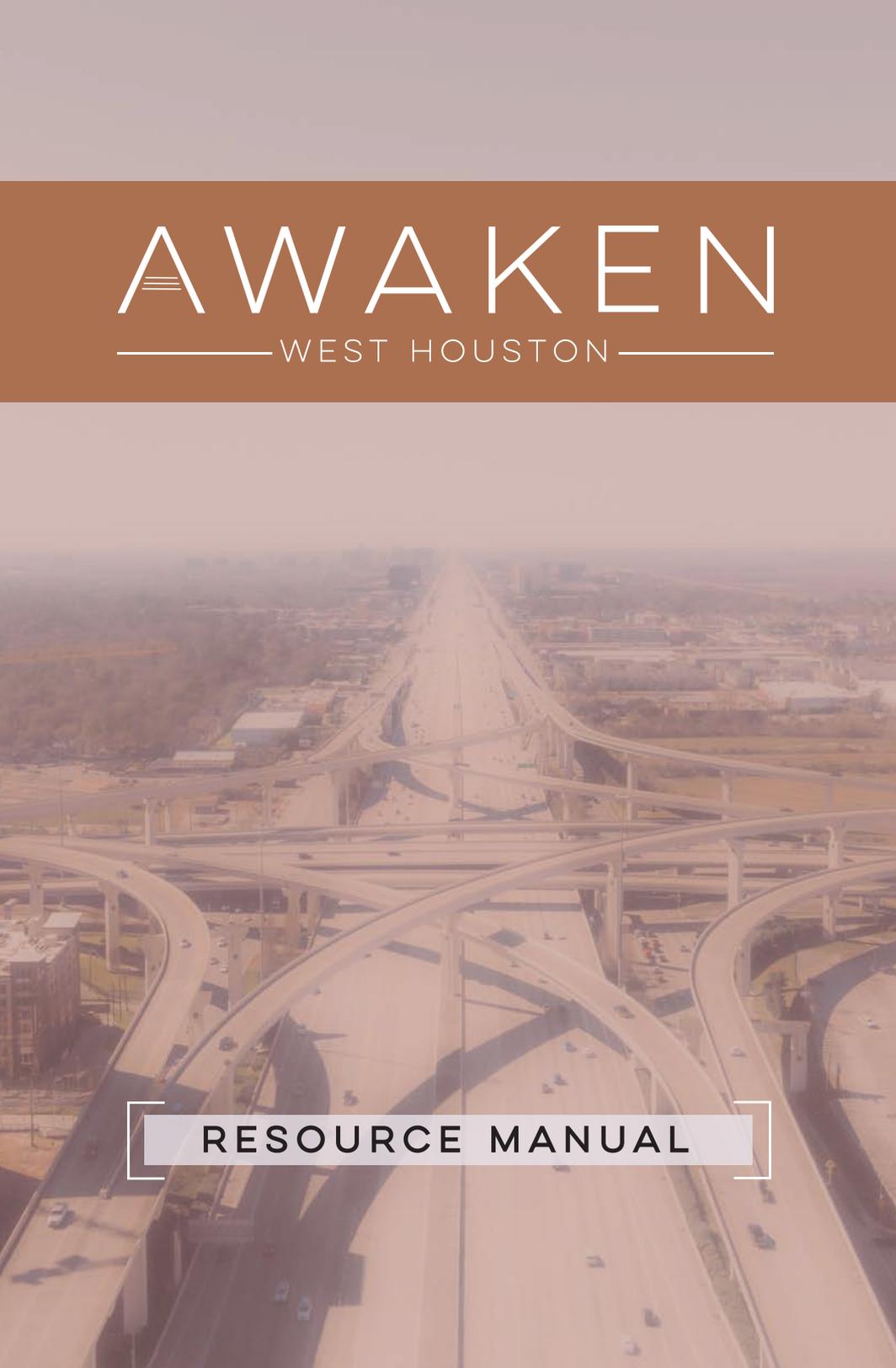


AWAKEN

— WEST HOUSTON —



RESOURCE MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for choosing to participate in Awaken West Houston 2023. Last year over 4,500 believers from across Katy/West Houston participated in our first Awaken initiative. Each participant was given 17 households to fast and pray for over a 30 day period. Over 75,000 households were prayed for by name from March 2-31, 2022. Praise the Lord! Only He knows the eternal impact that fasting and those prayers had in the lives of the men, women, and children represented on our lists.

This year, rather than receiving the names of 17 households you most likely don't know, we're asking you to identify seven (7) people/households in your life here in Katy/West Houston who you believe to be far from God (neighbors, coworkers, friends, classmates, etc.). Then from January 30 - February 28, 2023 we want you to fast as God leads you, pray daily and fervently for those on your list, and even reach out in simple ways to share the love of God with them. Also, we'd like you to join others all over the city in a Prayer Walk through your neighborhood on Saturday, February 25, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Maybe you're asking, "What should I pray?" or "What is fasting?" or "What are some simple ways to share God's love?" or "What's a Prayer Walk, and how do I do it?" That's what this guide is all about. Find all your answers (or at least some of them) inside!

May God bless you, and may God bless our city as we seek His favor throughout Awaken West Houston!

January 30 - February 28, 2023

CHOOSING MY FAST

For Awaken West Houston 2023 we're asking you to do the following:

1. Identify seven (7) people/households in your life here in Katy/West Houston who you believe to be far from God, and write their names down on the provided Prayer Card.

2. Fast as God leads you and pray every day for 30 days (January 30 – February 28) for the people/households on your *Prayer Card*.

3. Make life better for those on your *Prayer Card*. Throughout the 30 days look for practical opportunities to share God's love with those on your *Prayer Card*. And as God opens doors, share the Gospel! See *Practical Help for Living on Mission* on pages 16-34 in this Resource Manual.

4. Prayer Walk your neighborhood. Join others all across our city and Prayer Walk your neighborhood on Saturday, February 25, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. See *Prayer Walking My Neighborhood* on pages 35-40 in this *Resource Manual*.

This portion of the *Resource Manual* is intended to encourage and equip you to choose and pursue your fast during the 30 days of Awaken West Houston 2023.

A great little book on fasting...for free?

Last year participants in Awaken West Houston 2022 read a short book called *Revival Starts Here: A Short Conversation on Prayer, Fasting, and Revival for Beginners Like Me* by Dave Clayton. If you would like a copy of that book please contact Redeemer Community Church here in Katy at info@redeemercommunity.org to receive your free copy while supplies last.

If you have a copy from last year you'll remember it's a quick read, only about 75 pages. Read it again to warm your heart afresh for prayer, fasting, and revival!



SHARPEN YOUR AFFECTIONS WITH FASTING

Taken from *Habits of Grace* by David Mathis, Copyright © 2016, pp. 117-126. Used by permission of Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60187, www.crossway.org.

In his book Habits of Grace: Enjoying Jesus through the Spiritual Disciplines, David Mathis wrote a chapter entitled Sharpening Your Affections with Fasting. That chapter has been included in its entirety below. It's a good introduction to this often-neglected spiritual discipline.

Fasting has fallen on hard times at least, it seems, among our overstuffed bellies in the American church. I speak as one of the well-fed.

Sure, you'll find your exceptions here and there. Some pockets even prize the countercultural enough to steer their vehicles into the ditch of asceticism. But they are vastly outnumbered by the rest of us veering toward the opposite shoulder. The dangers of asceticism are great—surpassed only by those of overindulgence.

Our problem might be how we think of fasting. If the accent is on abstinence, and fasting is some mere duty to perform, then only the most iron-willed among us will get over the social and self-pampering hurdles to actually put this discipline into practice. But if we are awakened to see fasting for the joy it can bring, as a means of God's grace to strengthen and sharpen godward affections, then we might find ourselves holding a powerful new tool for enriching our enjoyment of Jesus.

What is Fasting?

Fasting is an exceptional measure, designed to channel and express our desire for God and our holy discontent in a faller world. It is for those not satisfied with the status quo. For those who want more of God's grace. For those who feel truly desperate for God.

The Scriptures include many forms of fasting: personal and communal, public and private, congregational and national, regular and occasional, partial and absolute. Typically, we think of fasting as voluntarily forgoing food for some limited time, for an express spiritual purpose.

We can fast from good things other than food and drink as well. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, "Fasting should really be made to include abstinence from anything which is legitimate in and of itself for the sake of some special spiritual purpose."¹ But normal Christian fasting means privately and occasionally choosing to go without food (though not water) for some special period of time (whether a day or three or seven) in view of some specific spiritual purpose.

According to Donald S. Whitney, fasting's spiritual purposes include:

- Strengthening prayer (Ezra 8:23; Joel 2:13; Acts 13:3)
- Seeking God's guidance (Judg. 20:26; Acts 14:23)
- Expressing grief (1 Sam. 31:13; 2 Sam. 1:11-12)
- Seeking deliverance or protection (2 Chron. 20:3-4; Ezra 8:21-23)
- Expressing repentance and returning to God (1 Sam. 7:6; Jonah 3:5-8)
- Humbling oneself before God (1 Kings 21:27-29; Ps. 35:13)
- Expressing concern for the work of God (Neh. 1:3-4; Dan. 9:3)
- Ministering to the needs of others (Isa. 58:3-7)
- Overcoming temptation and dedicating yourself to God (Matt, 4:1-11)
- Expressing love and worship to God (Luke 2:37)²

While the potential purposes are many, it is that last one which may be most helpful to focus our thoughts about fasting in this short chapter. It encompasses all the others and gets at the essence of what makes fasting such a mighty means of grace.

Whitney captures it like this: “Fasting can be an expression of finding your greatest pleasure and enjoyment in life from God.”³ And he quotes a helpful phrase from Matthew Henry, who says that fasting serves to “put an edge upon devout affections.”

Jesus Assumes We’ll Fast

While the New Testament includes no mandate that Christians fast on certain days or with specific frequency, Jesus clearly assumes we will fast. It’s a tool too powerful to leave endlessly on the shelf collecting dust. While many biblical texts mention fasting, the two most important come just chapters apart in Matthew’s Gospel.

The first is Matthew 6:16-18, which comes in sequence with Jesus’s teachings on generosity and prayer:

And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their re-ward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Fasting is as basic to Christianity as asking from God and giving to others. The key here is that Jesus doesn’t say “if you fast,” but “when you fast.”

¹D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1960), 1:38.

²*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, rev. ed. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2014), 200-17.

³Mathew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, n.d.), 4:1478, quoted in Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, 214.

The second is Matthew 9:14-15, which may be even more clear. Should Christians today still fast? Jesus's answer is a resounding yes.

Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast." (Matt. 9:14-15)

When Jesus, our bridegroom, was here on earth among his disciples, it was a time for the discipline of feasting.⁴ But now that he is "taken away" from his disciples, "they will fast." Not "they might, if they ever get around to it," but "they will." This is confirmed by the pattern of fasting that emerged right away in the early church (Acts 9:9; 13:2; 14:23).

