

# ON MISSION *Together*

PRAY FOR 30 DAYS

PRAYER GUIDE

# Thank You

## **FOR JOINING US FOR THIS 30 DAY PRAYER JOURNEY.**

These devotions and prayer prompts are designed to assist North Carolina Baptists in praying for God to be glorified through our obedience to His command to go across the street and around the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This year's devotional contains entries from a cross-section of North Carolina Baptists, including pastors, church planters, missionaries and stay-at-home moms.

We believe that North Carolina Baptists are a movement of churches on mission together. There are so many things that we can do as the people of God. We can serve, we can give and we can share. While there are many things we can do, we know that God alone can change hearts. Unless the Lord builds the house, we labor in vain (Psalm 127:1). So, we invite you to pray. Use these devotions to help you meditate on God's Word and pray toward the coming of His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

# Day 1

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Revelation 5:9

**Brian Upshaw**

*The Summit Church, Fuquay-Varina Campus*

As N.C. Baptists, we want to be known as “a movement of churches on mission together.” This is not just some catchy slogan. It is a call to all of us to unite around the great mission of God to see the gospel of Jesus Christ spread to the very ends of the earth. Why is it important that we be on mission together? It is important because we know the end of the story!

Revelation 5:9 shows us that a day is coming when King Jesus, the Lamb of God, will open the scroll that reveals God’s final judgment on the earth. In this verse, the truth is confirmed that a certain people are saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, including people from every tribe, language, people and nation. This means that every language and every ethnicity are represented around the throne of God.

This multicultural, multilingual, multiethnic throng of people is reinforced five other times in Revelation (see 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 14:6; 17:15). The Bible is clear. God wants worshipers. Not only that, God wants worshipers from every tribe, tongue, people and nation. To that end we pray, we give and we go — on mission together!

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Ask the Father to raise up missionaries from North Carolina to go to every tribe, tongue, people and nation.**
- **Ask the Father to save people from every tribe, tongue, people and nation.**
- **Pray that the Lord will use these 30 days of prayer to show you how you can be more involved in His mission and where He might be calling you to go.**

# Day 2

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE Nehemiah 7:66-69

Micheal Pardue

*First Baptist Icard, Connelly Springs*

When Nehemiah finished his wall around Jerusalem, God put it on his heart to assemble everyone “to be enrolled by genealogy” (Nehemiah 7:5). Just imagine: the people of Israel, gathered together. Sons of Zaccai and Bigvai and Harim. It’s a list we would likely gloss over in our Bible reading plan.

However, we read that the whole assembly together totaled nearly 50,000 people. A formidable force, to be sure. A people who had been scattered about, away from their land and place of worship, had now assembled in one place. Initially, Nehemiah and the other leaders were concerned because the “city was wide and large, but the people within it were few...” (Nehemiah 7:4). But this assembly surely put to rest any thought that they were too few to handle the work God had for them.

In the next chapter, Nehemiah called them together again, and Ezra shared from the Book of the Law so that all could hear and understand the words of God. Worship was restored. The Sabbath was observed. Offerings and sacrifices were made. Men agreed to live in the city to keep her safe. There was much left to do, but the work could be accomplished because they took on the labor together. We, too, are called to a great work that must be done together.

### PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that North Carolina Baptists would be reminded that we are all in this kingdom work together.**
- **Pray that North Carolina Baptists would utilize our combined resources for the work of the kingdom.**
- **Pray that North Carolina Baptists would be encouraged by remembering that we are many when we are together.**

# Day 3

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE Philippians 2:1-13

**Matt Capps**

*Fairview Baptist Church, Apex*

I once watched an interview with an actor who portrayed Jesus in a film adaptation of the gospel accounts. The actor remarked how he strived to remain “in character” while on set when interacting with those around him between shots. After all, he was dressed for the part of Christ. It reminded me of one of Paul’s favorite exhortations, to “put on Christ.”

There is no more glorious or demanding example of this than what we find in the Christ-hymn of Philippians 2. This passage puts forth Jesus as the ultimate model for Christian behavior and action, the supreme example of humble, self-sacrificing service. The context of the passage shows that this is not just a proclamation of what Christ did, but also a call to practice Christ-likeness as well.

