



FASTING & PRAYER

Personal meditations for a new Christ Awakening in America



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These personal meditations are provided for those who would like to partner with the Awakening America Alliance and Cry Out America intercessors as we seek God for a new Christ awakening in the nation, specifically beginning with twenty-one days of prayer and fasting during the month of January.

We have intentionally focused on uniting our hearts in prayer around the Twenty Indicators of a Spiritual Awakening and some of the strategic ways they will intersect throughout the year with the 2015 Preach2Engage initiatives and National Prayer Accord.

We encourage you to dig deeper into the Word of God and develop your own Scripture-based prayers for revival and transformation in America.

Please visit us at www.awakeningamerica.us to register with Cry Out America and to share your personal prayer requests.

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Spiritual Awakenings

Since the earliest days of European interest in the Americas, God's people have sought a place to worship in freedom and longed to experience spiritual awakening. Along the way, God has chosen a variety of places and people to awaken the nation for Christ: the colonial village of Northampton, Massachusetts; the Cane Ridge Camp Meeting; New York City's bowery district; a renovated livery stable on 312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles; and your world. *YOU are a vital link to the next great awakening looming on the horizon of America in our generation.*

Each occurrence of nationwide revival has been different, yet one common denominator has always been evident: a sense of hungry, prayerful desperation. Each time the extended masses have humbled themselves and sought God's deliverance, He has responded in power. That is why in the midst of obvious spiritual decline across America, we have reason for hope today.

In April 2008, an Awakening America Alliance Leadership Summit was called to reflect on the First Great Awakening and the potential for a contemporary nationwide transformation. Recognizing that true awakenings bring visible change, *Twenty Indicators of Awakening* were identified and now serve as an evaluation tool for Awakening in America.

As we agree together in prayer, may God supernaturally bring a divine reversal from darkness to light in the hearts of Americans, who have not experienced His grace. The power of extraordinary, united prayer cannot be overstated. As we unite our voices CRYING OUT to God, we will experience a Christ awakening in America!



National Prayer Accord

In recognition of:

Our absolute dependence on God

The moral and spiritual challenges facing our nation

Our national need for repentance and divine intervention

The covenants of prayer that God has answered throughout history

Our great hope for a general awakening to the lordship of Christ, the unity of His Body, and the sovereignty of His Kingdom

We strongly urge all churches and followers of Jesus in America

to unite in seeking the face of God through prayer and fasting, persistently asking our Father to send revival to the Church and spiritual awakening to our nation so that Christ's Great Commission might be fulfilled worldwide in our generation.

This voluntary agreement in prayer seems "good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28) in light of the promise of Jesus in Matthew 18:19 and the unity for which Jesus prayed in John 17. This prayer accord presupposes a spirit of freedom to adjust its component parts as local Christians see need. Though many are seeking God more often than this prayer accord outlines, calling millions of others around focused times of prayer is an urgent need.

The National Prayer Accord is one of the Awakening America Alliance's *Upstream* strategies to counteract and eventually eradicate *Downstream* pollution in our nation.



Downstream in America we find the symptoms and signs of church irrelevance, fragmented relationships, cultural decay, moral decline, and love growing cold, but . . .

Upstream from such symptoms, we find hope in united prevailing prayer.

THE REVIVAL OF THE CHURCH AND ADVANCEMENT
OF THE KINGDOM IS EVIDENCED BY THE INDICATORS OF
AWAKENING IN THE CHURCH AND CULTURE

We resolve to promote as an ongoing “Rhythm of Prayer” . . .

Weekly In private or small group prayer, which lends itself to a focus on the regular preaching and teaching of God’s Word, asking the Holy Spirit to light the fires of revival by anointing our preachers and teachers each week.

Monthly In local ministry prayer gatherings, such as a mid-week prayer meeting, a Bible study class, a Sunday evening service, a home group, or one meeting of a college campus group, etc. for the exclusive purpose of prayer for revival.

Quarterly . . . In prayer gatherings among local ministries and groups, uniting churches in a community, college ministries in the area, businessmen’s groups, or radio listeners for an evening meeting, a luncheon, or a segment of airtime focusing on prayer for the community or region.

Annually . . . In prayer meetings designed to unite Christians nationally, such as The National Day of Prayer, the first Thursday of May, and Cry Out America, September 11 each year—occasions that call millions of people to pray together.

Day One Prayer Focus

“...but I have prayed for you and when you are restored strengthen others” (Luke 22:32).

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

“He always lives to make intercession” (Hebrews 7:25).

“Christ Jesus is He...who also intercedes for us” (Romans 8:33).

As certainly as Jesus prayed for Peter, He prays for us. Let’s begin this first day by praying for one another, asking God to strengthen, inspire, and anoint us to pray in one accord with Him and each another throughout these 21 days.
The power of unity cannot be underestimated.

Created in the Potter's Image

"But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father. We are clay and Thou our Potter and ALL of us are the work of Thy hand" (Isaiah 64:8).

We may be clay, but we bear the Father's image. In Genesis 1:26, God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule..." To grasp our value to the "Potter," we must begin—not in the garden "fall" or in reference to the serpent—in this setting where God purposefully pauses to counsel with Himself.

This first biblical reference to "us" and "our" with the Trinity in view is significant. Only in the creation story do we find God's full disclosure of His relational oneness. For years, scholars have debated the full meaning of the "image of God" (*Imago Dei*). Some have suggested that Adam and Eve were like God in their personhood, ability to reason, creativity, and spiritual nature. Others have concentrated on the "let them rule" phrase, stating that we are most like God when we rule.

Because the Trinity co-labored over the creation of man (let us make man in our image), we can also discern that to be created in the image of God includes the fact that man was created to be a relational, interdependent, social being—created to relate to God and others.

The uniqueness of a coin is forever determined by the image stamped upon it at the mint. Even when it is lost, misplaced, or damaged it still retains its original image and its significance to the master (Luke 15:8). The uniqueness of man was determined in the creation process. We were created in the "image of God" and His likeness was stamped upon us. Consequently, cherishing life is a priceless priority. "Behold children are gifts from the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). His gifts are to be cherished, protected, nurtured, and loved. We should embrace the virtue and imperative that **"Life is priceless—handle with care."**

Can the phrase "image of God" still be applied to man after the fall? Apparently, for God reiterated this truth to Noah in:

*"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed;
for in the image of God has God made man"* (Genesis 9:6).

Similarly, James seemed to include all of humanity, fallen and redeemed, when he wrote: “With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who have been made in God’s likeness” (James 3:9).

The testimony of Scripture seems to indicate that while some aspects of the “image of God” were lost at the fall, other aspects remained intact. This would indicate that there are two distinct aspects of the “image of God.” One aspect—man’s essence—remained the same despite his fall into sin and corruption. The other aspect—man’s nature—changed completely because of his lost communion with God. It is this fall into sin that brings the heritage of a sinful nature to all descendants of Adam (Genesis 5:3).

However, man’s “essence” includes the capacity for redemption and gives value even to the life of those outside Christ. Man cannot lose this element of the divine image and still be human, thus every human is priceless—meriting respect and value, worth and dignity.