Put an Edge on Your Feelings

What makes fasting such a gift is its ability, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to focus our feelings and their expression toward God in prayer. Fasting walks arm in arm with prayer—as John Piper says, fasting is "the hungry handmaiden of prayer," who both reveals and remedies."

She reveals the measure of food's mastery over us or television or computers or whatever we submit to again and again to conceal the weakness of our hunger for God. And she remedies by intensifying the earnestness of our prayer and saying with our whole body what prayer says with the heart: I long to be satisfied in God alone!⁵

That burn in your gut, that rolling fire in your belly, aching for you to feed it more food, signals game-time for fasting as a means of grace. Only as we voluntarily embrace the pain of an empty stomach do we see how much we've allowed our belly to be our god (Phil. 3:19).

And in that gnawing discomfort of growing hunger is the engine of fasting, generating the reminder to bend our longings for food godward and inspire intensified longings for Jesus.

Fasting, says Piper, is the physical exclamation point at the end of the sentence, “This much, O God, I want you!”⁶

Will You Fast?

More could be said about the rich theology behind Christian fasting, but this habit of grace is simple enough. The question is, will you avail yourself of this potent means of God’s grace?

Fasting, like the gospel, isn’t for the self-sufficient and those who feel they have it all together. It’s for the poor in spirit. It’s for those who mourn. For the meek. For those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. In other words, fasting is for Christians.

It is a desperate measure, for desperate times, among those who know themselves desperate for God.

⁴Enough could be said about feasting as a spiritual discipline to warrant its own full chapter, but perhaps I can do even better by sending you to Joe Rigney’s book-length treatment in *The Things of Earth: Treasuring God by Enjoying His Gifts* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015). Some readers might suppose that the overstuffed bellies of the American church hardly need any instruction on feasting, since we’ve grown so accustomed to it, while fasting is the discipline that is grossly underserved. It is true that fasting is largely overlooked and too often forgotten, but true feasting is also in decline through familiarity, overuse, and lack of spiritual purpose. When every day becomes a feast, no day is truly one. We have need to recover the spiritual significance of feasting together in faith—not simply indulging, but explicitly celebrating together, on spoil occasions, the bounty and kindness of our Creator and Redeemer. For the Christian, our normal daily consumption is to be characterized by enough restraint that feasting is something we can rise to on special occasions, by faith and in good conscience, rather than being the baseline of every day. Daily restraint both keeps our stomachs primed for times of fasting and makes possible a kind of special indulgence on feast days.

⁵*When I Don’t Desire God: How to Fight for Joy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 171.

⁶*A Hunger for God*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 25-26. For a more thorough treatment on fasting, see *A Hunger for God*.

The Slow Path to Good Fasting

Chances are you are among the massive number of Christians who rarely or never fast. It's not because we haven't read our Bibles or sat under faithful preaching or heard about the power of fasting, or that we don't genuinely want to do it. We just never actually get around to doing it.

Part of it may be that we live in a society in which food is so ubiquitous that we eat not only when we don't need to, but sometimes when we even don't want to. We eat to share a meal with others, to build or grow relationships (which are good reasons), or just from peer pressure. And of course, there are our own cravings and ache for comfort that keep us from the discomfort of fasting.

When You Fast

Fasting is markedly countercultural in our consumerist society, like abstaining from sex until marriage. If we are to learn the lost art of fasting and enjoy its sweet spiritual fruit, it will not come with our ear to the ground of society but with our Bibles open. Then, our concern will not be whether to fast, but when. As we've seen, Jesus both assumes that his followers will fast, and he promises it will happen. He doesn't say "if," but "when you fast" (Matt. 6:16). And he doesn't say his followers might fast, but "they will" (Matt. 9:15).

We fast in this life because we believe in the life to come. We don't have to get it all here and now, because we have a promise that we will have it all in the age to come. We fast from what we can see and taste, because we have tasted and seen the goodness of the invisible God- and are desperately hungry for more of him.

Radical, Temporary Measure

Fasting is for this world, for stretching our hearts to get fresh air beyond the pain and trouble around us. And it is for the sin and weakness inside us, about which we express our discontent, and long for more of Christ.

When Jesus returns, fasting will be done. It is a temporary measure, for this life and age, to enrich our joy in Jesus and prepare our hearts for the next, and for seeing him face to face. When he returns, he will not call a fast but throw a feast; then all holy abstinence will have served its glorious purpose, and be seen by all for what a gift it was. But until then, we will fast.

How to Start Fasting

Fasting is hard. It sounds much easier in concept than it proves to be in practice. It can be surprising how on-edge we feel when we miss a meal. Many an idealistic new faster has decided to miss a meal and only found that his belly drove him to make up for it long before the next mealtime came.

Fasting sounds so simple, and yet the world, our flesh, and the Devil conspire to introduce all sorts of complications that keep it from happening. In view of helping you start down the slow path to good fasting, here are six simple pieces of advice.

These suggestions might seem pedantic, but my hope is that such basic counsel can serve those who are new at fasting or have never seriously tried it.

1. Start small

Don't go from no fasting to attempting a weeklong. Start with one meal; maybe fast one meal a week for several weeks. Then try two meals, and work your way up to a daylong fast. Perhaps eventually try a two-day juice fast.

A juice fast means abstaining from all food and beverage, except for juice and water. Allowing yourself juice provides nutrients and sugar for the body to keep you operating while also still feeling the effects from going without solid food. (It is not recommended that you abstain from water during a fast of any length.)

2. Plan what you'll do instead of eating

Fasting isn't merely an act of self-deprivation, but a spiritual

discipline for seeking more of God's fullness. Which means we should have a plan for what positive pursuit to undertake in the time it normally takes to eat. We spend a good portion of our day with a fork in hand. One significant part of fasting is the time it creates for prayer and meditation on God's word.

Before diving headlong into a fast, craft a simple plan. Connect it to your purpose for the fast. Each fast should have a specific spiritual purpose. Identify what that is and design a focus to replace your eating time. Without a purpose and plan, it's not Christian fasting; it's just going hungry.

3. Consider how it will affect others

Fasting is no license to be unloving. It would be sad to lack concern and care for others around us because of this expression of heightened focus on God. Love for God and for neighbor go together. Good fasting mingles horizontal concern with the vertical. If anything, others should even feel more loved and cared for when we're fasting.

So as you plan your fast, consider how it will affect others. If you have regular lunches with colleagues or dinners with family or roommates, assess how your abstaining will affect them, and let them know ahead of time, instead of just being a no-show or springing it on them in the moment that you will not be eating.

Also, consider this backdoor inspiration for fasting: If you make a daily or weekly practice of eating with a particular group of friends or family, and those plans are interrupted by someone's travel or vacation or atypical circumstances, consider that as an opportunity to fast, rather than eating alone.

4. Try different kinds of fasting

The typical form of fasting is personal, private, and partial, but we find a variety of forms in the Bible: personal and communal, private and public, congregational and national, regular and occasional, absolute and partial.

In particular, consider fasting together with your family, small group, or church. Do you share together in some special need for God's wisdom and guidance? Is there an unusual difficulty in the church, or society, for which you need God's intervention? Do you want to keep the second coming of Christ in view? Plead with special earnestness for God's help by linking arms with other believers to fast together.

5. Fast from something other than food

Fasting from food is not necessarily for everyone. Some health conditions keep even the most devout from the traditional course. However, fasting is not limited to abstaining from food, as we saw from Martyn Lloyd-Jones: "Fasting should really be made to include abstinence from anything which is legitimate in and of itself for the sake of some special spiritual purpose."⁷

If the better part of wisdom for you, in your health condition, is not to go without food, consider fasting from television, computer, social media, or some other regular enjoyment that would bend your heart toward greater enjoyment of Jesus. Paul even talks about married couples fasting from sex "for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer" (1 Cor. 7:5).

6. Don't think of White Elephants

When your empty stomach starts to growl and begins sending your brain every "feed me" signal it can, don't be content to let your mind dwell on the fact that you haven't eaten. If you make it through with an iron will that says no to your stomach but doesn't turn your mind's eye elsewhere, it isn't true fasting.

Christian fasting turns its attention to Jesus or some great cause of his in the world. Christian fasting seeks to take the pains of hunger and transpose them into the key of some eternal anthem, whether it's fighting against some sin, or pleading for someone's salvation, or for the cause of the unborn, or longing for a greater taste of Jesus.

⁷Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, 1:38.

CHOOSE YOUR FAST

We're asking you to pray fervently every day for those on your Prayer Card. And we are asking you to fast as the Lord leads you throughout Awaken. Everyone's fast will look different. In Revival Starts Here Pastor Dave Clayton describes four types of fasts:

1. Major Fast

A major fast is when you abstain from food or drink for twenty-four consecutive hours or more. A major fast requires a certain level of physical health, and it is recommended that you check with your doctor if you're doing a major fast that lasts more than a few days in a row. Some examples from Scripture of a major fast can be found in Matthew 4:2, Acts 9:9, and Esther 4:15-16, just to name a few.

2. Minor Fast

In a minor fast, you choose to abstain from food for a certain period of time (i.e., 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. or sunup to sundown). This fast is sometimes called a "Jewish fast," and it can last for days at a time, eating only at a set time of the day. In a minor fast, most people will drink liquids during the day and have one small meal after sundown each evening.

3. Partial Fast

A partial fast is when you give up only certain foods during the course of your fast. This fast is seen most clearly in Daniel 1, where Daniel abstains from certain foods out of devotion to God for a period of time. During a partial fast, some people choose to give up certain foods they enjoy in an effort to turn their hearts more deeply toward God.

4. Soul Fast

Technically speaking, biblical fasting only refers to abstaining from food or drink (or both) for a spiritual purpose. However, some people choose to fast from things other than food. Some people will give up television, social media, or other activities for a soul fast to focus on prayer.

Each of these fasts can be a valuable way of connecting with God more deeply. If you are physically able, though, I would encourage you to prayerfully consider one of the first three fasts. There is something about giving up food that physically and spiritually realigns you in ways nothing else can.⁸

During Awaken West Houston 2023 some will choose to fast through breakfast until lunch each of the 30 days. Others will choose to fast all day on each Monday or Tuesday, etc. of Awaken. Still others might choose to fast through lunch each day throughout Awaken. For some it will look like this, and for others it will look like that. The question is, “What will it look like for you? Which fast will you choose? What is the Lord leading you to do when it comes to fasting throughout Awaken?”

Awaken starts on January 30. Try to have your plans for fasting chosen before then so you can get off to a great start!

⁸*Revival Starts Here: A Short Conversation on Prayer, Fasting, and Revival for Beginners Like Me* (Brentwood, TN: HIM Publications, 2018), 47.

PRACTICAL HELP FOR LIVING ON MISSION

For Awaken West Houston 2023 we're asking you to do the following:

1. Identify seven (7) people/households in your life here in Katy/West Houston who you believe to be far from God, and write their names down on the provided Prayer Card.