First, before 2:1-13, Paul urges the church to conform to Christ — that is, to live a life worthy of the gospel (1:27). Second, after 2:1-13, Paul continues this thought by exhorting the church to be blameless, innocent and without blemish (2:14-17). In other words, as Christians we are to humble ourselves for the sake of unity and be in the service of others (2:2-4). This is the key to being on mission together.

Remember those WWJD bracelets that were so popular over a decade ago? Perhaps there were deeper theological and missiological roots to this fashion trend than we imagined. It wasn’t about wearing a bracelet but about embodying a message.

### PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that God would melt our hearts in adoration as we reflect on the humble, self-sacrificing work of Christ.**
- **Pray that Christ would convict us when we are not acting in conformity to His character, and that we would emulate Him in our interactions and relationships.**
- **Pray that the Holy Spirit would empower us to know how to “put on Christ” in all situations.**

# Day 4

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Matthew 5:13-16

**Rick Hughes**

*Brook Haven Baptist Church, Germantown*

### **Are you salty?**

“Salty old man” is on a t-shirt my grandsons brought back to me from their vacation. “Salt” means different things to different people, and what my grandkids meant was totally different from what my grandfather taught me about salt and saltiness. On the farm where I grew up, we used salt as a preservative. My grandfather taught me how to salt meat to keep it in the smokehouse for use throughout the year.

What was Jesus’ purpose in telling people to be salty? Was he telling them to be grumpy? Of course not! When Matthew wrote about “saltiness” 20 centuries ago, they had yet another understanding of salt. In those days, salt was used as a seasoning, a preservative and even a disinfectant. Jesus was pointing to the gospel because Christ-followers are salty in a good way.

When people understand and share the gospel, they season the culture around them such that others may taste and see that the Lord is good. Moreover, believers who make disciples preserve the truth of the gospel by multiplying image-bearers who create a legacy. Finally, the gospel is the ultimate disinfectant to remove the stain of sin from our lives.

### **Is your light hidden?**

People who live in big cities cannot imagine how dark it gets at night on a farm. My grandsons and I once spent the night in a tent by the lake. The only light came from our lantern and the stars. We were surrounded by darkness except for the faint light of our little campsite.

As believers in a world growing increasingly dark, we can often feel like a tiny light in a sea of darkness. As John 8:12 states, “I [Jesus] am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” Do you follow Jesus and reflect that light of life to others?

Jesus challenges us to be salt and light outside the walls of our church buildings, to be on mission together. We must be intentional about going into the dark places of the world and allow Jesus' light of life to shine in and through us. Only then can we become salt to season, preserve and disinfect the lives of others through the power of the gospel by the work of the Holy Spirit.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask the Lord to show us hindrances that keep us from being salty.
- Pray that God would show us behaviors that prevent the light of Jesus from shining through our lives.
- Ask that God would show us how our love for Him may be feigned by seeking the glory of people rather than seeking to bring glory to God.

# Day 5

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Mark 1:35-38

Chris Aiken

Englewood Baptist Church, Rocky Mount

These verses appear amid the busy context of ministry. Jesus was inundated with spiritual and physical brokenness of every kind. From demonic possession to physical healings, His activity drew the entire city to His doorstep in search of relief.

At the pinnacle of these demands, we find the Lord in prayer, seeking fellowship and leadership from the Father. When He finished, He declared that while the work was plentiful and the demands were continual, His Father had ordained another purpose: to preach the gospel “*there*.”

*There* is where we find the will of God, and *together* is how He desires us to embrace His will. It is not enough to be busy or simply meet needs. We were destined to be *on mission together, there*, as we constantly increase the scope of our ministries until there is no town, no city, no place left without a witness of the gospel and of God’s people faithfully proclaiming it together.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- Pray that we as N.C. Baptists may not be overwhelmed with activity but be intentional to fulfill the Lord’s purpose together.
- Pray that we as N.C. Baptists may never be satisfied to remain where we are but may courageously press beyond to the nearby towns, so that we might preach the gospel there also.
- Pray for God’s glory to be manifest throughout our state as we labor together to expand the name and fame of the Lord together.

# Day 6

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Romans 15:5-6

**James Weddington**

*Eastern Hills Baptist Church, Charlotte*

Have you ever sat in the bleachers and felt the energy created by hundreds or even thousands of people cheering in unison? Perhaps you have been drowned out by the zeal of children chanting in the car the name of their favorite restaurant when asked what to eat for dinner. Paul understood the power of unity to accomplish a task. Rome was a cultural crossroads and melting pot, like many areas of our state today. Paul's prayer captures a pressing need for merging cultures, specifically Jewish and Gentile believers.