—David Ferguson, Great Commandment Network
Awakening America Alliance, Co-Chair

- ◆ Pause in a prayer of yielding: “Lord, I acknowledge Your work in my life and yield to it. Continue Your Spirit’s work in me that I might better express the life and love of Jesus.”
- ◆ Respond to the Potter with gratefulness and love as you reflect on the wonder of His unending grace. “For I am convinced that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:39).
- ◆ Consider quietly the Potter’s intimate attention toward His creation—His caring concern of your worth and value to Him; you are priceless. Now, allow your heart to respond to Him; tell Him of your gratitude, your thanks, your love.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Two Prayer Focus

Increased care for children as “gifts from the Lord” as the gospel addresses abortion, adoption, foster care, and child well-being

Prayer as Pilgrimage

One of the greatest dangers in the Christian life is stagnation. It happens when we quit moving. There's a lot of reasons why we quit moving and growing. Sometimes it just isn't easy, and we decide to stay where we are. It's easier to stay than go. The press of other life issues sometimes cause us to stop right where we are spiritually. Obstacles from situations or other people often bring our spiritual progress to a halt.

One of the most dangerous reasons is simply lack of vision. We've been growing; we are doing things in the Kingdom; we are seeing God move, and there can come that moment of feeling we have arrived. The failure to have the spiritual vision that challenges us to keep moving is deadly.

*How lovely is your dwelling place Lord Almighty!
My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.
As they pass through the Valley of Baka,
they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.
They go from strength to strength,
till each appears before God in Zion (Psalm 84:1-2, 5-7).*



Psalm 84 is a tool God has used to continually challenge me to keep moving, especially in my prayer life. I have used this powerful psalm to keep myself on a prayer pilgrimage. It is interesting that Psalm 84

speaks of pilgrimage, because the whole psalm is really about dwelling in God's house. How do you dwell somewhere, yet still be on a journey to that place?

I think that apparent contradiction is why it appeals so much to me. You see, that's where I am spiritually. Through Jesus, I now dwell in God's house. Indeed, it can be said that you and I are God's house in which He dwells through His Spirit. That is just solid biblical teaching.

Yet in living this out, I discover that I am on a journey. It is a journey of awareness. And like any journey, I must keep moving if I am to arrive at my destination. Without setting my heart on the pilgrimage of awareness, I will forget the amazing truth that I not only can, but am even now dwelling in the House of God! It is prayer that keeps me walking in awareness.

*Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty; listen to me, God of Jacob.
Look on our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one.
Lord Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you (Psalm 84:8–9, 12).*

—Dave Butts, Harvest Prayer Ministries &
Awakening America Alliance Executive Cabinet

- ◆ Pause in a prayer of reflection and ask the Lord to reveal any area of your life where you may have quit moving or growing in your relationship with Him.
- ◆ Thank God for the longing in your heart and spirit to move into a deeper communion with Him through prayer, fasting, and study of the Word. Acknowledge His promise that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled (Matthew 5:6).
- ◆ Ask the Lord Jesus Christ to move by His Spirit upon the hearts of the people of America, drawing them into personal relationship with Him, and pray that the body of Christ will be prepared to disciple those learning to be Jesus' followers.

AWAKENING INDICATOR —Day Three Prayer Focus
Amplified participation in corporate as well as individual
prayer, fasting, and other spiritual disciplines
leading to more effective discipleship

Reboot Your Marriage

“...in the world you have tribulation...”(John 16:33), and some of our “tribulation” comes through marriage, families, friendships, neighbors and co-workers! Every human relationship needs an occasional reboot!

To reboot is to start again, to reset, to clear certain memory to make it work properly once again, and then proceed. Marriages and other relationships need a “reboot” when we have disappointed one another, forgotten important dates (like birthdays or anniversaries), lost our temper, or been unkind.

In marriage, we often need a reboot as we make our way through various stages of marriage:

- 1) When the honeymoon phase subsides, a second honeymoon often helps.
- 2) After children come along, a weekend away is recommended.
- 3) When the “nest” is empty, a cruise can often be a reboot.

One of the most common relational “disconnects” happens when one person is disappointed or rejected, upset or irritated, and instead of responding with care or compassion, we give facts or reasons. We give “pep talks” or try to “fix it.” Even worse, we communicate how our offense or hurt is much more painful.



Consider for a moment Jesus’ invitation to take His yoke upon you and learn of Him (Matthew 11). The imagery is of Christ standing before us in the yoke, but the other side of the yoke is empty.

Now imagine that Christ stands before you as the One who is the essence of love and invites you to take the other side of His yoke.

Take a few moments to meditate and allow the Holy Spirit to implant the truth of this scripture deeply into your heart and spirit. Picture Christ, however you imagine Him, sandaled feet, flowing robes, or bearded face, standing before you. Imagine now His whispered words. Maybe He speaks first to husbands, as the Lord would say, “I’m often times thinking of her, taking thought of her, encouraging her, affirming her, but a great deal of the time I do it without you. Husbands would you take the other side of this yoke and together, let’s love her well.”

In a similar way, wives imagine Christ standing before you in His side of the yoke. He says to you, “Would you come now daughter and take the other side of this yoke? Because, I am often times supporting and comforting and affirming your husband, but a great deal of the time I do it without you; I do it alone.”

Would each of you come now and take the other side of the yoke that you might learn of Him? Learn what He knows about your husband; learn what he knows about your wife, so that together you might co-labor with Christ to love this other person well. Would you now allow the Holy Spirit to take a new image deeply into your hearts and spirits that it might radically change our co-laboring with Christ?

—David Ferguson, Great Commandment Network
Awakening America Alliance, Co-Chair

- ◆ Take a few moments to thank God for His unconditional love and ask Him to develop this type of love not only in your home and family, but also in marriages throughout the nation. You might consider praying using 1 Corinthians 13 as a guideline.
- ◆ Pray believing that God is able to bring about a divine reversal in homes that are on the verge of divorce. Ask the Lord to bring wisdom and understanding that genders forgiveness and healing.
- ◆ Decree and declare that He is able to restore godly marriages that will encourage the next generation to embrace the value of biblical marriage in the church and society.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Four Prayer Focus

**A decrease in divorces and renewed commitment
to marriage between a man and a woman
in covenant relationship as God intends**

Keeping Your Marriage Alive

As we continue praying and seeking God for a new Christ awakening in America, you might ask, “What do healthy marriages have to do with awakening?” Encouraging and strengthening marriages impacts homes, which impact the atmosphere in our churches, eventually the community and the nation. Here are a few key insights on how to keep your marriage alive.

Practice Humility

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5–6). People resist the proud, too. It’s important to remember that difficult places are often the result of mistakes; many of which are yours. Now is the time for humility. Examine your own role in the situation. Ask God to help you see your sin. I find it’s best to remind myself that the biggest problem in my marriage is not my spouse... it’s me! Take care not to blame shift; God opposes the proud.

Commit Time

We often think of our lives as a culmination of a few big, life-altering decisions, but actually our existence is comprised of thousands of daily choices. If you are married for any length of time, you know how easily you let the ordinary take over your lives. This comforting familiarity easily gives way to complacency. You may end up settling for way less than what God desires for your marriage. It takes a certain level of intentionality to break out of this. Thankfully, it doesn’t have to be hard.