2. Fast as God leads you and pray every day for 30 days (January 30 – February 28) for the people/households on your *Prayer Card*.

3. Make life better for those on your *Prayer Card*. Throughout the 30 days look for practical opportunities to share God's love with those on your *Prayer Card*. And as God opens doors, share the Gospel!

4. Prayer Walk your neighborhood. Join others all across our city and Prayer Walk your neighborhood on Saturday, February 25, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. See *Prayer Walking My Neighborhood* on pages 35-40 in this *Resource Manual*.

This portion of the *Resource Manual* is intended to equip, encourage, and empower you to make life better for those on your *Prayer Card*—to share God's love in practical ways and to share the good news of the Gospel. Let's jump in.



HOW ONE QUESTION GOT ME TO GO TO CHURCH: TIPS FOR INVITING YOUR FRIENDS

By Cynthia at bit.ly/awhininvitefriends

EDITOR'S NOTE: Last year during Awaken West Houston 2022 participants were asked to fast and pray for 17 households in Katy/West Houston and then write and mail each one of them a postcard telling them they've been praying for them and expressing hope that they experience the love of Jesus. But, participants were "not allowed" to mention their church or invite them to their church on those postcards. We wanted 2022 to be about The Church, not any one particular church. While we love that sentiment, this year for Awaken West Houston 2023 we encourage you to fast and pray, serve and love, and even invite the people on your Prayer Card to your church. Go for it!

It All Started With One Question – Would you like to go to church with me?

I want you to think back to the time when you were deciding to go to church. Why did you go? What held you back from initially going? For many people in the Christian community, the church has always been a part of routine, day-to-day life, but it hasn't always been the case for a few of us. If the church has been a part of your Sunday routine for as long as you can remember, then it's likely you've forgotten how scary it can be walking into a foreign building and risk being seen by people—genuinely seen.

I was once that young adult, trying to find a home church, yet afraid to be seen amongst a group of strangers.

4 Reasons To Invite People To Church

Why should we invite people to church? It is so easy for us to believe that our friends and neighbors will make it there independently. We don't want to impose on anyone, and we definitely don't want to embarrass ourselves. So, do we really need to invite people?

The quick answer is yes, and here are four reasons why.

1. People are afraid

You don't need to live in a country where believers are crucified to be afraid to go to church. Going to church alone is terrifying. Especially when you've been hurt by the church or by members of the church, I can attest to this feeling.

During my college years, I became very curious about God and religion. There was something in the pit of my stomach that wanted to know more about who God was. I had so many questions. The problem was, I didn't know where to begin. I started going to Catholic mass but could barely stay awake. I didn't understand the service, nor did I get any questions answered, so I never returned.

Then, in 2013 I moved across state lines to start my job in the U.S. Air Force. I was single and moving to a foreign city all by myself. I was ill-equipped, to say the least. I had never rented a place without my parent's help, but here I was doing everything alone.

After a few months, I felt settled and got into a routine of working and enjoying my downtime, but something was missing. I started researching churches in my area to explore and noticed one close to my apartment (so close I could walk to it). I decided I was going to give it a try. Unfortunately, when that Sunday came, I could not move my feet. I was overwhelmed by fear as I looked at the massive building.

What door do I enter? Are they going to make me stand up and introduce myself? How do I know my beliefs align with there's? Will I be the darkest person in the room?

All of these questions stopped me dead in my tracks, and I never made it inside that church. I was embarrassed. I was afraid. I was ashamed.

This happened over and over again. I didn't want to walk into a church and be told how much of a bad person I was. I didn't want anyone to know I had rarely opened up the Bible. I didn't

want people to know I had questions and wasn't entirely sure God existed.

I eventually stopped trying to find (or enter) a church. There were problems with the small churches and the big churches alike, so I just resigned myself to believe I would never belong.

Then, in Easter of 2014, it all changed. An acquaintance from college had just moved to the area with her husband and started working in my unit (small world). A few weeks before Easter, she handed me a flier and casually asked if I would like to go to church with her and have Easter lunch afterward.

I immediately said yes. She had no idea I was terrified to go to church. She had no idea I wanted to go. But she asked anyway, and it transformed my life.

2. The Bible commands us to

If the mere fact that people are embarrassed, afraid, or ashamed to go to church doesn't move you to invite friends, then maybe understanding what the Bible has to say will.

The Bible clarifies that we are to go out and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV). That doesn't just mean missionary work in foreign countries but includes our day-to-day lives. Our purpose is to share the gospel.

God's word directs us to gather, encourage, serve, and teach one another. The simplest way this happens is in the church. The church isn't the only avenue to salvation, but it does provide a community of support and accountability for new and old believers.

Verses to consider:

"not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." - Hebrews 10:25, NIV

“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” - Matthew 18:19-20, NIV

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” - Acts 2:42, NIV

“For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” - Romans 12:4-5, NIV

“Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” - Ephesians 4:14-16, NIV

3. Biblical community and accountability

The term “one-another” is used in the Bible approximately 100 times. We are called to love, serve, forgive, speak, submit, confess, pray, etc... for one another. You can’t do that if you refuse to participate in a Christian community or church.

Why invite people to church? Because the church provides biblical community and accountability that we all need. We are called to be in community with fellow believers. It is not because we are better than nonbelievers, but because we need other people to keep us accountable and help us live in a God-honoring way.

As the old adage goes, “birds of a feather flock together.” Only fellow believers can help us stick to our faith and uplift us when we struggle (because we will have hard times).

4. Knowledge of Jesus

If you genuinely believe that Jesus is who he says he is and that heaven is far better than the earth, then why wouldn't we want to share it with our friends and family? Salvation is not guaranteed to everyone. By faith in Jesus, we are saved, and God can use you to bring someone to faith.

Why should we invite people to Church? Because the church is a great way to introduce someone to who Jesus is and how He has changed your life (and others).

How To Invite Someone To Church

As tempting as it may be to drop and flyer and run, the best way to invite anyone to church isn't by throwing out an open invitation. Don't go knocking door to door and telling people they should go with you when they don't even know you. Inviting people to church starts by asking them into your life.

The Best Way to Invite a Friend

When my friend offered to go with me to church and then invited me into her home afterward, I immediately said yes! I met her and her husband at their house before church, and we all rode together to their Easter Service. This made a world of difference.

I walked into a large foreign building and felt comforted that I had a friend by my side. Surely people wouldn't know who I was. That service transformed my life. I felt the Holy Spirit like I had never felt before. Do you remember that something in the pit of my stomach? It was a match waiting to be ignited inside of me—a passion for the Lord. That Sunday, the fire grew full force. I fell in love with Christ.

When you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, there is an inward transformation reflected on the outside. Consider it an evolution of faith as you gradually change. There was no grand show for me accepting Jesus into my life. There was no altar call. Instead, in the middle of prayer, I raised my hand and asked Jesus into my life. From that day forward, my life has never been the same.

And you know what? It all started with ONE question – ***“Would you like to go to church with me?”***

Having a friend beside me made the terrifying less scary. She knew which door to walk in; she comforted me in explaining what I would expect. I only had to raise my hand for being new, no need to stand up and speak (thank God!). The enemy induced those initial fears to keep me from listening to God’s will, but I had the strength to face those fears with someone by my side. Having seen how this one question was the catalyst for my transformation, I am convicted of sharing with you this testimony in hopes that it will encourage and equip you.

The BEST way to invite someone to church is to ask them to go with you. Include them in your plans. It doesn’t have to look like my story to have the same impact.

Tips For Inviting Friends

Easter and/or the holiday season is the easiest time to invite your neighbors, friends, and family to church with you. This is when churches offer special programming/services, and family get-togethers are a given.

But even if you find yourself in the middle of the year without special services, be bold, be genuine, and simply ask, “Would you like to go to church with me?”

But please, don’t give them a flyer and then tell them to check it out or stop by. Instead, be active, be involved, and be present.

Try these 5 tips:

1. Pray before inviting someone.

Ask the Holy Spirit to prompt you if you should invite someone. If He lays it on your heart to ask, then ask. While you could go and ask everyone you know, it’s not as effective as intentional invitations.

2. Ask them if they would like to go WITH you.

Don't throw an open invite, but instead offer to meet them:

- Outside the main entrance of the church (and explain which entrance that is)
- In the lobby of your church
- At your home, so you can carpool together.
- Offer to meet in the parking lot and walk in together.
- Offer to meet before or after for a shared meal.

3. Explain what it will look like.

- Is there a "dress code"? (If no one ever shows up in jeans, let them know?)
- Should they bring a Bible, or will there be extras?
- Will they have to introduce themselves?
- Which door should they enter if you aren't meeting them beforehand?
- How long will the service be?
- Are they expected to tithe? (I would hope not, but please make it clear).
- Take away as much of the unknown as possible, making it less scary to attend.

4. Be by their side as they fearfully step into the unknown.

Your presence will comfort them and give them the strength to see for themselves what church is really about.

5. Follow up. If they attended church, follow up and ask what they thought?

Are they interested in attending again? Did they have questions or concerns? Do they know where to start next? Getting them to church is a huge victory, but there is still work to be done. Our goal is to bring people to Christ, not just the Church.

Once you've invited your friend, and they've attended church, help them uncover the next steps. Remember, our purpose is to bring people to Christ, not just church.

THREE POWERFUL STORIES

Videos from Christ Together Austin

Watch these three short videos and see if God might inspire you to step outside your comfort zone, take a risk, and love others in Jesus' name like these believers in Austin, TX did.

Love Your Neighbors – A Turquoise Table. This four-minute (4:18) video shares the incredible story of a follower of Jesus in Austin, TX who used a picnic table to meet, serve, and love her neighbors in Jesus' name. Maybe God would have you do something like this! bit.ly/awhtableinaustin

Love Your Neighbors – A Simple Step. Here's another four-minute (4:25) about a busy family that wouldn't let anything stand in the way of loving their neighbors. Watch it, but be prepared to throw your excuses in the trash can! bit.ly/awhsimplestep

Love Your Neighbors – Breakfast Tacos. This five-minute video (4:50) will encourage you to overcome your fears when it comes to loving your neighbors and those on your Prayer Card. bit.ly/awhtacos



8 WAYS TO EASILY BE MISSIONAL

by Jonathan Dodson at bit.ly/awh8ways

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jonathan Dodson shares eight simple ways to live on mission with Jesus in the everyday stuff of life.

Missional is not an event we tack onto our already busy lives. It is our life. Mission should be the way we live, not something we add onto life: "As you go, make disciples."; "Walk wisely towards outsiders"; "Let your speech always be seasoned with salt"; "be prepared to give a defense for your hope." We can be missional in everyday ways without overloading our schedules. Here are a few suggestions:

Eat with Non-Christians

We all eat three meals a day. Why not make a habit of sharing one of those meals with a non-Christian or with a family of non-Christians? Go to lunch with a co-worker, not by yourself. Invite the neighbors over for family dinner. If it's too much work to cook a big dinner, just order pizza and put the focus on conversation. When you go out for a meal invite others. Or take your family to family-style restaurants where you can sit at the table with strangers and strike up conversation. Cookout and invite Christians and non-Christians. Flee the Christian subculture.