How would they reconcile differences for the cause of Christ? Just like in Paul's time, things to divide over are not hard to find. Paul gives this advice to encourage believers: be on mission together. God gives believers harmony with one another by perfectly displaying endurance and encouragement for us. A unified voice for the sake of the gospel glorifies God as our oneness and unity is in accord with Jesus Christ. As with kids chanting or a cheering crowd, when believers unite to be on mission together, the church will have a louder voice for the gospel.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray today for believers to live a life of encouragement and endurance.**
- **Pray that believers' unity may be based solely on the completed work of Christ.**
- **As we seek to be on mission together, pray that our voice for the gospel will resound loudly in our communities for the glory of God.**

# Day 7

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Matthew 28:18-20

Edward Davis

*Missio Dei, Raleigh*

On Nov. 9, 1989, the world was astonished by the news of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The city that had been divided for 28 years was united again. Although the epicenter of joy was Germany, an onlooking world shared in the excitement. Something great had taken place!

As we look through the verses of Matthew 28:1-17, we see that the greatest event in human history had just taken place in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is risen! Now, after several post-resurrection appearances by our Lord, Jesus gives His last words, His command — indeed, His marching orders for the church in Matthew 28:18-20.

Based on the authority of King Jesus and his promised presence, we must now go and make disciples for King Jesus. But how?

Our text gives us three lessons on how we can obey the call to go and make disciples for Jesus Christ. First, our call to go and make disciples is dependent on the *authority* of King Jesus. In verses 16 through 18, Jesus makes it emphatically clear that He is the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the boss of bosses. He alone is sovereign. His authority extends over creation (Matthew 8:26), over sickness and diseases and demons (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:28-34), over sins (Matthew 9:1-4) and over death itself (Matthew 28:1-10).

Second, our call to go and make disciples is dependent on the *command* of King Jesus. The assignment is clear: make disciples. As Mark Dever would put it, making disciples is simply helping others follow Jesus. This is the heart of the Great Commission.

How do we do that? By going, which is evangelism; by baptizing, which is helping others identify with Jesus and His family/community; and by teaching, which is helping others know and live by the will of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

Finally, but certainly not of least importance, our call to go and make disciples is dependent on the promised *presence* of Jesus Christ. Jesus promises that He will be with us always! Family, you can take that to the bank. Jesus will never leave us nor forsake us. Oh, what a Savior!

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask God to help you lean on the authority of Jesus as you seek to live missionally.
- Begin by asking if you need to be discipled, and if so, ask God to send that person who will invest in helping you follow Jesus to maturity. Second, ask God to send one person you can disciple.
- Ask God to help you live on mission in such a way that, as you anticipate opportunities to share the gospel, you will reflect confidence in Jesus being with you.

# Day 8

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

John 20:21

**John Morrison**

*Christ the King Church, Hickory*

The Father sent Jesus into the world to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). This sending overflows from God's everlasting love and ultimately results in the redemption of the world. This is God's mission. The Father sent Jesus *into the world* (John 3:17), and now Jesus sends us into the world to join in His mission.

The world is all around us; it is the place of our daily lives. We trust that Christ purposefully sent us to where we are right now. Jesus sends us into the world to *serve*. As He served in word and deed, so we serve by declaring and displaying His gospel. We take heart that we are not sent alone, for just as the Father sent the Son *in the power of the Holy Spirit* (Luke 3:22; 4:14), so Jesus pours out His Spirit on us to empower us on His mission (John 20:22). Moreover, we are sent *together* as God's people. We join in God's mission as members of Christ's body, the church. Jesus sends us together into the world to join in God's mission by declaring and displaying the gospel.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Thank the Father for His perfect love that has overflowed in His redemption of the world.**
- **Ask Christ Jesus for the grace to declare and display His love in your community.**
- **Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen you for this mission and to maintain His unity among God's people.**

# Day 9

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Psalm 126:6

**Michael Cloer**

*Cape Fear Network of Baptist Churches*

After hearing the gospel from me for nearly three years, James professed his faith in Jesus Christ as his Lord and was baptized. Less than a year later, I preached his funeral. The promise of God in Psalms 126:6 was confirmed again by a simple act of obedience.

