts, they spread the news about “this child,” and all who heard were amazed. The deep-reaching impact of Jesus’ entry into the world is displayed in Mary’s classic introverted response as she deeply “treasures up all these things” and continues to “ponder them in her heart.”



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ponder God’s great potential in the person of Jesus. Recognize how His humble entry into your world has changed you and equipped you to bring light into a darkened world that so desperately needs to hear that He can forever redeem any soul who calls on His name.
2. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you see potential places where He is at work in those around you.
3. Ask the Lord to highlight areas in your life that you need to be convicted of and to bring comfort to areas that need His healing touch.

## THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

LUKE 4:1-13

As Jesus broke through the waters of baptism, the Spirit descended upon Him, prophetically remaining with and in Him. The Spirit would be His source of strength, power, discernment, and direction as He began His messianic ministry. There are two primary works for which the Spirit is given: to transform our character toward holiness and to become our source of power for life and ministry.

Following Jesus' baptism of the Spirit in the Jordan, He entered the arena of character building in the desert of temptation. It was after this trial of temptation that He began His ministry in the power of the Spirit. We follow a similar pattern—regenerated by the Holy Spirit, transformed in character, empowered for ministry, and surrendered in obedience to the commands of the Father for Kingdom service.

Jesus gives us access to the same power to overcome sin and temptation through surrender, obedience, and His Spirit's ongoing, indwelling presence.

- Holiness is our birthright.
- Jesus models the normal Christian life of Spirit-empowered life and ministry.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Ask God to reinforce the truth that you are filled with the same Holy Spirit presence and power that indwelt Jesus.
2. Ask that the Holy Spirit will reveal your sinfulness, redeem your character, and restore your righteousness in Christ.
3. Pray that you will allow the Spirit to lead, guide, and move you into deeper intimacy with Jesus and greater passion to join Him in His work.

» by Monty Wright

## THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST

LUKE 4:14-21

The Spirit of the Lord activated, appointed, and anointed Jesus for the ministry of the gospel. It is a ministry to proclaim and demonstrate the power of the Good News to the physically and spiritually poor; to the captive, brokenhearted, blind, and oppressed. Jesus, the Great Physician of the body and soul, faithfully teaches about the Kingdom—and with great authority, sets people free.

As followers of Christ, the Spirit of the Lord anoints us to proclaim and demonstrate the Good News. We cannot have one without the other, and neither one can precede the other.

Just before the outbreak of COVID-19, a new health center was launched in one of the most impoverished communities in San Jose, California. Its mission was not only to proclaim the Good News, but to demonstrate its power to heal the sick and set people free from the curse of poverty. Believers volunteered countless hours to fill out applications for rental relief funds, administer COVID tests, deliver boxes of food, and provide educational and tech support to families.

Thousands experienced God's love and mercy in tangible ways. More than 85 people surrendered their lives to Jesus and were baptized as they heard the message of Christ and experienced healing and deliverance for their souls. The Good News of Jesus is all-the-more good and powerful when it is preached both in word and deed.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that your life and ministry will be marked by the fullness, power, and anointing of the Holy Spirit.
2. Ask the Lord for more confidence to faithfully proclaim and demonstrate the gospel.
3. Pray that He will provide liberty, healing, and jubilee to the spiritually poor, captive, brokenhearted, blind, and oppressed.

## THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

LUKE 5:1-11

The crowd is pressing in on Jesus. They are desperate to be near Him and hear His words. Peter is content being busy around Jesus. He has his own urgent work to be done and tasks that consume his time and attention. He needs to wash out the (empty) nets. Then Jesus interrupts him.

Jesus wants to connect more deeply with this mob of listeners and forces Peter to redirect his attention to something else. Jesus climbs into Peter's boat, and now Peter must ferry this traveling teacher out into deeper water.

Then Jesus decides to give *him* fishing advice! Peter has just cleaned his nets; he has spent an exhaustive amount of time maintaining a system that produced nothing. Surely Jesus can see the bags under his tired eyes and the calluses on his hands from doing the same thing every morning. He even reminds Jesus how hard he has worked and how minuscule the results have been; but Peter obeys and trusts Jesus' words, throwing his clean nets back into the water.