Walk, Don't Drive

If you live in a walkable area, make a practice of getting out and walking around your neighborhood, apartment complex, or campus. Instead of driving to the mailbox, convenience store, or apartment office, walk to get mail, groceries, and stuff. Be deliberate in your walk. Say hello to people you don't know. Strike up conversations. Attract attention by walking the dog, taking a 6-pack (and share), bringing the kids. Make friends. Get out of your house! Take interest in your neighbors. Ask questions. Pray as you go. Save some gas, the planet, and some people.

Be a Regular

Instead of hopping all over the city for gas, groceries, haircuts, eating out, and coffee, go to the same places. Get to know the staff. Go to the same places at the same times. Smile. Ask questions. Be a regular. I have friends at coffee shops all over the city. My friends at Starbucks donate a ton of left over pastries to our church 2-3 times a week. We use them for church gatherings and occasionally give to the homeless. Build relationships. Be a Regular.

Hobby with Non-Christians

Pick a hobby that you can share. Get out and do something you enjoy with others. Try City League sports. Local rowing and cycling teams. Share your hobby by teaching lessons. Teach sewing lessons, piano lessons, violin, guitar, knitting, tennis lessons. Be prayerful. Be intentional. Be winsome. Have fun. Be yourself.

Talk to Your Co-workers.

How hard is that? Take your breaks with intentionality. Go out with your team or task force after work. Show interest in your co-workers. Pick four and pray for them. Form mom groups in your neighborhood and don't make them exclusively Christian. Schedule play dates with the neighbors' kids. Work on mission.

Volunteer with Non-Profits.

Find a non-profit in your part of the city and take Saturday a month to serve your city. Bring your neighbors, your friends, or your small group. Spend time with your church serving your city. Once a month. You can do it!

Participate in City Events

Instead of playing X-Box, watching TV, or surfing the net, participate in city events. Go to fundraisers, festivals, clean-ups, summer shows, and concerts. Participate missionally. Strike up conversation. Study the culture. Reflect on what you see and hear. Pray for the city. Love the city. Participate with the city.

Serve Your Neighbors.

Help a neighbor by weeding, mowing, building a cabinet, fixing a car. Stop by the neighborhood association or apartment office and ask if there is anything you can do to help improve things. Ask your local Police and Fire Stations if there is anything you can do to help them. Get creative. Just serve!

Don't make the mistake of making "missional" another thing to add to your schedule. Instead, make your existing schedule missional.



LIVE THE B.L.E.S.S. LIFESTYLE

Adapted from Dave Ferguson at bit.ly/awhbles

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This simple acronym (B.L.E.S.S.) has helped many of God's people begin to live with greater Gospel*

intentionality. Awaken West Houston 2023 will help you Begin with Prayer. See if God might want you to take another step into missional living.

Begin with Prayer. “I can do that!”

“Lord, I want to lift up the people on my Prayer Card to you. I know You want them to be touched with Your love. And I know You have placed me here to be a representative of Your relentless love—to help them see, hear, and respond to the Gospel. I pray You would open doors for me to talk to each one about You. Today, I specifically want to pray for ____ and ____ and _____. Would You open a door for me to spend time with them... to listen to them... and to eat with them? And Lord, please give me opportunities to serve them and share my story. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Listen with Care. “I can do that!”

Asking good questions and listening well are powerful tools in relationship building and for discovering how you might more effectively minister to those far from God.

- What was something good about your growing up?
- What is something important to you these days?
- What is something you hope for in the future?
- Was there anything hard about growing up?
- Are there any challenges you are facing these days?
- Is there anything about the future that makes you nervous?

Eat Together. “I can do that!”

People share the most interesting things about their lives over a meal—particularly if you are listening.

“Jesus didn’t run projects, establish ministries, create programs, or put on events. He ate meals. If you routinely share meals and you have a passion for Jesus, then you’ll be doing mission. It’s not that meals save people. People are saved through the gospel message. But meals will create natural opportunities to share that message in a context that resonates powerfully with what you’re saying.” Tim Chester, *A Meal with Jesus*

Serve in Love. “I can do that!”

The first place to start serving is with those in close proximity to you—with those on your Prayer Card. So often we think in terms of going on a mission trip or serving in a shelter downtown. Those things are great, but we start with right where we are. Look around—to your neighbors, to the people you work with, to your classmates, or to those with whom you play (the gym; other parents at the kids’ ball-game), or to those whom you’re passion about. Start there.

Everyone wants to do something big for the Lord, but that big thing could be right next door, in the office down the hall, or at the coffee shop you frequent.

Share Your Story. “I can do that!”

By now you have built a close relationship and have earned the right to tell your story. Perhaps you’ve already been asked what makes you different. Whatever the case, this is your time to be more than a good neighbor and tell them the great difference God has made in your life.

And as you tell your story maybe you can work in The Story—the Gospel. “God, through His Son Jesus, can change your life, too.” This is also a wonderful time to invite your friend to your church. There they can meet others whose lives have been changed by Jesus, too.



THREE GREAT WEBSITES THAT SHARE THE GOSPEL

Send one or more of these links to someone on your Prayer Card. Then get together over a cup of coffee or meal to visit about what they learned.

Two Ways to Live. This wonderful written presentation of the Gospel can be found at twowaystolive.com. It takes just a few minutes to read. Maybe you and one of your friends on your Prayer Card could have a life-changing visit about it.

Good News in 90 Seconds. This website speaklife.org.uk has a number of great videos, but this 90-second video is a great presentation of the Gospel and may provide a good conversation starter for you and those on your Prayer Card. bit.ly/awhgoodnews90secs

The Story Film. This powerful 6-minute video tells the big story of the Bible, “how it all began and how it will never end.” Maybe this video could help your friends and neighbors understand the Gospel in a better, deeper way, and provide a great opportunity for you to share how Jesus has changed your life. thestoryfilm.com



LEARN TO SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH GREG STIER

Video at bit.ly/awhgregstier

EDITOR'S NOTE: Greg Stier has been training teens and adults to share the Gospel for 30 years. This five-minute video (5:07) is quite helpful with some practical advice on why we should share the Gospel, how we can engage others in spiritual conversations, and how to communicate the good news. Take a look and see if it's a blessing to you.

Here is a bit more from Greg's website gregstier.org:

Many teens and adults don't share their faith simply because they don't know how to bring it up or explain the Gospel. An easy and simple way to start Gospel conversations is through the Ask-Admire-Admit strategy:

1. ASK: Get to know people. Listen to them and learn their story. Ask questions about their background and spirituality.

2. ADMIRE: As a person shares their faith background, point out things about their religion you admire (i.e. dedication, missions).

3. ADMIT: Emphasize that as a Christian, you are a messed up sinner who needs salvation. Transition into your story and the story of the Gospel.

As you transition into the Gospel story, use the G.O.S.P.E.L. method to explain what you believe.

- God created us to be with Him.
- Our sins separate us from God
- Sins cannot be removed by good deeds.
- Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again.
- Everyone who trusts in Him alone has eternal life.
- Life with Jesus starts now and lasts forever.

End the conversation with these two questions:

1. Does that make sense?
2. Is there anything holding you back right now from putting your faith in Jesus?



PRAYING FOR YOU EVANGELISM

An excerpt from Howard Tryon's book *Praying for You: A Workbook for Reaching Others Through Prayer*, pp. 10-13

Finding myself in a deep depression, I hiked up a mountain south of Phoenix. Downcast and disillusioned, I trudged up that trail expressing to God my inadequacy and frustration. I felt I had nothing left. Yes, I loved Him but lacked the reserve to keep going. I had failed. But what was I to do? My whole training and passion centered on Him.

I pleaded, "Lord, I am tired of evangelism. I just do not want to participate in it anymore. It's not that I lack the desire to see people won to You. I long for that. I am weary of the methodology. Believers are burned out by it. Unbelievers are weary of it. There has got to be a better way."

An Answer to My Prayer

The Lord began to answer that prayer during the next summer when I taught a course on the Pastoral Epistles. I first taught the study to a group of young African-American ministers in Phoenix and then to students at Arizona College of the Bible. Both times I encountered 1 Timothy 2:1-8.

First of all, then, I urge that entries and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, that man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.

The class discussions centered on why the church was failing to make this command a main focus of ministry. In my personal meditation I reflected on an outreach I had founded while attending Dallas Theological Seminary during the early 1980s. I found that when I encountered a person who was cool or hostile toward the gospel, I could affect them if I closed the conversation with, "I am a student at Dallas Theological Seminary, preparing for full-time ministry. Is there anything in your life that I might pray for this week?"

Immediately the individual's countenance would change. They would say, "Yes, you can pray for my dad who is ill," or "You can pray for my job," or "You can pray for my kids at school." Regardless of their earlier negative responses, there was always a positive and friendly acceptance of me and appreciation for the offer to pray.

Since we went out every Saturday, I would venture out the following week and knock on the same doors. Immediately I'd remind them of my commitment to pray on their behalf by saying something like, "I've been praying for your dad. How's he doing?"

Reflecting on 1 Timothy 2:1-8 and my evangelism experience in Dallas, I thought, "Instead of prayer being a side issue of an outreach program, why not make prayer the focus of an outreach program?"

I began to imagine how this method might work with my neighbor Chris. Chris was a police officer, and we often played basketball together. I pictured myself knocking on his door and saying, "Chris, you know that I am a pastor of South Mountain Bible Fellowship. I have a ministry of praying for people. Is there anything in your life that I can be praying for this week? Maybe I can pray for a relative that's sick, your child at school, your wife, your work on the police force, or maybe a concern you have in the community. Is there anything I can pray for you this week?"

I thought he might say, "Howard, you can pray for my brother. He has been diagnosed with cancer." I couldn't think of any reason why he would reject this request. I then wondered what would happen if I returned to his home a week later and said, "Chris, I've been praying for your brother. How's he doing?" After talking with him over the condition of his brother I would conclude by saying, "I'll keep praying for your brother Jim. Is there anything or anyone else I might also be praying for?"

The more I meditated upon this scenario, the more excited I became. Wrestling to define this approach, I settled on the title Praying For You (PFY) evangelism. I was convinced that this would work as well for others as it had for me.

I decided to conduct a test of Praying For You in my community. work as well for others as it had for me. I chose a cul-de-sac of nine homes on a street one block away from our home in Phoenix. I did not know a single family on the street, so I was going out

cold turkey to talk with them. One Saturday afternoon I visited each home in the cul-de-sac and said to the people answering the door, “My name is Howard Tryon. I am the pastor of South Mountain Bible Fellowship. I have a ministry of praying for people. I call it Praying For You. Is there anything in your life that I might be praying for this week? Maybe you have a relative who is ill, concerns at your work, or a concern for the community.”