You know people who are far from God, but how can you experience the joy of bringing them to your Lord? It begins by going to them. Our intentionality to go to the lost must be a lifestyle, a continuous action.

Witnessing as a lifestyle is not a result of guilt but flows from a heart of compassion. When was the last time you wept over lost souls? Do you have a list of lost souls that you continually pray for?

As God prepares the heart of that lost soul, we must be faithful to share the gospel seed. The power of our witness is not in our illustrations or outlines but is in the Word of God.

There is no joy on earth or in heaven like celebrating a lost soul coming to Jesus! When you and I go and weep and sow the incorruptible seed, we have the privilege of rejoicing when that soul is found.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that the Father would grant you compassion for the lost.**
- **Pray specifically for people you know who are far from the Lord.**
- **Ask God that you may experience the joy of watching someone you have witnessed to follow the Lord in baptism.**

# Day 10

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

1 John 3:18

Sharon Ellington

*One Church, Avon*

If you haven't had the chance to meet me yet, here is your warning. I am loud, I hate shoes, I carry my ukulele almost everywhere, and I tend to say whatever comes to my mind. I am not your traditional pastor's wife.

A non-believing world does not want to hear from a perfect Christian. Instead, that woman who is suffering from infertility needs to know how Scripture helped you after hearing the words "you have less than a 10% chance of conceiving." A wife struggling in her marriage may need to hear that your marriage hasn't always been perfect, but that God helped you through and will help them too. They need to know that your house isn't always clean, your children misbehave, and sometimes you run late!

To be able to love in action and truth, you have to be out there. So I challenge you today, North Carolina Baptists, to go on mission together. Show the love of Christ to those around you by being kind, by sacrificing, by sharing yourself as you tell them about the One who sent you.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray today for someone suffering in a sin you have experienced. Pray for ways you can minister to that person.**
- **Pray for the boldness to step out and love those whom you may not understand, those who think, look and act differently than you.**
- **Pray that God will make clear to you the opportunities He has for you to serve, and for the boldness to act upon those opportunities.**

# Day 11

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Colossians 2:8-10

**Cory Smith**

*First Baptist Hildebran*

In Colossians 2:8-10 Paul cautions the Colossian church about those propagating philosophy and empty deceit that hail from human tradition and the elemental spirits of the world. He warns the Colossians because these individuals and their teachings have the potential to take the church captive. Today, our churches also run the risk of being held captive by philosophies and empty deceits.

They encircle our denomination, the political climate of our country, and even our own personal preferences. We must not fall victim to them. Instead, we must focus on Christ and the mission He has called us to over everything else.

My concern doesn't come from the power of these philosophies and traditions. Christ is far superior to them. Instead, my concern stems from our reactions to them. We are becoming known more for fighting against contemporary belief systems, politics and people groups than we are for proclaiming Christ.

In our attempt to battle against the issues I fear we are being taken captive by the fight. They are beginning to consume our focus, our efforts and even our pulpits. This cannot be. We must be vigilant. We must be kingdom focused. We must be on mission together.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that we might be bolder about the gospel than we are about the “issues” we fight against.**
- **Pray for a gospel awakening within the local church.**
- **Pray for our pastors as well as our associational, conventional and denominational leaders.**

# Day 12

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Psalm 71:14-18

**Betsy Bolick**

*Perkinsville Baptist Church, Boone*

The psalmist writes this lament in the midst of great pressure and persecution from outside forces. His heart proclaims unwavering faith in God, the rock of refuge and covenant keeper who never leaves or forsakes His children. The psalmist knows this truth personally and intimately. From his youth the Lord has taught him that God alone is his hope, fortress and trust. He asks the Lord not for great wealth, comfort or prosperity but instead that he would live long enough to proclaim the righteous and wonderful deeds of his God to the next generation. The cry of his heart is that the mission of God would not die with his own death, but live past the days numbered for him.