One of the simplest things you can do today is take time for your spouse. Take 15 minutes to sit facing each other and talk about what’s on your mind. It doesn’t have to be deep. Make it a priority. Even if you have young ones running around the house, taking that daily ‘Mommy and Daddy’ time will have a lasting impact on your children.



Remember

The Biblical purpose for your marriage is not your satisfaction. That just happens to be a wonderful byproduct. Marriage is God's idea, and it is meant to reveal the glory of God.

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5:31–32)

—Gil Balch, Marketing and Media Coordinator
Awakening America Alliance

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- ◆ Pray that your marriage will reflect God's intent for husbands and wives as stated in Ephesians 5:32. “This mystery [becoming one flesh] is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.” Ask God to help make your marriage one through which outsiders (kids, family members, and friends) are drawn to Christ as a result of unity with your spouse.
 - ◆ Pray for God to grant you humility when disagreement arises, and it will arise. Spend time in prayer with your spouse in times of agreement so that you can learn to trust each other during conflict.
 - ◆ Make a habit of spending extra time in prayer before you go to sleep. Take a few moments to pray for another couple in your neighborhood or church that you know is struggling. Ask God to give them unity and humility, and remember that these are the same things your own marriage needs!

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Five Prayer Focus
Restoration of righteous relations between men and women;
decrease in divorce rates, co-habitation, same-sex relations,
sexual abuse, sexual trafficking, out of wedlock children, and STD's

An Awakened Church (Part 1)

Several years ago, I was invited to lead the morning prayer sessions for our denomination's international assembly. Interestingly, church leaders had chosen "Awake" for the theme to inspire delegates representing more than 130 nations around the globe. After a powerful week of prayer, worship, and the Word, I experienced an encounter with the Holy Spirit unlike anything I had ever known in my life. It was as if the Father was giving me a clearer picture of what a truly awakened church would look like.

As I have reflected on this personal, awakening moment, these are some of the **characteristics that I believe will become evident in an awakened church in any nation:**

- ◆ We will attract Father's presence by honoring the Son, seated at His right hand. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will become the center of our focus—the preeminent One.

In these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they (Hebrews 1:2–4).

- ◆ With cleansed hands and purified hearts, we will be robed with holiness, unconditional love, and power to not only move forward into God's presence but to move out into our world—forward, never backward.

Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart . . ." (Psalm 24:3–4).



- ◆ Holy Spirit fire will be imparted to us and ignited in us. It will stir within God’s people a righteous indignation for His young sons and daughters who have been overtaken in the darkness of the night.

“but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8).

God’s time is not our time. We have heard His call in the past, but we will not hear it forever: I believe He is saying to us: “AWAKE to My cry, AWAKE to My harvest! It is final harvesting time. I have washed you; now continually robe yourself in My purity, My power, and My anointing for My work.”

Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed (Romans 13:10–11).

—Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

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- ◆ Pause and ask yourself, “Am I still dreaming godly dreams for the nation of America?” If so, “Do my prayers reflect a faith in His ability to bring an awakening to our nation?”
 - ◆ Use the bulleted points and Scriptures to guide your prayers for:
 - Christ to be glorified, the church to be cleansed, and the Holy Spirit to impassion believers to demonstrate the Lord’s love and compassion in their cities
 - Successful evangelism and church planting in your city and across the nation.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Six Prayer Focus

A passionate pursuit among churches for the well-being of their cities through the planting of new congregations, benevolent ministries, practical service, and focused evangelism

An Awakened Church (Part 2)

What do you see? What do you dream for America's awakened church? If dreams birth desires and desires determine destiny, I believe today's dreams can awaken tomorrow's destiny. With this in mind, how will we move forward into 2015 following our 21 days of prayer and fasting to impact a culture in desperate need for transformation?

We must be consistent and intentional to pursue what God envisions within us. We must do so with holiness, for the One who has called us is holy. We must pursue His harvest with true, not feigned, humility because as we awake, arise, and shine, our shining will be with His reflected glory and not our own. We will be awakened to an unsatiated hunger for more.

Our obedience will mean our death, yet those who die with Christ will be raised to new life with Him. We will shine with His anointing not only to stand in His pulpits but to walk into His fields. We will also drip with His perspiration as we work together in the night of this world. We will radiate with the glory of His presence that will rise upon us.

*I was asleep but my heart was awake.
A voice! My beloved was knocking:
'Open to me, my sister, my darling,
My dove, my perfect one!
For my head is drenched with dew,
My locks with the damp of the night'* (Song of Solomon 5:2).

If we truly CRY OUT in repentance and turn from our wicked ways, our hearts will be purged and our land healed. God longs to, pour in His oil for our mourning, wrap us in His restored beauty for our rags and ashes, and cover us in a garment of praise for the privilege of being His oaks of righteous planted in the harvest field for the display of His splendor—not our own (Isaiah 61).

God is issuing an invitation for corporate prayerfulness, private communion, and deeper revelation. Now we must walk forward with great expectation and watch as He brings transformation within us and within those we harvest for Him.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

We must be willing to accept a revival that may not be so neat and tidy because true revival involves confession, forgiveness, reconciliation, and embracing those God brings to His church that may not always meet our specifications. The writer of Proverbs reminds us “Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox” (14:4). Consequently, while others may be polishing their thrones to build their kingdoms, we will be cleaning our dirty stalls with towels that have become wet from washing one another’s feet as well as the feet of His newborn babies.

We will find an unbelievable soul satisfaction for this fresh longing of our hearts. With His Holy Spirit empowerment, we will accept and move toward our destiny in Christ. My prayer is that God will place not only a hunger but a willing and obedient spirit to pursue what can and will become reality for an awakened church in any nation.

In this new day, the joy we experience will far outweigh the pain of giving birth. Our joy and strength will be exponentially multiplied not only in this day of harvest but in the day of Christ’s return for He says to us: “I AM, I AM, I AM your soon-coming king!”

— Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

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- ◆ Do you have an expectation of what a local revival might look like? Confess it to God, abandoning any control of what He wants to do. Even though He’s already in control, ask God to have free reign over the method and outcomes of HIS work. It will free you to wait patiently before the Lord.
 - ◆ Think about someone in your church who is a new convert. Pray specifically for this individual, their family, and their ministry or calling God has placed on their life. Share with them that they have been remembered in your prayers. This is also a good practice for covering every member of your congregation in prayer.

AWAKENING INDICATOR — Day Seven Prayer Focus
Increased conversions and baptisms

The Church's Finest Hour

"For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isaiah 60:2-3).

If I were to ask you to take a moment and evaluate the current state of our nation, I believe that we would agree darkness is increasing in the land. As a result, the foundational pillars that support and undergird our society (domestically, politically economically, and morally) are disintegrating and are on the verge of collapse. As the integrity of these pillars continue to erode, the ruin of our society is imminent.

In the midst of this gross darkness, which is descending upon America, we have been commissioned by Jesus to be the "light of the world." Consequently, we have been entrusted with the spiritual heritage of this nation. Unfortunately, because the church has been in a deep slumber, our leaders and some of the most brilliant minds in the nation refuse to look to the church for answers. We have been marginalized and considered to be irrelevant at this most critical time.