That afternoon only one person refused prayer. The others responded favorably with prayer requests. The man that declined happened to live next door to a family of Christians. When I first went to the Christian home and offered prayer, they became so excited that they came out to the front yard and wanted me to hold hands with them in conversational prayer right then and there! While we’re enjoying this small prayer revival, their non-Christian neighbor pulled his car into his driveway, peered over to observe us, and quickly entered his home. By the time I knocked on his door, he had already decided to have nothing to do with me.

I kept going back to each of these nine homes each week, even to the home of the gentleman who wanted nothing to do with me. Amazingly, within a few weeks even his family began to express prayer requests that they wanted me to take to the Lord on their behalf.

Initially I received general prayer requests concerning other people and concerning community problems such as drive-by shootings, gangs, and drugs. After a while people began to greet me with smiles and say “Oh good, you’re back. Please come on in.” I would often stay as long as forty-five minutes. During the week I prayed for family members, personal problems, financial struggles, broken relationships, and other needs.

I then decided to test Praying For You with six of my own neighbors. Not a single person said no to my offer of prayer.

Within one year I saw about twenty people in our neighborhood trust the Lord as a result of Praying For You.

THE BRIDGE ILLUSTRATION

Maybe you've heard of the Bridge Illustration before. It's a simple yet profound way to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others. There are various versions of the Bridge Illustration out there. Below you'll find a three versions. Pick one, learn it, and then share it with others!

The Bridge Gospel Illustration by Dave Sterrett: In this five minute video (4:52) Dave walks through the Gospel using Romans 6:23 as the main verse. bit.ly/awhbridge

The Bridge to Life by the Navigators: At this page you'll find simple instructions for sharing the Gospel. You may have to memorize a handful of verse, but that hard work will be well worth it! bit.ly/bridgetolife

OneVerse Bridge Diagram by StuMo: Student Mobilization created a resource using Romans 6:23, as well. It's much like Dave Sterrett's illustration above, but this one has written instructions. Some of us learn better that way! bit.ly/awhbridgestumo

**Go live on mission with Jesus where you live, work/
study, and play!**

PRAYER WALKING MY NEIGHBORHOOD

For Awaken West Houston 2023 we're asking you to do the following:

1. Identify seven (7) people/households in your life here in Katy/West Houston who you believe to be far from God, and write their names down on the provided *Prayer Card*.

2. Fast as God leads you and pray every day for 30 days (January 30 – February 28) for the people/households on your *Prayer Card*.

3. Make life better for those on your *Prayer Card*. Throughout the 30 days look for practical opportunities to share God's love with those on your *Prayer Card*. And as God opens doors, share the Gospel!

4. Prayer Walk your neighborhood. Join others all across our city and Prayer Walk your neighborhood on Saturday, February 25, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

This brief portion of the *Resource Manual* is intended to equip you for the Prayer Walk on February 25.

WHAT is Prayer Walking?

Much can be learned from Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendicks' book *Prayer Walking: Praying Onsite with Insight*. But, that's just what prayer walking is—"praying onsite with insight." It's simply praying in the very places that we desire God to bring forth His answers. For our Awaken West Houston Prayer Walk, that very place is in each of our neighborhoods. Prayer walking is usually a low-profile affair: friends or family stroll alone, two-by-two, or as a family through and around their own neighborhoods, schools, and work places, praying as

they go. There are some occasions when the prayer should be demonstrative, but usually it's being on the scene without making one. Though they usually go unnoticed, prayer walkers quickly become aware of the realities and needs of their neighbors.

WHEN is the Prayer Walk?

We are asking participants in Awaken West Houston to prayer walk on Saturday, February 25, from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

WHERE is the Prayer Walk?

While one can prayer walk around a school (praying for administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the like), through a shopping mall (praying for workers, customers, and things prompted by stores [walk by a toy store and pray for kids, walk by a jewelry store and pray for marriages, walk by a men's clothing store and pray for dads, walk through the food court and pray for the nations, etc.], or around a depressed part of town, for Awaken West Houston 2023 we're asking participants to prayer walk in their own neighborhood.

WHY do we Prayer Walk?

Being onsite with a prayerful spirit opens up our hearts and minds to the needs of our neighbors in a way that simply praying inside our home never can. When we see that home on the corner, we're reminded that a widow lives inside, and we pray for her with compassion. When we see that front door, we wonder what's going on behind it; and for that matter, what's going on behind many of the doors in our neighborhood. Single moms? Struggling marriages? Addiction? Financial problems? Anger? Abuse? So, we pray with greater intensity. We see that lone kid riding his bike in circles on the driveway. What's going through his mind? Is he struggling at school? At home? We pray for him and all the kids in the neighborhood. We see that dilapidated yard. Rather than get angry as so often before, this time we pray for God's grace and love to flood that home.

You see, being onsite can give us greater insight. And that insight can guide our prayers in much more specific ways. And God may

even inspire us to serve and love one or more of these neighbors in very practical ways.

WHO is to do the Prayer Walk?

We're asking everyone participating in Awaken West Houston 2023 to do the Prayer Walk on Saturday, February 25, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. But maybe as our brothers and sisters in our churches learn about the Prayer Walk they'll join us too, even if they're not fully participating in Awaken.

HOW to do the Prayer Walk?

1. If you'd like, sign up for a free account at blesseveryhome.com. Among other helpful tools for living on mission, this wonderful website will give you the names of many of your neighbors. Maybe you could write down some of their names and addresses as you head out on your Prayer Walk.

2. Take a leisurely stroll in your neighborhood, but with your eyes and heart open for the purpose of prayer. Ask the Lord to guide your prayers.

3. As you see different things throughout your neighborhood, creatively turn them to prayer.

- **A Tree:** Pray for deep spiritual roots in the people/families in your neighborhood.

- **A Bike/Toy Laying in the Grass:** Pray for all the kids in the neighborhood (safety, love, spiritual life, friends, etc.)

- **A Front Door:** What might be happening behind the many doors in your neighborhood? Pray!

- **A Streetlight:** Pray that your neighbors would come to know Jesus the Light of the World!

- **A Water Hose:** Pray that your neighbors would grow spiritually thirsty and come to Jesus who said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him

come to Me and drink.” (John 7:37)

- **Some Beautiful Flowers:** Pray that God would heal broken relationships (with spouses, kids, siblings, neighbors, friends) and restore them to beauty.

- **You get the idea!**

4. Make sure to pray for Gospel saturation in your neighborhood. “Lord, through me and other believers in my neighborhood, may every man, woman, and child in this neighborhood have the repeated opportunity to see, hear, and respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

5. As you Prayer Walk God may very well impress upon you something He’d like you to do for a neighbor. Write it down. Type it into your phone. Don’t forget. Then trust and obey.

6. If you’d like, watch this four-minute video (3:37) to get some more encouragement and good ideas about prayer walking. bit.ly/awhprayerwalk



MORE INSIGHT FROM WAYMAKERS MINISTRY

For the following article and more: bit.ly/awhprayerwalk2

Praying On-Site With Insight

In hundreds of cities around the world, God is helping Christians to pray as they pass through the streets of their communities. We’ve come to use the word “prayer walking” to describe this kind of on-site intercession.

As you prayer walk, your prayers extend beyond your own concerns, focusing directly on the needs of others and opening yourself to see them with God’s eyes and heart.

Pray with a Partner

- You can prayer walk alone, but many find that their prayers are more focused when expressed with a friend.
- Pray audibly for clarity and better agreement.
- As you finish, discuss – or even write down – the prayers, people, and places of most importance. You'll be ready for the next round of on-site prayer.

Pray with God's Spirit

- Invite the Spirit of God to accompany you, guiding your steps and your words.
- Be attentive during moments of silence, allowing the Holy Spirit to help you see with His eyes and pray in accordance with His heart.
- Address God directly when contending with evil or its aftermath. Ask God to redeem people as he restrains the enemy.

Pray with God's Word

- Read Scripture aloud. God breathed it and loves to bless it.
- Express God's thoughts in your own words.
- Carry Scripture with you. Use a small Bible or note cards.
- Choose a particular verse or theme as a base for your prayers throughout one day's prayer walk. Use another to launch your prayers the next day, and so on.

Pray with Purpose

- Pray for the present-hour needs of people and places that you see.
- Sketch a map to focus on select streets and homes.
- Pray quietly. You can be on the scene without making one.
- In confidence of God's unfolding purpose which includes your preparation prayer, don't look to initiate gospel conversations during your prayer walk. Pray for God to open doors of communication soon.
- Explain what you are doing to inquirers: "We're praying God's blessing on the neighborhood. Are there specific ways we can pray for you or others?"
- Be persistent. Try prayer walking the same areas near your

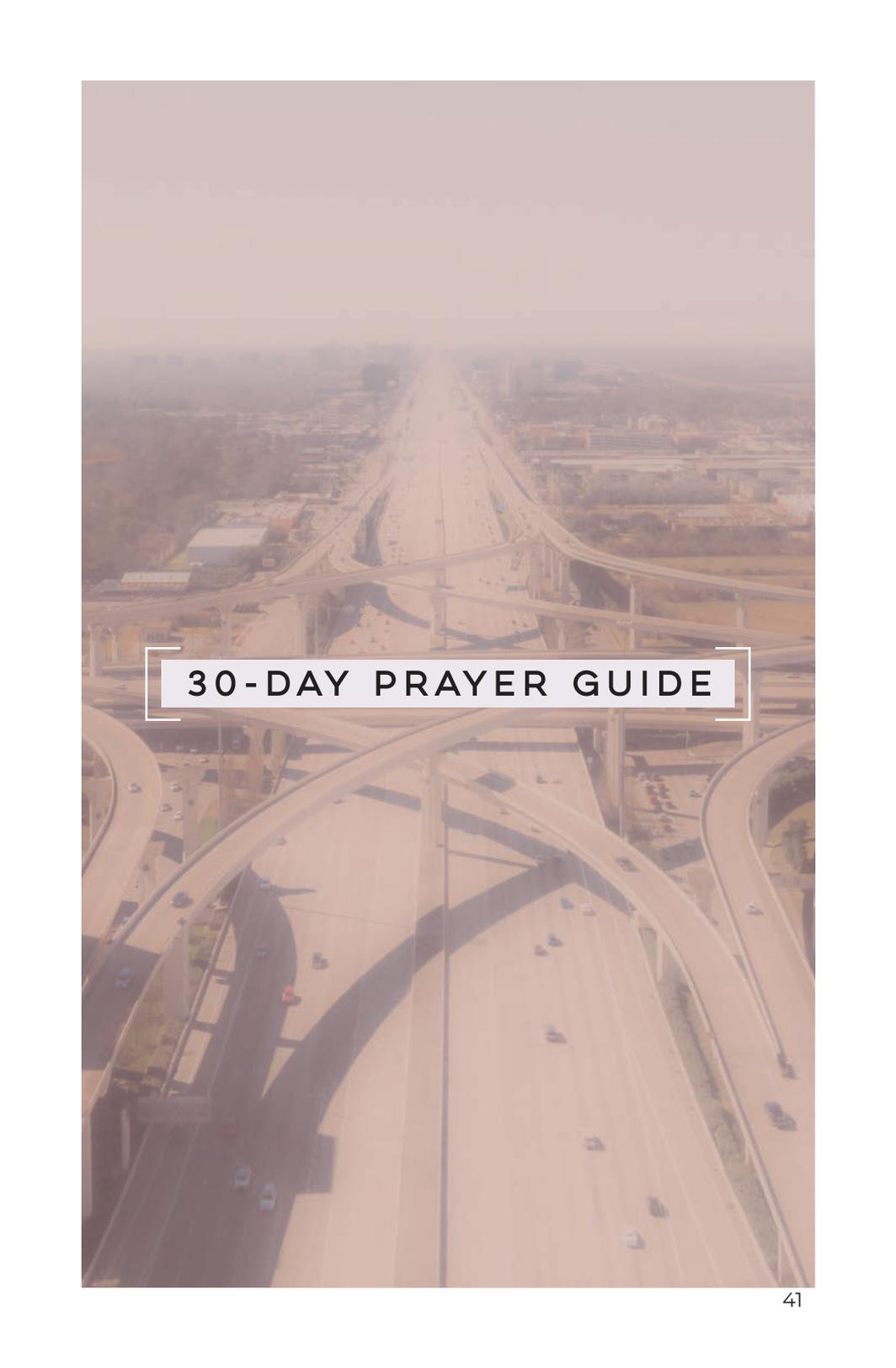
work, school or home in a regular way. You'll often find that your prayers deepen and your concern and awareness of God's heart for people increases.