D.A. Carson has said that “the church is never more than three generations from losing the gospel; one generation to believe it and proclaim it, a second generation to assume it, and a third generation to lose it.” May we not be those who assume or lose the gospel. May we be people on mission together, people who believe and proclaim the gospel to the next generation in North Carolina and to the ends of the world.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Take time to praise God for His salvation and mighty deeds that He has done.**
- **Pray for N.C. Baptists across the state to believe and boldly proclaim the gospel.**
- **Pray for the generations in your local church. Ask God to show you how you can remind them of God’s righteousness and His wondrous deeds.**
- **Pray that you would live your life on mission together and that God would teach you to number your days and gain a heart of wisdom.**

# Day 13

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Psalm 32:1-5

**Zeb Cook**

*Apex Baptist Church*

To be forgiven of our wrongdoing is both a beautiful and humbling experience. In Psalm 32, David recalls this experience as he processes one of the lowest moments in his life. He begins this Psalm by stating how blessed we are to be forgiven and then quickly transitions into the agony of unconfessed and hidden sin. In verses 3-4, David is on the mountaintop looking back into that low valley of his life, and he describes what many of us feel from time to time. He uses language that resonates with us — language that describes the heaviness, silence, groaning and weakness we feel in our attempt to conceal what an all-knowing God already sees. That which we think is helping us is the very thing causing us the most turmoil. David climbs out of the valley in verse 5 and gloriously states that when he acknowledged his sin to the Lord, He forgave him. When he turned to find his way back to God, David realized that God never left. There is good news for us today. God is more eager to forgive than we are to confess.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Ask God for a spiritual awakening in your church, community and state. Ask the Lord to begin this process within your own soul first. It may be that today you have sin to uncover so you can experience the freedom found in Jesus.**
- **Spend time meditating on verses 1-2, and thank God for the blessing of forgiveness.**
- **Pray for the lost world around you that desperately needs the hope of the gospel. Pray for the countless believers who are attempting to conceal their sin and find themselves in great inner turmoil because of it. Pray that God would open their hearts and that true revival would take place.**

# Day 14

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE 2 Chronicles 20

Marty Dupree

*Little River Baptist Association*

We sometimes find ourselves in situations where we don't know what to do — or feel powerless to do anything.

Pray and ask God to tell you what to do, then do exactly what He tells you. God blesses obedience. 2 Chronicles 20 is a great encouragement and reminder that God can fight our battles for us, no matter what we are facing or how big the challenge is.

Jehoshaphat faces an incredible situation in which three armies are coming against Israel. He prays and consecrates a fast. He is then reminded that the battle is God's (verse 15) and that God will save them (verse 17).

Jehoshaphat is instructed to put the priests and worshippers out front and the army behind. When the three armies come against Israel, he would see the salvation of the Lord. The armies completely destroy themselves and never reach Israel. God fought the battle and Israel spent three days gathering all the "spoils."

God blesses obedience — no matter how radical His request. He fights the battles for us, then blesses beyond the victory.

### PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray about things you need to turn over to God to fight for you. Ask Him to.**
- **Praise the Lord for battles He has already fought for you.**
- **Pray about a mission God is calling you to do that only He can do. Will you obey?**

# Day 15

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Ezekiel 3:10-11

**Brooke Medina**

*The Summit Church, Brier Creek*

We live in an age when words and information can flow ad infinitum. The online world, for all its many benefits, has made it much easier to carelessly throw words on our social media wall without concern for how they sound to the ears and eyes of those who read them. In the Era of the Hot Take, we're expected to have an opinion on nearly every news item, and even worse, to share our often hastily crafted opinion with a world of online strangers, subjecting it, and ourselves, to their praise or derision.

The prophet Ezekiel received the instruction found in verses 10-11 during a time when the children of Israel were exiled to Babylon. This exile was a period of national shame and personal turmoil as men, women and children were torn from their families, their properties and, in many ways, their identities.

God's first charge to Ezekiel was not to hastily and boastfully scold the Israelites. His first command was to listen, and after having listened, to meditate, allowing the Father's words to transform his own heart. It was only after Ezekiel had oriented his heart to humbly heeding God's words that he was permitted to instruct others. The practice of quieting our hearts to hear what the Father is speaking takes humility. It is an acknowledgement that we are needy and must first be transformed by love before we are ready to speak prophetically to others.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Thank the Father for His steadfast love, even during times when it might feel like you're walking through a period of spiritual captivity or isolation.**
- **Ask God for the ability to hear what His Spirit is saying to you and the grace to obey.**
- **Pray for strength to rest confidently in Christ's love as you discern how to engage with others.**

# Day 16

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Acts 17:26-27

Denise O'Donoghue

*Imago Dei, Raleigh*

N.C. Baptists believe in the Great Commission. In fact, we are one of the top states in the country for sending our brothers and sisters to other parts of the world to share the gospel and to baptize and make disciples. We should all be involved in supporting North Carolina's international missionaries.