However, I remain greatly encouraged because the church's finest hour is just upon us. The glory that the Father gave to Jesus is resident on the inside of every true believer, according to John 17:22. As this glory is revealed, the Scriptures declare that the nations and leading officials will flock to us for answers. We are seeing this beginning to happen which is an indicator that an awakening and sweeping move of God's Spirit has begun.

"O Israel," says the LORD, "if you wanted to return to me, you could. You could throw away your detestable idols and stray away no more. Then when you swear by my name, saying, 'As surely as the LORD lives,' you could do so with truth, justice, and righteousness. Then you would be a blessing to the nations of the world, and all people would come and praise my name" (Jeremiah 4:1-2).

— Arthur Guice, Senior Pastor,
Spirit of Liberty Church of God &
Cry Out America State Coordinator

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- ◆ Take a few moments to ask God to give you fresh revelation of how the church has become a “sleeping Giant” and specific ways He desires to reverse this trend.
 - ◆ Decree and declare that the church will be roused out of its slumber and awakened to our responsibility to be providers of hope for our nation as we become increasingly aware of the brevity of time we have remaining to evangelize our world.
 - ◆ Pray for the glory of the Lord that is resident within us to be manifested so true unity will be experienced throughout the church according to John 17:22–23.
 - ◆ Ask the Father that through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, His church will increasingly be recognized by the nations as a people whose light and compassion bring hope and salvation.



AWAKENING INDICATOR — Day Eight Prayer Focus
Community and national leaders seeking out the church
as an answer to society’s problems

Serving the Next Generation

Generation is the act of producing offspring or the act of creating something inanimate. A generation can also be a stage in a succession of natural descent—grandmother, mother, and daughter. A family generation is the average time between a mother's first offspring and her daughter's first offspring. This makes a natural generation approximately 25 years in length.

Many experts believe because of the acceleration of culture and technology, cultural generations are approximately 10–15 years long. At one time, it took 40 years for an idea to move from Europe and take root in the U.S. Because of modern technology, the transfer now is believed to be about two years or less. Our opportunities to be culturally relevant, to reach and equip the next generation, are on an extremely fast track. How are we serving our generation and equipping the next?

Even in view of his personal weaknesses and failures, King David was considered a man after God's own heart, who would fulfill all His will. The New Testament commentary on King David's legacy was "after he had served his own generation by the will of God, [he] fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers" (Acts 13:36). Of course, from David's lineage, God raised up a Savior.

In his book, *Watchman Prayer: How to Stand Guard and Protect Your Family, Home and Community*, Dutch Sheets challenges us with these words, "Testimonies are waiting to be created; a generation of youth is waiting to be born again (Exodus 37); dry bones are waiting for breath; homes are waiting to be healed; addictions are waiting to be broken; untold millions are waiting to hear the gospel for the first time."

The first and primary place we serve and equip the next generation is by loving and training our children in the home. Fathers and mothers after God's own heart will have an unconditional love that pursues the best for their children. Not only do they train and discipline, they also watch or protect and warn of potential enemies that could bring harm to the next generation. A watchful parent will also recognize the gifts and callings that God has placed within their children and help to nurture and encourage those gifts. How vital this is both for our biological and spiritual children God places in our lives.

The length of time we have to serve our generation may vary, but our history is yet to be written. Are we still producing spiritual offspring? With cultural acceleration occurring at today's rate, are we being culturally relevant without compromise?

—Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

- ◆ Thank God for mothers and fathers who have a relationship with Him that enables them to love and teach their children with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding that come from knowing God.
- ◆ Thank Him for godly extended family members who bless and encourage parents as well as their children.
- ◆ Ask God to build and strengthen the faith of parents, giving guidance and insight for developing their children's gifts and callings (2 Timothy 1:5–6).
- ◆ Pray that God will give mothers and fathers the language of those who are instructed by God, so they may speak with wisdom into their children's lives; they will know how to sustain their children when they are weary with comforting words; they will be able to teach their children how to be instructed by the Lord (Isaiah 50:4).
- ◆ Pray for parents to be filled with God's Spirit and model a relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit even as Jesus modeled that relationship for us.
- ◆ Pray God will cause parents to multiply their Christian impact through their willingness to parent those who have not had godly parents (Isaiah 54:1-3).
- ◆ Pray that fathers will be careful not to exasperate their children but lovingly, wisely, and patiently train their children in the ways of the Lord, creating an atmosphere of joy that celebrates obedience in their homes (Colossians 3:20, Ephesians 6:4).

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Nine Prayer Focus
Imparting faith to children and youth by equipping parents to
become the primary disciplers of their children

Believing God for Greater Than

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father (John 14:12).

This response to Phillip's request, "Lord, show us the Father," has always been a bit challenging for me when I consider all the mighty works and miracles Jesus did in His brief lifetime and even shorter public ministry. However, the concept of Jesus' followers doing "greater works" is a bit more understandable when we realize what Jesus is telling Phillip. Essentially, He is saying, "The miracles you have seen me perform could have only been accomplished through the all-powerful work of God the Father."

Later, Paul reassures us that Christ Jesus is now seated at the Father's right hand ever interceding for us (Romans 8:34). Consequently, when a miracle—event not explicable by natural or scientific laws—occurs, we can have no doubt that it is the result of the Father's working and not our own. He is the One due all the glory and praise!

This was definitely the case when my father was healed of thyroid cancer. Dad had experienced symptoms similar to a stroke victim, became extremely disoriented, and experienced other physical challenges, combined with unexplainable weight loss. The doctors performed a plethora of tests attempting to discover the cause for his confusion and inability to function normally. Eventually, they determined that he had a growth on his thyroid gland and a biopsy would be required. After two biopsy procedures, we were told the results indicated one of two aggressive forms of thyroid cancer.

A few weeks later, surgery was scheduled with a cancer specialist from a prominent clinic in the Memphis area. A host of family members gathered to support Mom and Dad on the day of the procedure. The small waiting room forced us to wait in the lobby, and the nurses jokingly said, "We need a set of bleachers rather than a few extra chairs for this gang."

We were believing God for a "greater than" report from the doctor!

I will never forget what transpired approximately half-way through the operation. My brothers and I accompanied Mom back to a small room to meet with the surgeon. The unplanned pause was not to share bad news but to ask our opinion about removing the entire thyroid versus only the growth. Earlier, the doctor had assured us a pathologist would be present in the operating room, and they would run careful tests to make certain all the cancer had been removed before closing.

Apparently, the surgeon and the pathologist were amazed with their findings. He said, “We have examined and reexamined the growth, and we cannot definitively say this is cancer.” We opted for removal of the entire thyroid for precaution and awaited the final pathology report a few days later.

Due to other responsibilities, I returned home, but two days later, we received the wonderful news. Mom called to say the pathology report revealed some type of “dead cells.” It seems the few weeks’ delay that allowed for prayers to be offered, literally around the world, also gave a window of opportunity for the omnipotent Father of heaven and earth to perform a miracle procedure unexplainable by natural or scientific laws. We were filled with praise and thanksgiving to the Lord of glory, who does exceedingly, abundantly above all we can ask or think.

—Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

- ◆ Take a few moments to read and reflect on one of your favorite miracles from Scripture. Ask God to increase your faith to believe and embrace Him as the Lord of the impossible (Luke 1:37).
- ◆ Pray for Jesus followers to walk in the reality of God’s Word (John 14:12; Matthew 17:20; Luke 18:27, and Hebrews 11:6) so that they will be able to present the fullness of His message and reveal the secrets of His kingdom—the mystery of Jesus Christ dwelling in and empowering us by His Spirit.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Ten Prayer Focus

Christians involved in bold witness accompanied by miracles, dramatic conversions and Holy Spirit empowered victories over evil

Celebrating Jesus Together!

Years ago I met a very special brother of African heritage in Canada, Bernie Smith. Bernie was the senior Canadian champion in track and field for several events. He was an incredible minister of the Gospel with a compassion for the poor as well as a marvelous worship leader and pastor.

Bernie led worship at Amsterdam '83 where thousands of evangelists came from all over the world in response to an invitation by Billy Graham. When he and I met each other, it was interesting because we never focused on our differences. It's like when you meet someone who has blond, red, or black hair. You notice the difference, but that's it. Immediately, you either connect as friends or have caution about an individual. Bernie didn't look at me any more oddly than he would anyone else, even though I had an amazing southern accent along with a bit of energy beyond the norm.

We fell in love as brothers because of Jesus living in each of us. Our age difference didn't matter, neither did our ethnicity. He didn't see me as anything but a shell in which Tom resided— the real Tom. I saw him exactly the same way. Our friendship has flourished over three decades though geographically we are nations apart.

This is what Jesus can do with an individual, a couple, a neighborhood, a province, state, or a nation. He is the One that we see in each other, and His love permeates all. Oh the power of the Gospel!

—Tom Phillips, Billy Graham Library &
Awakening America Alliance Executive Cabinet

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- ◆ Take a few moments to read 1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 2, and Galatians 3:26–29. Pause in a prayer of yielding: “Lord, I acknowledge Your Word of peace and reconciling love. Please use me as an instrument of healing and unity in my world.”
 - ◆ Join with Jesus in His high priestly prayer of John 17 by asking that we would be one as He and the Father are one.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Eleven Prayer Focus
Breakdowns of racial, social, and status barriers
as Christ's church celebrates together—Jesus

Awakening to the Fear of The Lord

When was the last time you heard a sermon on “the fear of the Lord?” On the other hand, what about a sermon about grace? Of course, grace proliferates every sermon and song we hear, but “the fear of the Lord”? I don't think so. There is rarely even a mention of it.

I was a new Christian when the fear of God first fell on me (a very biblical expression and experience). It marked me for life. So today, balancing my white hot love affair with Abba as I sit nestled on His welcoming lap is the constant awareness Father also loves me enough to correct and discipline me.

We are told culture cannot tell the difference between a Christian and an unbeliever. Did you ever wonder why? Here's a leading reason: there is no fear of God in His people! You see, “the fear of the Lord is clean,” and “the fear of the Lord is to hate evil” (among a long list of other things—a great Bible study).

Paul said: “Cleanse yourself . . . perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1). The aged Solomon wrote: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

When a nation, a people, a church, or an individual loses it's fear of God, morality and integrity decline, and God turns His face.

—Jeff Farmer, Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America
& International Center for Spiritual Renewal Adviser

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- ◆ Spend some extended time studying “The Fear of the Lord” throughout Scripture. As you meditate on the nature and characteristics of God, ask Him to give you an Isaiah 6 encounter.
 - ◆ Why not take this opportunity to confess your need of cleansing from anything that is revealed in the light of His holiness. Believe Him for a fresh calling and commissioning in your life to share with others about the fear of the Lord, who alone is worthy of honor.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Twelve Prayer Focus

An awakening to the “fear of the Lord” rather than the approval of people, thus restoring integrity and credibility

Heroes and Champions of Faith

The church needs heroes today. Heroes of the faith who are willing to risk their own lives to rescue the perishing at all cost. Every generation needs heroes—men and women—we can look up to and emulate. The Bible is filled with stories of heroic believers who obeyed God and did mighty exploits in difficult situations. We are told to consider their faith and imitate their manner of life. The writer of Hebrews makes several references to those who should be imitated:

"We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised" (Hebrews 6:12).

"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith" (Hebrews 13:7).

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter (or finisher) of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:2–3).

Not finding positive heroes to imitate, many of our young people today have sadly latched onto negative heroes. They emulate perverse rock stars, gang leaders, television stars, athletes, and the list goes on. Many destructive role models have been substituted for the true heroes our generation so desperately needs. Just as the Bible points to heroes of the faith whose example we should follow, it also gives many warnings about imitating the ways of evildoers:



"Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character'" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

"Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God" (3 John. 1:11).

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked (ungodly) or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night" (Psalm 1:1–2).

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus and, like the heroes and champions of the faith who have gone before us, provide a living example to the next generation of how to run a godly race and finish well!

—Doug Stringer, Somebody Cares America & Awakening America Alliance Executive Cabinet

- ◆ Ask God to shift our culture for good as He raises up men and women who will walk in the spirit of the sovereign Lord, anointed to preach good news to the poor, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for captives, and be instruments of hope for the release of prisoners from darkness (Isaiah 61).
- ◆ Pray that you and your family will be ambassadors for Christ as you exemplify His love through your example of loving relationships in marriage, family, and the community of faith.
- ◆ Pray for Christians in your neighborhood. Begin prayer walking your streets, and invite other Christ followers to join you. Watch to see where God is working in lives and begin to join Him.
- ◆ Ask God to give godly leaders in our local, state, and national government, marketplace, and media. Praise Him that as His purity invades these high places, it will impact our culture. Thank God that their influence as Jesus followers will permeate every arena of our society.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Thirteen Prayer Focus
Neighborhood transformation and an accompanying decrease of social ills through increased expressions of “loving your neighbor” in service, compassion, and unity

A Perpetual Construction Zone

*“Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this
Your servant and to the prayer of your servants
who delight in revering your name” (Nehemiah 1:11a).*

Ruth Graham once saw a highway sign she liked so much that she had the words inscribed on her tombstone: “End of construction. Thank you for your patience.” Whether we are on a personal journey to spiritual maturity or attempting to rebuild a nation on godly foundations, we must accept the fact that it’s a perpetual process.

In ancient times, one of God’s more severe disciplinary measures that Israel endured was their time in Babylonian captivity. Eventually released to return home, they found political, social, and spiritual conditions in their homeland were in shambles. When Nehemiah appears on the scene, the walls of Jerusalem were still in ruins because of the habitual laziness of the people and a failure to learn from the lessons of the past. He was not a priest or theologian but a passionate servant of God. He was so moved concerning the affairs in his homeland that he wept, prayed, planned, and began the task of reconstruction.

You might ask, “What does Nehemiah’s rebuilding project have to do with my life or awakening in our nation? Walls symbolize strength and protection. In ancient cities, walls were the first line of resistance. When our means of defense are torn down, the enemy has free access to our minds, emotions, and will, eventually impacting our families, churches, and communities. Reconstructing walls pictures the restoring and renewing of the strength of a life and a nation.

The challenges may seem insurmountable, and we will sense the opposition increase when the enemy sees us getting serious about rebuilding. Yet, we cannot afford to retreat or compromise our strength of character and commitment to Christ. Satan will consistently attempt to cause more rubble and destruction in the middle of our attempts at reconstruction, but we can respond as Nehemiah:

“...The God of heaven will give us success. We His servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it” (Nehemiah 2:20).