CONFESSIONS OF A RELUCTANT PRAYERWALKER

By Omar Garcia, Missions Pastor at Kingsland Baptist Church in Katy, TX

Read this wonderful article by Pastor Omar at bit.ly/awhomar.



30-DAY PRAYER GUIDE

DAY 1

JANUARY 30

"The [gospel] problem in America is not relevancy, it's accessibility, which is connected to God's people... get the people moving... get them moving!"

– Dwight Smith

"Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word."

Acts 8:4

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Imagine every man, woman, and child in Katy/West Houston being given the repeated opportunity to see, hear, and respond to the Gospel. That's what God wants! To see that vision become a reality we must see individual followers of Jesus identifying people in their lives who don't know Jesus, praying/fasting for them, reaching out in love, and introducing them to Jesus. We must see all of God's people "moving" out where they live, work/study, and play with the life-giving Gospel of Jesus. As Awaken begins, imagine believers "scattered" in every nook and cranny of our city living Spirit-filled lives and telling others about Jesus. Do it, Lord!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord, inspire Your people in our city to "get moving" with the Gospel where they live, work/study, and play. 2. Lord, we gather each Sunday in our churches; as we scatter throughout the week help us go about "preaching the word."

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, use the devoted prayers, loving actions, and bold "preaching of the word" of Your people to awaken each person/family on my list to Your great love. 2. Help each person/family on my list understand the Gospel and trust in Jesus for salvation.

Written by Pastor Mitch Maher // Redeemer Community Church

DAY 2

JANUARY 31

“Faith is like an empty, open hand stretched out toward God, with nothing to offer and everything to receive.”

— John Calvin

“By grace you have been saved through faith...”
Ephesians 2:8

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

We have a natural reaction to that which sounds too good to be true. In a culture where every interaction is a transaction for services rendered, grace is an anomaly. This makes the message of the gospel one that is unnatural. An offer to receive such an incredible gift while having nothing worthy for its payment creates a natural tension. Herein we find the beauty within the anomaly of the gospel. The gift of grace bestowed upon the empty and outstretched hands of faith is a supernatural gift. Engaging in gospel conversations is not a display of logical eloquence but rather a display of supernatural glory; one to which we are invited.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Father, help us overcome the perceived obstacle of logical prowess or verbal eloquence as we respond to the gospel need that surrounds us. Overwhelm us with Your empowering grace as we take faithful action toward gospel engagement.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, please grow my heart's burden for each person and family on my list. Father, open minds and hearts that extend outstretched arms and empty hands of faith toward You throughout each person and family on my list.

DAY 3

FEBRUARY 1

"A person will worship something, have no doubt about that. That which dominates our imaginations and our thoughts will determine our lives, and our character. Therefore, it behooves us to be careful what we worship, for what we are worshipping we are becoming."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Romans 12:1

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Worship is not an event but a lifestyle! The definition of worship is to adore, honor and respect! We are all giving worth to something and that is what we are worshipping! When a believer truly worships God with His/Her life it cannot go unnoticed. People will see the change in us because "what we are worshipping we are becoming!" The way you work, raise kids, treat the everyday person around you and even the way you play that sport or extra curricular activity you are a part of. When you worship God with your life it will be like Jesus said when He called us a City on a Hill or the Light of the world!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Father, if any of us are worshipping anything other than you expose it, so we can repent and worship you alone! 2. Father, I pray as I worship you with my life today it will draw people closer to you.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, I pray we represent you with our worship today! I pray for all my brothers and sisters on this journey together to reach West Houston. Helps us to be full of life not because we are but because You are and you live in us!

DAY 4

FEBRUARY 2

“Presence precedes proclamation. Our tending to Christ’s presence in the world, and to each other’s presence, makes possible the proclamation of the gospel into people’s lives.”

– David Fitch

“And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.” Acts 2:46

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

The gospel is more than a set of new facts about God, it is the means by which we are lovingly restored to God and each other. It calls us into relationship. To enjoy the presence of God and each other as God’s new community. This means we put being “present” with others as a priority of proclaiming the gospel in the world. Presence precedes proclamation. Nobody cares how much we know until they know how much we care. Throughout this prayer campaign, let’s seek opportunities to be with and love on and care for the people on our list. As we make presence a priority, we increase the potential of “God adding to our numbers day by day.”

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

1. Lord, help us to see the incredible importance of our “presence” with others. 2. Father, give us your supernatural love for the people on our list and around the world, that we might enjoy their presence too.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord I ask that you would create opportunities for connecting and being with each person and family on my list. God help each person and family on my list to see and experience Your presence in me as I seek to love them as You do.

DAY 5

FEBRUARY 3

“Let our wise men ransack earth to its center, and climb to heaven and make inquisition through every star, the testimony of universal nature if heard aright shall never contradict the inspired utterances of the Holy Ghost.”

– Charles Spurgeon

“The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.”

Psalm 19:1

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

Every part of the natural world, when viewed with honest eyes, points to Creator God. There is an inescapable intricacy to every aspect of creation that screams to all who take a closer look, “This did not happen by accident, but by design!” Scriptures such as Romans 1 and Psalm 19 remind us that these beautiful examples point to the Lord when eyes are opened to the truth. It is a myth that good science is at odds with scriptural truth; on the contrary, the more we know of the Cosmos, the more we recognize its absence of chaotic randomness. Some of our greatest talking points with those far from God may begin with the wonder of our world.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Father, thank you for the reminders of your glory that surround us in nature. Remind us of the Hands that formed such wonder. And as we delight in such work, open doors for us to remind others of the work you have done. Amen.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, we’re reminded today that those people you have put in our path are precious to you. We pray they gain the joy of knowing you through by trusting Jesus. In His matchless Name we pray, Amen.

DAY 6

FEBRUARY 4

In our world of strangers, estranged from their own past, culture and country, from their neighbors, friends and family, from their deepest self and their God, we witness a painful search for a hospitable place where life can be lived without fear and where community can be found.

– Henri Nouwen

O Lord, you have searched me and know me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Psalm 139:1-3 ESV

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Our friends, neighbors, families have been and are suffering from Isolation, depression, loneliness, suicidal ideation and more. There are 8 billion people in this crowded world and yet we are more polarized, isolated and lonely than ever before. But there is hope. For there is a God who knows us, who created all of humanity for community, relationship with Him and each other. As His people, the church, we are a community who offer the gift of hospitality, welcoming home a seeking, searching, suffering world.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord, give us, as your people, open arms that invite our hurting world to experience community and connection with Christ and His church. 2. Lord, open our eyes that we might see, hear and respond with love to those longing for You.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, for all those on my list, I pray that they will see their need for you and open up their hearts to hear the truth. Lord, for all those on my list, I pray that fear will find faith and loneliness will find the You oh Lord!

DAY 7

FEBRUARY 5

“When I pray for another person, I am praying for God to open my eyes so that I can see that person as God does, and then enter into the stream of love that God already directs toward that person.”

– Philip Yancey

“And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, ‘Look at us.’ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.”

Acts 3:4-5

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

Read Acts 3:1-10. How many times had Peter and John seen this man before today? Yet this time, they saw him differently. Both John and Peter directed their gaze at him. In other words, they looked intensely at the man. It was purposeful and intentional. Even though they may have seen him many times before, on this occasion, they truly saw him. Having witnessed Jesus focus His attention on individuals during his earthly ministry, Peter and John fixed their gaze on this man with the sole purpose of seeing him with different eyes...eyes of compassion and eyes of love. Who do you need to SEE in this way today?

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Lord, I beg you to give me eyes to SEE the people on my prayer list as you see them and may have the strengthen and compassion to love them as you love them. In Jesus Name, Amen.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, I pray for each person on my list today to know full well they are truly seen by me. More importantly, I pray that they would know full well that they are seen by You! In Jesus Name, Amen.

DAY 8

FEBRUARY 6

God shapes the world by prayer. The more praying there is in the world the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil

– E.M. Bounds

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”

Mark 11:24

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

The power of our prayer is rooted in our faith. It is impossible to please God without faith. When we pray we must believe that supernatural power is being released against the work of the enemy. We have the potential to shape the world with our prayer of faith. Have faith in God today and voice your prayer to the Father. Believe that nothing is impossible with Him.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Father, I place my faith in you the creator of the universe and I pray for impossible situations be made possible over the families of West Houston. I pray for faith to arise in every family in West Houston.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, I pray that they would increase in faith. I pray over walls and obstacles that seem impossible to them that they would be demolished in the name of Jesus. I pray for a supernatural move of the Holy Spirit for every person on my list.

DAY 9

FEBRUARY 7

"It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures...like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

— C.S. Lewis

"for the joy that was set before him Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame
Hebrews 12:2

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Jesus compares the kingdom to a "treasure hidden in a field" that a man "in his joy" sells all to buy. (M 13:44) The point is to show the worth of the Kingdom. The next parable is similar but with a twist. "the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it." This time it is the Kingdom who is searching and the thing of great worth is you. So we find the kingdom is of such great worth, it is a joy to sell all to gain it. Likewise, you are of such great worth, it is a joy for Jesus to give up all to gain you.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Father, help us taste and see that you are good, that we might be moved to share you with others. Help us to know the joy of finding the kingdom and feel the joy of being loved by our savior.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, expose the emptiness of transient things and show yourself to be the treasure that satisfies the heart to the people on my list.