And then suddenly, Peter has a great multitude of fish on his hands. His nets are breaking, and his boat is sinking. His old tools cannot keep up with this new thing Jesus is doing. He calls his friends over to try and help, but they all end up astonished. Now Peter is terrified. He even asks Jesus to leave. In that moment, Jesus' presence and power is overwhelming. It feels like too much. Jesus responds with comfort and a promise. For Peter and every disciple since, following Jesus is just the beginning of so much more.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Are you desperate to be closer to Jesus, or are you content merely being busy around Him? Pray that He will reveal the answer to you.
2. Ask that the Lord will reveal to you what you are simply maintaining without producing fruit.
3. Pray that God will open your eyes to what you need to leave behind so you can be ready for and obedient to Jesus' promise of more.

## THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST

LUKE 7:11-17

An outstanding feature of the earthly life of Jesus Christ was the miracles He performed. The one described in Luke 7:1–17 involved interrupting a funeral procession to raise a young man from the dead and “give him back to his mother.” I love the response of the people who witnessed this miracle: “They were all filled with awe and praised God . . . ‘God has come to help His people.’” Of course, this was just one of the many miracles of Jesus, who healed people of various diseases, released them from demonic control, turned water into wine, calmed the storm, multiplied food, and raised others from the dead.

And Jesus Christ is still a worker of miracles. He is daily intervening in people’s lives, overruling and overturning their circumstances. He is still miraculously at work to “help His people.” Does He still raise the dead? Well, I’ve heard three stories in recent years from credible witnesses where it seems He did.

He still heals the sick, defies the natural order of things, and multiplies resources to provide for His people. Hebrews 13:8 declares, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Obviously, Jesus doesn’t choose to miraculously intervene in every situation, but He still does miraculously intervene, and we still have the privilege to approach the throne boldly and ask in faith for Him to do so. Whatever you need Jesus to do today, be confident that He is still able.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that the size of your faith will be defined by the power of Jesus Christ.
2. Ask Jesus to help you to stop worrying and fretting over your difficult circumstances.
3. Take what you’re facing today to Jesus and trust Him for a miracle.

» by Terry Smith

## THE ATONING DEATH OF CHRIST

LUKE 23:32-34

Our text today (Luke 23:32–34) reminds us that Jesus died with criminals, yet He extended forgiveness to them. Imagine it—our Jesus was executed with other death row inmates! And in that setting, we see His care for the one who believed (Luke 23:43).

In that same setting, what did Jesus pray? *“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing”* (Luke 23:34). This was not a prayer for the criminals; it was a prayer for the soldiers (law enforcers) tasked with officiating His execution for the government!

Our Jesus understood His role. He became the atoning sacrifice for our sin. He did not shy away from this task. He became the divine sacrifice (in the old English, the word was “propitiation”) for human sin. The apostle John put it this way: *“He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world”* (1 John 2:2). His death paid the price for my sin!

This week, we remember Christ’s life and His death on the cross. Oh, that we thank Jesus for providing forgiveness for sin through His shed blood.



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. Pray that incarcerated men and women will see Jesus as their forgiver of their sins.
2. Pray that men and women in law enforcement and the military will see Jesus as their sustainer and encourager in hard times.
3. Ask the Lord to reveal one people group that you can pray for.

» by Patrick Blewett

## THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

LUKE 24:1-11

The crowning miracle of the Incarnation was the Resurrection of Jesus Christ—predicted by Jesus, but still unexpected. The Resurrection cements the authenticity of all of Jesus' other claims. He is Lord!

Oh, how we love these women who went to the tomb early that morning. We know that sorrow and disappointment bring fatigue. Yet, despite the heartbreaking hours at the foot of the cross, following the procession to the tomb, and investing their resources to gather the spices, they somehow still managed to get out the door before sunrise. This demonstrates their faithful love for Jesus.

Disappointment and sorrow can also send us searching for answers in all the wrong places. The angels' question is one for us: "Why are you looking to dead things to solve your problems or ease your pain or bring meaning to your life?"

And, finally, we all know that disappointment and sorrow often cause us to forget. The angels didn't tell the women anything new; they simply reminded them of what Jesus had already said. *Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life!*



### PRAYER POINTS:

1. To the disciples, the women's story sounded like nonsense. Pray Mark 9:24: "Help me overcome my unbelief" for children, family members, and for the people where your missionaries serve, that they would investigate the risen Christ for themselves.
2. Pray for those who are experiencing sorrow and disappointment, that they would stay faithful to and focused on the Lord Jesus and remember His wonderful words of life.
3. Praise the Lord that because of Jesus, the stone has been rolled away in our own lives. We now live anew in the Resurrection power of Christ. *What a powerful name it is, the name of Jesus!*