Remember, you do not have to be a minister, prayer leader, or great theologian to participate in rebuilding America. We simply have to recognize that the path to restoration and renewal begins with a spirit of brokenness, humility, and recognition of need. As we acknowledge our desperate need for His divine intervention, we can be grateful that He will patiently continue the reconstruction process in our lives, transforming our nation one heart at a time.

—Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

Like Nehemiah, we can begin with the following:

- ◆ Respond with prayer—intense, strategic prayers and quick, momentary pleas throughout the day (Neh. 1:5–11; 2:4; 4:4–5; 9:5–37).
- ◆ Focus first on God—not political leaders, court systems, liberal agendas, or even the church. The Lord God of heaven is a covenant-keeping God, who is attentive to the prayers of His servants.
- ◆ Repent of our sins—Nehemiah did not merely point a finger at someone else; he included himself in the confession.
- ◆ Unite with God’s people—the people, who had a mind to work with Nehemiah, labored together and fought for their brothers, sons, daughters, wives, and houses (Nehemiah 4:6, 14).
- ◆ Recognize your strategic position—people in every class of life from high priest to merchants, male and female, young and old, were engaged in repairing the wall nearest their own house (Nehemiah 3).
- ◆ Be willing and obedient—respond to whatever the Lord speaks to you to do for the greatest effectiveness.
- ◆ Decree and declare: “We refuse to be intimidated by the enemy’s opposition to the reconstruction process God has for us. We trust the Holy Spirit to expose his tactics and renew our strength to deal with the rubble of broken lives and devastated communities.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Fourteen Prayer Focus
A transformation of society through the restoration of Christ’s
influence in the arts, media, and communications

Free at Last

“You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free” (John 8:32).

As surely as truth sets us free, the lack of truth produces bondage. Our nation has slowly drifted away from our biblical moorings we had as a young nation. We have strayed significantly from the days when our first President, George Washington, concluded one of his many public prayers in 1752 with these words, “Let me live according to those holy rules which Thou has this day prescribed in Thy Holy Word. Direct me to the true object, Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the life.

(Washington’s Papers, W. Herbert Burk, 1907, p. 87–95).

Each July fourth, we celebrate freedom, yet it seems important for us to consider the question: “Free to what?” Even as we celebrate life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness . . .

- ◆ Are we free to do what we want without considering others?
- ◆ Are we free to speak out—even if our words attack and demean others?
- ◆ Are we free to pursue our happiness at the expense of others?

The apostle Paul shares both an admonition and a warning: “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh. . .” (Gal. 5:13).

Sadly, freedom can give opportunity for the flesh—personally, as a nation, and as a culture. What results is the tragedy of freedom lost. In twenty-first century America, vain imaginations have replaced moral absolutes. Permissiveness and tolerance have been lifted up as moral ideals. The definition of tolerance (correctly defined as respect for other people without necessarily sharing their ideals, beliefs, and practices) has been twisted to mean that all individual beliefs, values, lifestyles, and “truths” are equal in value. The loss of true freedom is a global, cultural issue.

Our culture is “burned out” on the emptiness of cerebral arguments, linear thinking, and even correct theological systems. They long to see the relevance of God, His Word, and His people in their life and relationships, but the good news is we can have hope of a renewed freedom to love. The church must not only believe right and behave right, but also live and love right in relationship with God and others.

The principle seems clear: much truth leads to much freedom; little truth, little freedom. We may have a crisis in our message concerning truth. The twenty-first century church must restore a priority on experiencing biblical truth. Biblical truth was intended to be lived experientially in relationships.

As we join together for these 21 days of prayer, let's agree to claim the promise of John 14:14, "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." We're asking in His name for one specific thing: "Lord, free me from myself and this world that I might better receive and express Your love."

—David Ferguson, Great Commandment Network
Awakening America Alliance, Co-Chair

- ◆ Pause to reflect and ask yourself, "Have I become engrained in a culture addicted to our own self-indulgences, blinded to the discrepancies in our own espoused "values," and numb to the guilt pangs of our own transgressions?"
- ◆ As we embrace the imperative of personal prayer for spiritual renewal that was so much a part of our nation's history, pray King David's prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10). "Lord by Your spirit would you remove from my life anything and everything that hinders the expression of Your love; cleanse me; forgive me; empower me to live and love as Jesus."
- ◆ Ask the Holy Spirit to restore a desire within the body of Christ to protect and proclaim the Word of truth by becoming living epistles, who demonstrate it through Great Commandment love as we move toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission.
- ◆ Pray and ask God to transform our nation's response to truth from one of subtle decay (which comes from misapplying God's truth only to the rational mind) to allowing its transforming power to shape us into a nation that honors Him in all we do.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Fifteen Prayer Focus

A restoration of morality, ethical foundations and accountability among leaders of church and government, business and politics.

A Life-Changing Tip

About three weeks after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, I was returning from a conference and frantically trying to locate a piece of baggage. The shuttle driver had mistakenly set my carry-on bag on the sidewalk in front of Chicago's O'Hare airport. What made this especially frustrating was the fact that I was one of the few passengers who bothered to tip the guy.

Thankfully, due to heightened TSA security, the airport police quickly retrieved my suitcase and notified the Delta service agent, but not without first examining its contents. Of course, I had no problem with their search because the last thing I wanted to be carrying on board was contraband someone may have placed in it while out of my possession.

However, I must offer Mr. Shuttle Driver some consideration. He was on a very tight schedule. He had far too much baggage for the number of passengers and was coping with a bunch of tired, homesick women. They could care less whose luggage he sat on the sidewalk as long as they had their own. Deserving or undeserving, the driver probably needed all the tips and appreciation he could get.

In much the same way, we run through life on a tight schedule, carrying far more baggage than we ought to carry for our load capacity. Then to top everything, we have to cope with being surrounded by a gang of weary travelers who seem to have their minds on everything but what we think is really important. In the midst of it all, we get distraught and a bit irritated.

About that time, God slips us a tip that is far more than we deserve and whispers through the commotion:

“When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's cross” (Colossians 2:13–14).

Talk about a change in the course of events! God not only found us in our lost state, He freed us from all spiritual death threats, and canceled our staggering debt of sin through the cross of Christ. He graciously released us from Satan’s dominion of darkness and brought us into His kingdom of light. Now we have the opportunity to pass along this life-changing “tip” to others.

—Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

- ◆ Reflect on the glorious gift God has given through Christ. The distance between our sin and His grace is vast, yet He willingly condescended from high and lofty places to reach to us in our low estate. Remember your life before embracing Christ as Savior and God as your Father. Thank Him for His amazing grace and goodness to redeem you from destruction and crown you with His loving kindness and tender mercies.
- ◆ 1 John 4:17 says, “... as He is so also are we in this world.” Although He has given us the opportunity to be seated with Him in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6), remember the importance of reaching others, who have not embraced His redeeming grace.
- ◆ Are you struggling in any area of your relationships with hurt and unforgiveness? Pray Colossians 3:12–13 over your life: *“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”*
- ◆ Search for an opportunity today to show the undeserved love of Christ. It may be sharing the gospel or buying groceries for the stranger behind you in the cashier’s line. As you have been healed, ask God to open your eyes to every opportunity to reveal Jesus to others in a hurting world.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Sixteen Prayer Focus
Young adults, students, and children embracing the claims
and lifestyle of Christ through the witness of peers
who live and love as Jesus.