DAY 10

FEBRUARY 8

“It is possible we have created a culture of volunteers who serve others but not a culture of disciples who love their neighbors as themselves? A new question must be asked by Christ followers: ‘Would my neighbors care if I left?’”

– Rick Rusaw

“But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets.” Acts 24:14

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

The early followers of Jesus were not called people of “the church,” or people of “right doctrine,” or even people of “moral values”. The early Christians were called people of the “Way”. They were known for how they lived their lives, not just what they believed or valued. Our neighbors, more often than not, live too fast and are too cynical. Only an encounter with something real, where they encounter a set of eyes, a conversation, and an authentic life, will cause them to take notice. How many of your neighbors do you know their names, their hopes, their hurts, their history? Do any of them know you care about them the way Jesus does?

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Lord, awaken in us a desire to channel Your love to our immediate neighbors. Lord, help us to recalibrate our busy schedule so that we can make time to get to know our neighbors, knowing that a polite wave is no longer enough.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, please give me an opportunity this week to get to know one of my neighbors names, hopes, hurts, or history. Lord show me how to be a follower of the “Way” as I become a better neighbor.

DAY 11

FEBRUARY 9

"We would ask God to reveal what strongholds the devil held the lost in,...We would then claim that the weapons of our warfare were mighty through God to the pulling down of that stronghold and thank God for doing it right then! We would claim the binding of the strong man..."

– Jack Taylor

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests."
Ephesians 6:18

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

God has invited us to join Him in reaching the lost ones with The Good News. In all things, especially sharing the Gospel, prayer is essential. Talk to Him. Tell Him of your desire to do what Jesus did while He was on Earth: Save the lost ones, heal the broken hearted and set the captives free. God will join you in power when you join Him in what He has called you to do-share the Good News that Jesus saves.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Father, thank you for calling us to do the work of Jesus in West Houston and Katy. God, so stir our hearts with the urgency of a Hell to missed and Heaven to be gained that my brothers and sisters go to the lost and dying with the Gospel.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

God, set the hearts and minds of each of "the lost ones" free so they will hear and believe.

DAY 12

FEBRUARY 10

"Instead of doing what we want and asking God to bless it, find out what God is blessing and line up what you are doing with that!"

– E.M. Bounds

"And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

2 Corinthians 9:8 NIV

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

God is "able" to bless us so that we can abound in the work (mission) He has for us to do! He is able to but sometimes we do not have access to the blessing because our life is out of God's divine order. 1 Corinthians 14:33 says "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace." God's power, blessing and favor flow out of us having Him first with everything else falling in line after. If your life has no peace check who is on the throne of your heart. Make sure your life is in the divine order God has set for us. Our world is in chaos and when they see us live with God's blessing in divine order they will be drawn to Jesus!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord, help me always make sure you are on the throne of my heart and nothing else. 2. Lord, help me to live in Your divine order that brings peace. Help me live in such peace the world around me sees it and is drawn to Jesus!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father I pray we would not seek to be blessed. We would seek you and your Word to line up our lives with it! Chaos will always be in our world until You come. Help there to be peace and blessing IN us because we are in line with You!

DAY 13

FEBRUARY 11

"To take on the way of Jesus wasn't simply to take on his worldview or interpretation of Scriptures; it was to take on his lifestyle - to learn how to think, love, act, relate, practice, embody and model the Kingdom of God."

— Jon Tyson

"Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."

John 20:21

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Many of us are familiar with Christ's command to go and make disciples, but often struggle in knowing how. Jesus gives us a clue in John's gospel. In the same way the Father sent Him, He is sending us. Jesus' life and ministry was fueled by His communion with the Father. Our life and ministry is meant to be the same. The call of the Christian life today isn't just to know more and do more... it's to be more with Jesus, so we can live a life led by the Holy Spirit and rely on God to work in us and through us. The Christian life flows from communion with Jesus first. The more we enjoy Him, the more His joy will flow through us to others!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Thank you God, that the barrier of sin has been removed and we can now live in fellowship with You. 2. Lord, help us to think, love, act, relate, practice and embody the Kingdom of God as your witnesses in the world today.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord I ask that you help each person on my list to understand your desire for them to know a life of communion with you. I pray that you give each person and family on my list eyes to see and ears to hear your gospel message through my example.

DAY 14

FEBRUARY 12

"We make our friends; we make our enemies; but God makes our next-door neighbor."

—GK Chesterton

"Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'"

Luke 15:2

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

It's difficult to read more than two pages of the Gospels without encountering a mealtime. Obviously, food is not the central topic of the Scriptures, but there is no doubt that food was a tool of connection for the Lord Jesus. He was continually questioned by the Pharisees because of his dining companions. For that matter, Jesus was also found eating with the Pharisees! Why so much food in the story of Jesus? There's something disarming about sharing a meal. As we pray for our neighbors, how might we use mealtimes as an opportunity for connection, conversation, and growth? Who could you bless today with some time around the table?

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Heavenly Father, make us more like Jesus, as we intentionally connect with our neighbors around the table. We offer our meals for your use, Lord! In Jesus' name, Amen..

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Heavenly Father, help us to remember the spiritual hunger of those far from God that we sometimes forget. Would you open the door for us to share the hope of Jesus to those who haven't heard? Amen.

DAY 15

FEBRUARY 13

**"Make us worthy, Lord, to serve others throughout the world who live and die in poverty or hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy."
- Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

"For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead"
James 2:26 ESV

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Look around and it won't take long for your eyes to gaze upon a need. A person, created in the image of God, suffering under the weight of a fallen and broken world, in need of love, compassion and real action on your part. Your faith leads you to the margins where suffering is served and God's heart is on display through your actions as one who calls Jesus, Lord. To proclaim a faith in Jesus, a belief in the living God without a care or concern for the suffering of the poor, the thirsty, the marginalized, might cause you to reflect upon the purpose of your faith and prayers when they are not accompanied by our compassionate obedience?

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord, may Your heart move our hearts to act in faith with compassion, service and love to those in need all around us.
2. Lord, may our gospel prayers be put to action in our words and deeds, meeting people where they are.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, for each and every person on my list, I would ask today for a divine encounter with one of your children who will show them compassion and kindness in the name of Jesus. Holy Spirit, for each and every person on my list, draw them to You!

DAY 16

FEBRUARY 14

Evangelism is not a professional job for a few trained men, but is instead the unrelenting responsibility of every person who belongs to the company of Jesus.

– Anonymous

“Let us live sent with unrelenting responsibility.”
Mark 5:1-20

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

Please take a moment to read Mark 5:1-20. It’s a bit long, but you will enjoy seeing an unnamed man completely transformed and his priorities completely rearranged by Jesus. Jesus healed the demoniac miraculously and he immediately asked, no begged, to go with Jesus and his disciples. Jesus tells him no but instead SENDS him home to his friends to tell of all that God has done for him and how He has shown mercy on him. Untrained, yet taking an unrelenting responsibility for this new priority, he went and proclaimed all that Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled (v. 20).

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Lord, we confess our great need for you. Help us today to be faithful in our prayers for those on our list. God, today we pray boldly for the opportunity to proclaim you to those we are praying for and others you place in our path.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Faithful Father, awaken the soul of each and every person on my list. When they see and hear the gospel proclaimed ready them Lord to respond to you!

DAY 17

FEBRUARY 15

"The key to prayer is simply praying."

—AW Tozer

"But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer."

Psalms 66:19

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

As believers, we must understand that God listens to and attends to our prayers. Once we settle in our hearts that this is true, then we just simply need to pray. We need to be constant and consistent in our prayer life. Many times we drift from praying because we begin to waver and wonder from the truth that God listens and attends. Make a commitment daily to truth that God really hears you and is willing to attend to your prayers. The key is to pray and then pray again.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Father, give me a desire to pray.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, I lift up those on my list that they would also have a desire to pray and worship you. Lord, speak to their hearts and incline their hearts towards you. May all unbelief be driven out with the truth that you listen and attend to us.

DAY 18

FEBRUARY 16

"[Jesus'] prayer life is an expression of his relationship with his Father. He wants to be alone with the person he loves."

– A.T. Pierson

"when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Matthew 6:6

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

The first thing Jesus teaches his disciples regarding prayer is to pray in secret. Why? Because "your Father who sees you in secret will reward you." Prayer isn't for show. It isn't to be heard by others as a skill to be celebrated. Prayer is something else. It is intimate. It is time alone with your Father. Calling him "Father" is also key. It gives us a sense of the kind of intimacy we can expect. It is the intimacy enjoyed between a loving father and the son he delights to be with. As much as I, as a father, long for one-on-one time with my son to help him navigate life, how much more does our heavenly father long to be with you?

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Father, I want to experience the intimacy that Jesus had with you. Help me develop this discipline of daily alone time with you. And in that time, will you show your heart to me?

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, please give each person on my list eyes to see that only you can satisfy the deep longings of their soul.

DAY 19

FEBRUARY 17

"Missions exists because worship does not."

– John Piper

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

John 4:23-24

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

"Missions exists because worship does not" seems radical and not very gracious, but is true and logical. Evangelism/missions exist because when an unbeliever "worships" God, their worship is missing two elements the Lord mentioned to the Samaritan woman: Spirit, which is right relationship, and truth, which is right information. Jesus said that the Father is seeking such worshipers, because there are false and true worshipers. Evangelism/missions are crucial not only for the salvation of our neighbors, but also so they can worship the Lord in spirit and truth. The only way, truth and life is Jesus; He is the only way to worship God fully.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Lord Help us to truly believe you are the only way, the only truth, and the only life. And to have the boldness to share the good news of Christ, our only Savior. Amen

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, I pray for every family and individual on my list. I pray your Holy Spirit brings conviction to our hearts to share the Gospel and to our neighbors so they might turn to Jesus for salvation.

DAY 20

FEBRUARY 18

“ Prayer turns ordinary parents into prophets who shape the destinies of their children, grandchildren, and every generation that follows”

– Mark Batterson

“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 19:14

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

As we pray, it is vital that we include the children around us. Imagine what it will be like if we are more intentional and include children in our prayers? What if we were intentional in including local schools in our daily devotional? Children are integral to society; we need to pray for them in a specific manner. We can start by praying for protection as they face dangers, hurts, radical agendas, and worse. We can pray for parents to get help in raising their children through parenting conferences, good books, and the like. Let's pray for our churches to have effective children ministries. Let's be a community that focuses on our children!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord, give Your people throughout Katy a heart for the kids in their churches, in their neighborhoods, and in their schools. 2. Fill the kids and students ministries across our city with loving volunteers.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

1. *Pray for the spiritual needs of every child.* 2. *Pray for their parents to be spiritual role models.*

DAY 21

FEBRUARY 19

“The majority of the issues that our community is facing would be eliminated or drastically reduced if we could just figure out a way to become a community of great neighbors.”

– Jay Pathak

“For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
Galatians 5:14

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

The beauty of loving our immediate neighbors is that it is simple and genuine. Since the goal is to “love” and not make them our pet projects for evangelizing them, we don’t need to memorize any outdated pitches. We don’t need to come up with a diagram on how we are going to lead them to Christ. We just love. Which means we don’t love our neighbors so they will know Jesus, we love them simply because WE love Jesus. As we love those who live near us, something powerful happens. We end up becoming friends with some of them as we get to know them and they get to know us. Ultimately, they will see how our faith in Jesus affects how we do life.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Lord, help us to see that our immediate neighbors are someone we are to love unconditionally. Help us to not rush home and close the garage door and shut them out, but to be intentional with reaching out to them and getting to know them.

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, please awaken in me a desire to reach out to my immediate neighbors, even though I might be nervous to do so. Lord, give me the courage to step out in love and make a commitment to get the name of at least one of my neighbors this week.

DAY 22

FEBRUARY 20

“Learning to love is learning to live. It is becoming fully human. It is nothing less than the reason for our existence. In it alone do we find our deepest fulfillment. For if we find love, we find God. And if we find God, we have found love.”

— David Benner

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” 1 John 4:7-8

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

How has the unconditional love of God in Christ changed you? Do you know that God really loves you, just as you are, not as you aren't? That it really is by grace that you have been saved, and that this is the only way God saves people, by graciously loving them into His Kingdom. Before we can ever share the gospel with others, we must experience it for ourselves. We must know God's love. John goes on to write in his first letter that we love, because God first loved us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. Let's remember to abide in God's love today, before we attempt anything for Jesus!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord give us eyes to see and ears to hear your loving invitation to live from your love today. 2. Lord help us to love well. To be reflections of your love and truth to the world around us, that many people might come to know you!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

1. Lord help each person and family on my list to come to know that you are love and you desire a relationship with them. 2. Lord, please deliver each person on my list from everything and anything that is keeping them from knowing you personally.

DAY 23

FEBRUARY 21

God has given us two hands - one to receive with and the other to give with. We are not cisterns made for hoarding; we are channels made for sharing.

– Billy Graham

“give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.” Luke 6:38

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

The world says get what you can, when you can and as much as you can. We are called to give what you can, what you can and as much as you can. Why? Jesus says tells us that we hold the cup, the measuring tape, the scale that will determine what we receive by what we give. Jesus doesn't say wait till you have the time, the money, the energy, the focus, the passion, the calling ... no, you and I have already received from the Lord all that our neighbor, our friend, our co-worker or any one else need ... we have been forgiven, restored, loved, shown grace, mercy, kindness and more. You are rich in the gospel so give it all away!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord, give us an abundance mindset, that every believer, rich in the gospel, may share it abundantly. 2. Lord, may we see others through your eyes, seeing that what is truly needed is the very thing we possess ... life in Christ!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, may the overflowing gospel generosity of Christ followers be evident to each person/family on my list. Lord, give your children opportunities for gospel generosity so that each person/family on my list my come to know you.

DAY 24

FEBRUARY 22

“Men may spurn our appeals, reject our message, oppose our arguments, despise our persons, but they are helpless against our prayers.”

– Sidlow Baxter

“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you, that your faith will not fail...”

Luke 22:31

TODAY’S PRAYER THOUGHT

Lord, You prayed for Simon and derailed Satan’s agenda concerning him, we invite you to raise up men and women in West Houston who will not just be sensitive to the diabolical intentions of the enemy concerning our homes, families and brethren and the larger community, but who will also arise to derail his plans in Jesus’ name!

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

Lord, stir up the brethren in West Houston from every denomination to engage and cast down satanic plans concerning the Church Leadership in Jesus’ name. We pray for our children also that the enemy will not “sift them like wheat.”

TODAY’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, I pray for (name) that if he/she is not saved, you will save him/her. If he/she is saved, I pray that no matter what the enemy is doing or may try to do, his/her faith will not fail in Jesus’ name!

DAY 25

FEBRUARY 23

“Possibly the only example needed to illustrate intercession for the lost is the sacrifice of intercessory death that our Lord Jesus Himself made... The Bible tells us that even now Christ is involved in intercessions for us in heaven.”

– Manley Beasley

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplication, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; ...God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved”

1 Timothy 2:1-4

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Aligning our lives with God's design is a part of our worship to Him. Holiness includes becoming more and more like Jesus every day. As you move toward Jesus in your heart and life, you will pray for the salvation for those above you, beside you, close to you, far from you, the ones you love and those who are not so lovely toward you.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Father, I thank you that those who shared Christ with me were proactive. I thank you that they came looking for me to share the Gospel so that I might be saved. I pray that I (we) will be “on the go”, with the Good News that Jesus Saves.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

God, as your people go with the Gospel, go before us. Open the hearts of each lost one. Please, give them ears to hear your message of salvation. Draw them to You.

DAY 26

FEBRUARY 24

"The ministry of preaching is open to few; the ministry of prayer - the highest ministry of all human offices is open to all"

– Leonard Ravenhill

"...tremendous power is released through the passionate, heartfelt prayer of a godly believer."

James 5:16

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Have you noticed that we are getting busier than ever before and many are praying less or have totally abandoned praying altogether? You may not be a preacher, but you can still pray and impact lives, the services and ministries of your local body. You may not be an elected official but you can still "rule" and make "decrees" concerning nations and governments from your prayer closet.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Heavenly Father, raise up men and women of prayer in West Houston in Jesus name. Give us by the workings of Your Spirit men and women who will be given/committed to intense, passionate praying in Jesus' name!

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Lord, I pray for (name) that You will reveal and unveil to him/her the possibilities of prayer by responding to his/her prayers in Jesus' name.

DAY 27

FEBRUARY 25

"Prayerwalking is on-site prayer. On-site prayer is simply praying in the very places where you expect your prayers to be answered."

— Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendrick

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."
Habakkuk 2:14

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

Tonight's the night — from 5:00 to 6:00 PM believers across Katy/West Houston will prayer walk in their neighborhoods. As you prayer walk, remember that praying on-site will give you greater insight. Pray with your eyes open. Look for clues (such as toys in the yard) that will guide your prayers. Allow the sights and sounds to seep into your heart and then ascend to heaven in the language of prayer. Remember also that the nations are migrating to the United States, including our community. We have unprecedented opportunities to be a part of God's plan of redeeming the nations to Himself. Pray for the nations represented in your neighborhood.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Heavenly Father, help me to live before my neighbors in such a way that they see the beauty of Jesus reflected in my life. Keep me sensitive to opportunities to move in their direction and to share with them the story of Jesus.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Heavenly Father, I long for my neighbors to experience the transforming power of the gospel. May your light illuminate each home, moving us closer to the day when the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of you.

DAY 28

FEBRUARY 26

"Christ wants not nibblers of the possible, but grabbers of the impossible"

– C.T. Studd

Pray today for your availability to fully present and attentive to those on your list. Pray for opportunities not just to speak but to listen, to be fully present with them.

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

In Acts 8:26-40 Philip encountered an angel who urged him to head south to the road that goes from Jerusalem to Gaza. The Spirit led Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch. Upon seeing him, Phillip ran to meet him. God was already very much at work in the Ethiopian man as he was reading from the book of Isaiah. Philip approached and made himself fully available and he was fully present with him. He asked questions. He listened. He answered questions. He dared to believe that God wanted to change this man and GOD DID! A shocking portion of the story is Philip's obedience. He dared to believe the impossible as he kept taking faithful steps.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Lord, today help all of us praying to keep taking faithful steps and to keep believing in You and in Your work in others. We say yes to obedience. We say yes to your promptings. We say yes to being available today. AMEN.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Father, today I praise you for every person on this list. I praise you for the connection I have with them. I pray for each person by name that they would encounter the Living God through this 30-day prayer journey.

DAY 29

FEBRUARY 27

"Self-indulgence is the enemy of gratitude, and self-discipline is usually its friend and generator... a person's appetites are linked: full stomachs and jaded palates take the edge from our hunger and thirst for righteousness. They spoil the appetite for God"

– Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.

"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."
Matthew 26:41

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

We live on a Super-size-me society. It seems people nowadays (even Christians) are more interested in the here and now, the material instead of the spiritual. Therefore food or entertainment is more appealing than abstaining from it. Fasting causes our flesh to resist. If we endure that's a victory - but when if indulge, we may be spoiling our appetite for God. My mentor Thomas Cragoe, said: "we deprive ourselves from something good in order to achieve something better." The goal is fasting out of devotion instead of legalism. We are just trying to tame the flesh so that it would crave and thirst after God rather than obey the flesh.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Lord, help us develop an appetite and thirst after you through fasting. That our cravings would be more align with Spiritual rather than the material things of this world...which is so appealing.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

Our dear heavenly Father, as we pray for the people in our lists, develop in them an appetite for you and your Word. Cause them to thirst and seek after you and help us to be available to them.

DAY 30

FEBRUARY 28

"Then, in Easter of 2014, it all changed... she handed me a flier and casually asked if I would like to go to church with her and have Easter lunch afterward... She had no idea I wanted to go. But she asked anyway, and it transformed my life."

— Cynthia

"He [Andrew] found first his own brother Simon [Peter] and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah.'... He brought him to Jesus."
John 1:41-42

TODAY'S PRAYER THOUGHT

It's Tuesday, February 28, the last day of Awaken 2023. Sunday is coming. And, Easter Sunday will be here before you know it—Sunday, April 9. For the last 30 days you've been praying/fasting, serving/loving the people on your Prayer Card. If you haven't already, maybe it's time to invite them to your church. As Cynthia noted above, it was a simple invitation to church that transformed her life. At church she met Jesus and His people, and nothing would ever be the same for her. We're all familiar with the Apostle Peter. But it was his brother Andrew who invited him to come meet the Savior! Who will you invite to join you at church this Sunday?

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Lord, please give me and my brothers/sisters across our city the courage to invite our friends to church very soon. 2. Lord, help me and your people across our city welcome with open arms the people others invite to church with them.

TODAY'S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST

1. Lord, soften hearts all across our city to respond positively to invitations to church. 2. Lord, help our churches be places where the good news of the Gospel is proclaimed, and help sinners understand and trust in Jesus!

JOIN THE EXCITING JOURNEY OF SEEKING
GOD'S FAVOR ON THE MEN, WOMEN AND
CHILDREN OF KATY/WEST HOUSTON!

Awaken West Houston is a city-wide movement of prayer and fasting focused on unifying churches in West Houston to strategically pray and fast for every person in the West Houston area one neighbor at a time.

"We've seen God do immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine as we've sought Him through prayer and fasting on behalf of the people we love so much. We've seen Him heal relationships. We've seen Him break addictions. We've seen Him heal the sick. We've seen Him call His lost kids home. And we've seen Him do so much more. And we believe that God is just getting started. And I believe that what God is doing here in the city of Nashville is beginning to spread all across the nation and across the nations, and I believe He's wanting to do it with you where you are at as well."

— Pastor Dave Clayton of Awaken Nashville

AWAKEN
— WEST HOUSTON —