A Shared Experience

“And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm” (Mark 4:36–39).

Scripture often contains overlooked nuggets of information that can take us to new places of understanding. Hidden away in this Mark 4 passage is a small phrase that simply says “other little ships.” When this familiar account is reviewed, we find the disciples in a frightening situation—their lives flashing before their eyes, death eminent, and the Master right there with them.



The resolution to the crisis occurred as Christ rebukes the wind and speaks peace to the stormy sea. All was well after they called upon the Peace Speaker to deliver them.

When our lives are affected by adversities and unexpected circumstances, how are others

around us impacted? The “other little ships” were also protected from destruction when the winds calmed and the waters settled. What took place in the lives of the disciples made a difference in the lives of those sailing alongside them.

We don’t live in bubbles with everyone totally separated from us. Our situations and our reaction to them—good or bad—directly affects the world around us.

The folks on the other little ships were thrilled with what took place. They benefited from the outcome of someone else’s experience. Are those around us benefiting from our reactions in life? Are we helping to calm their seas?

—Perry Horner, Church of God of Prophecy &
Awakening America Alliance Intercessor

*No man is an island,
Entire of itself,
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.
As well as if a promontory were.
As well as if a manor of thy friend's
Or of thine own were:
Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind,
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee. —John Donne*

- ◆ The movie, *The Castaway*, with Tom Hanks gives brief insight into what a person experiences when they are completely isolated. Though fictional, the reality of the results of a life in solitude is very revealing. Reflect on the gift of the Church in the believer's life. Thank God for loving relationships He has given you as well as His promise to never leave you nor forsake you.
- ◆ Intercede for God to reveal His evident presence to the people of our world and bring a greater awareness of His manifest presence in His church. Ask Him to grant His servants the boldness to continue speaking His Word to others, while HE stretches out His hand to heal, so that signs and wonders are performed through the name of Jesus (Acts 4:30).
- ◆ Pray for God to use your life experiences—the sunny days and the stormy times—in 2015 to be have positive impact on the people of your world.
- ◆ Prioritize interceding daily for lonely individuals in your church and community. Remember to pray for those who are homebound, in nursing homes, widowed, single parenting, in military service away from home, or simply living isolated lives. Put action with your prayers by visiting, calling, and sending notes of encouragement to those God brings to mind or across your path. Let them know you're praying for them and love them.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Seventeen Prayer Focus
Increasing testimony of the manifest presence of God

Never Displaced or Misplaced

*“May the beloved of the LORD dwell in security by Him,
Who shields him all the day, and he dwells between His shoulders . . .
The eternal God is a dwelling place, and underneath are
the everlasting arms . . .” (Deuteronomy 33:12, 27).*

Have you ever faced a time of transition when you felt totally displaced or perhaps even misplaced? You were certain you had clearly discerned God’s instructions, but once the decision was final and the move made, you began to wonder if He had placed you on the back side of the desert like Moses or even abandoned you completely. Surely, this was not His final destination for you.

After fighting life or death battles in the spiritual trenches of a dynamic pro-life ministry for more than 13 years, I found myself in a ministerial role for a local congregation. Many saw this as a promotion, especially for a woman. Yet, I was grieving the loss of almost daily interaction with unbelievers at their point of need and serving with wonderful Jesus followers from a broad spectrum in the kingdom of God. Surely, pastors were not supposed to feel this way!

One day while nursing my self-pity in the church’s prayer chapel, I cried out to God, “I feel so displaced!” Almost immediately, I heard in my Spirit, “but Kay, I am your dwelling place.” Before the mountains were born or the everlasting God had spoken the world into existence, He had prepared a place by Him where He could hide me in the cleft of the rock and cover me with His hand during this transition and everyday of my life. Suddenly, His evident presence filled the small room, and I no longer felt misplaced and alone.

Thankfully, God loves, chooses, and sets ministers apart for His service not because we are super spiritual or extraordinarily gifted, but out of love and amazing grace, so that we might be a display of His power and glory even in our weaknesses.

According to George Barna, “73 percent of surveyed Americans expect clergy to live up to higher standards of moral and ethical conduct than they expect of self or others.” Even the president of the United States is not expected to live by a pastor’s code of behavior.

In the words of Gary Kinnaman, “It’s almost like they are one step closer to God than the rest of us. So when expectations aren’t met, when they disappoint us, or when they fail, we react. Our heroes become villains. They fall off the pedestal, and we find ourselves despising them. We have great difficulty reconciling their human frailty with our expectations.”

What is “normal” life for a pastor and his family? Expectations are as varied as the churches they serve and as numerable as the number of members in the congregation. Imagine their personal struggles with the added pressures of family responsibilities, church expectations, and the complications of having nowhere and nobody with whom they can feel safe to share. Having close friends can even be challenging.

I love the fact that Scripture is uncensored. We see the good, the bad, the beautiful, and the ugly. We rejoice in fulfilled dreams, struggle with unanswered questions, and get answers we would rather not have heard. Yet, there is benefit in the struggle, the questioning, the failing, and the succeeding—not by a human definition but God’s definition of success. We would do well to remember this and encourage our leaders who constantly face the pressures of life lived in the fishbowl.

—Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

- ◆ Examine your expectations of your pastor. Are there unrealistic things you’ve unwittingly required of them? Have you ever been too demanding of your pastor? Ask God to give you a fresh, godly perspective of their role and renew your faith in His choice for the godly authority He has placed in your church.
- ◆ Pray specifically for your pastor, and ask God to strengthen their personal walk with Christ and help them shepherd their families first and lead the church well. Follow with a call, email, and/or card of encouragement. Mention a positive aspect of their recent sermon that was especially meaningful to you.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Eighteen Prayer Focus
Improved health among ministers as evidenced
by their joy, decreased resignations, healthy loving relationships
within their families, and an increased response
among young people called to the ministry

A Tale of Two Donkeys

A new generation of leaders is rising. They are filled with vision, energy, and zeal. Many of them feel ready to take the reins of leadership and forge ahead. But timing is key.

Over the past several years, formal and informal conversations between Christian leaders across the country invariably gravitate to the topic of leadership transition. When do we pass the baton? How do we pass the baton? Passing the baton at the right time and in the right way can make or break the spiritual legacies of leaders who have been running their race faithfully for years.

As we press in, pray for, and position the Body of Christ for the next great awakening, this issue can weigh heavy on our hearts. The last thing any of us want to do is stand in the way of a visitation from God by clinging to positions or prominence. Is it time to let young leaders loose? While pondering this topic recently, the Lord brought to my mind a tale of two donkeys. It is surprisingly applicable.

Jesus was headed to Jerusalem for the most important assignment in human history. He had walked that way many times before, but on this particular trip He did it differently. Let's look at Matthew's account.

"Now when they drew near Jerusalem . . . Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them . . . So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them" (Matthew 21:1-3, 6-7).

When the disciples came into the village, they found the mature donkey and the young colt together. They did not have to get the donkey from one place and the colt from another. These animals already had a relationship with one another.

When they were brought to Jesus, He sat on them both, together. The mature donkey could have carried Jesus alone. It had plenty of experience carrying people and other loads over the years. But Jesus did not want to do things the way this donkey had done them before.

Jesus could have chosen the colt alone. The colt may have been able to carry the weight of Jesus alone, but the risk of stumbling or permanent damage to its growing bones and muscles may have ruined it for future use.

Jesus chose to rest His weight on them both. In fact, it was prophetic that He did so. Together they would carry the weight of His glory into the city. Together they ushered in a global awakening that is still being felt today!

Just as the donkey and colt needed each other to fulfill God's purpose of delivering Jesus to Jerusalem, mature Christian leaders and next-generation leaders also need one another as we corporately seek awakening.

Next-generation leaders can challenge mature leaders to seek God for new wineskins, new ways of doing things. Mature leaders can model how to steward a move of God with humility, and guide the next generation around the stumbling blocks Satan is sure to throw in the way.

At some point the next generation of leaders will take over and bring still future generations along. But timing is important. It might just be that the awakening we all long to see will come as the generations work together.

—Jodie Chiricosta, Vice President
Somebody Cares America

- ◆ Take time today to write a prayer letter. Compile a short note of hopes and prayers for the Christian leadership in your city. Make the letter full of encouragement, scriptures, and focus on the importance of the next generation. Then send the letter first to your own pastor and then to other prominent pastors, youth ministers, and other leaders in your city.
- ◆ Decree and declare God's deep love for children and youth. Ask Him to save those who are without Christ and to lead the babes in the Lord to maturity.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Nineteen Prayer Focus
Heightened expressions of love and unity among all believers, as demonstrated by the unity of pastors and leaders

God Has Not Forgotten You

What happens when we experience tragedy, sudden loss, or even temporary setbacks? With the support and prayers of those around us, in time we regain hope and trust. My encouragement to each of us is that even though challenges, obstacles, and life-altering events occur, God is there for you with arms outstretched. His unfailing love will see you through and His plan for your life has not changed.

May hope arise in you today!

God has not forgotten you. He has a plan and a purpose for you that are far greater than any of the temporary circumstances, which may be plaguing you. His Word over your life is true, and He will be faithful to complete it.

We must stand on the goodness and faithfulness of God and continue to declare His Word over our lives. In 2 Chronicles 6:17, Solomon prayed, "And now, O Lord God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David."

Solomon knew the word of God spoken over his father, David, and that word carried the promises for his own life. Now Solomon cried out to the Lord to let that word come true that he might see it come to pass.

We too, must pray earnestly for the purposes of God to come to pass in our lives. We are not to sit idly by, waiting to see what will happen all around us. God invites us to become partners with Him to see His Word come to pass. "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

In the midst of all the challenges we are facing, God's faithfulness and His goodness are ever-present. But it is important that we not let our focus turn to our circumstances, which can cause us to doubt God's word for our lives. When we stop and reflect on the landmarks of our past and what God has done in our lives, we see His faithfulness and steadfast word over our lives.



God's nature is unchanging.
He is faithful to His Word.
He hasn't forgotten you or
His promises for your life.
Countless are His thoughts
towards you — always!

*"How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!
How great is the sum of them!
If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand;
When I awake, I am still with You"* (Psalm 139:17–18).

—Doug Stringer, Somebody Cares America &
Awakening America Alliance Executive Cabinet

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- ◆ Declare God's Word over your life that you are indeed a child of God. *"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God"* (Romans 8:14). Thank God for the privilege of being adopted into His family as a joint heir with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17).
 - ◆ Remember God's Word through Paul, to always rejoice in the Lord (Philippians 4:4), regardless of circumstances. Shift your focus away from yourself and earthly circumstances so that you can receive from the Lord. Quiet your heart and listen to Him.
 - ◆ Although Solomon claimed the promises made to him and his father, David, he still neglected the people in his kingdom. *"Your father [Solomon] made our yoke heavy"* (1 Kings 12:4). Remember God has not forgotten the disenfranchised or forsaken of this world. Ask the Spirit of Christ to give you a desire to care for the hungry, homeless, the most vulnerable, and needy. Then act on those prayers, trusting the results of your actions to God.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Twenty Prayer Focus
Increased care for the hungry and homeless,
the most vulnerable and needy

Unreasonable Love

The word “love” is a commonly used word in our language. We love pizza and chocolate, shopping and hunting, our spouse or significant other, and our children. However, love at its best is the height of human affection and loyalty. In New Testament Scripture, the word used to describe the divine love of God is agape—a selfless love, which gives and sacrifices expecting nothing in return, an unconditional love that has the best interest of the recipient at heart. One might say it’s an “unreasonable love.”

In one of the most intimate writings in Scripture, John uses tender terminology such as “dear children” and “dear friends” as if he is writing a family letter from the heavenly Father to His “little children.” He essentially looks at the evidence and gives clear proof of the incarnation of the Son of God—Jesus Christ. Based upon this extravagant demonstration of divine love, John challenges us to love one another with these words:

“This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:9–11).

When you pause to think about it, the Incarnation narrative (Matthew 1:18–25) is one of the most unreasonable love stories in all of Scripture. Webster defines “unreasonable” as “not governed by or acting according to reason . . . absurd.” How absurd that God would send His Son to be our Savior—One who shares the nature of the Father—God manifested in human flesh! “For in Christ all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form” (Colossians 2:9).

Consider how unreasonable it was for God to ask a young, virgin handmaiden, engaged to be married to a righteous man, to conceive an unplanned pregnancy then endure the shame and risk that would be involved. How ridiculous that Joseph would be requested to follow through with his wedding plans with Mary and accept the responsibility for her “illegitimate” child! Unreasonable! Yet what would our world be like if they had chosen otherwise?

We tend to divorce ourselves from certain accounts in God's Word. This occurred more than 2,000 years ago to some people in Israel. It is an interesting story, but nothing like that would ever happen today. No, we will never have another virgin birth. Jesus Christ is the one and only Savior of the world. Yet, all of us have experienced disappointment, loss, or overwhelming needs. Sometimes entire communities and population segments have been ignored and marginalized.



Who are we in their story? What could be asked of us as recipients of God's unreasonable love? Could He be challenging us to respond with unreasonable love for those the world might deem unloveable?

—Kay Horner, Executive Director
Awakening America Alliance

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- ◆ Place yourself in their story and ask, “What have I recently done for God that seemed totally unreasonable to my world?”
 - ◆ Ask God to birth afresh in you His love that compels you to see neglected and hurting people through the lens of the gospel, so that you and your church can begin to address their needs through word and deed (Matthew 25:31–40).
 - ◆ Pray, asking the Holy Spirit to strengthen your faith walk with Christ, so that you may be used to impact those in your sphere of influence to come together in unified strategies and unreasonable love, accompanied by practical actions, that will transform your entire neighborhood, community, and city.
 - ◆ Visit www.namb.net/loveloud/ to discover some great ideas for demonstrating God's love by meeting significant human need while sharing Christ.

AWAKENING INDICATOR—Day Twenty-one Prayer Focus
Commitment to radical generosity as evidenced by compassion ministries and global missions



21 Days Fasting and Prayer
Personal Meditations
prepared by the
Awakening America Alliance
www.awakeningamerica.us