Today's passage reveals another part of God's plan for getting the gospel to the nations, and it involves everyone who lives in North Carolina. Paul, speaking to the men of Athens, informs them that God moves unsaved people to places where they might find Him and be saved. This is where you and I come in. God is placing internationals from all over the world in our neighborhoods, in our workplaces and at our childrens' schools. They are where we shop, where we eat and even where we play. Let's be on mission together, and as these people "feel their way toward Him," let us help them "find Him."

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask the Lord to increase your love for internationals.
- Ask the Lord to show you ways to care for them.
- Ask the Lord to give you boldness to share Jesus with them.

# Day 17

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

John 13:34-35

**Quintell Hill**

*Multiply Community Church, Monroe*

Do you like new things? Jesus communicated something new when He commanded His disciples to love one another. This really wasn't something new, but it was a reiteration of what God already communicated to His people. They were to love God and love their neighbor. This love did not just extend to the people of God but to the nations. They were always to be a light to the nations!

Today the church is also to be a light to the nations. One of the primary ways that the nations will know Him is by our love for one another. To say it a different way, our love for one another is our gospel witness to a watching world that is in desperate need of a Savior. The way we model this love is by looking at the One who is love: Jesus.

John said, "When Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved them to the end" (John 13:1). He did not stop loving; He loved those who did not love Him. His love extended to those who were not lovable. He demonstrated this love as He washed Judas' feet. Jesus loved! As God's people, who are on mission together, we must continue to LOVE — Look Outward Very Easy! Just like Jesus did. This will be new to a watching world, but it always points back to the One who hung on that old rugged cross.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray and ask for forgiveness for not loving God as we should and for our love for Him to increase.**
- **Pray for our love for our neighbors and for our unity around the gospel to increase.**
- **Pray that our gospel witness can increase and souls be saved as the people of God Look Outward Very Easy.**

# Day 18

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

2 Corinthians 4:1-6

**Brad Knox**

*Mercy Church, Washington*

I'm not sure about you, but sometimes I struggle with staying on mission for Jesus. Whether it be life distractions, my own sinfulness or selfishness, or focusing on my own burdens, sometimes this task seems impossible. Thankfully, there are some lessons from the Bible that can keep us on task. In 2 Corinthians 4, specifically the first six verses, Paul gives some helpful reminders of keeping us on task when we feel like giving up. In defending his gospel ministry, Paul points us to why it is so vital that we stay focused. We're reminded that we are to be faithful to the gospel message, not distorting or changing it, but rather sharing its truth.

In a world used to deceit and lies, we are called to openly display the truth of the gospel. Why? Because this world has had its eyes blinded to the truth of Jesus and their minds clouded from seeing who Jesus is. If we want them to see Jesus and know His resurrection power, we must proclaim Him, for He alone can draw them from darkness and into the light of His glory. Let us commit to proclaiming the gospel and nothing else!

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that we would be faithful to the gospel.**
- **Pray that God would open the eyes and hearts of the lost.**
- **Pray that the light of the gospel would bring glory to God as we are on mission together.**

# Day 19

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Acts 13:1-3

Jason Miller

*Dutch Cove Baptist Church, Canton*

The church in Antioch was a church on mission together. Throughout chapters 11-12, we see this church reaching their city with the gospel and making disciples with a zeal for the mission of Jesus. This is their public testimony.

The first few verses of chapter 13 reveal the personal character of this church as though the doors are flung open and we are invited inside. What do we find fueling their missionary fire? Faithful worship, fervent prayer and obedience to the Holy Spirit.

Think about it. Things are going really well. They're experiencing the sweet fellowship of Christ in worship together, and then God says to them, "Set apart for me two of your best. I am sending them out from you." Their place in the missionary movement of God hinges on their response.

How did they respond? They fasted, prayed, blessed Paul and Barnabas, and yielding to the Spirit, joyfully sent them on mission. They knew that through obedience, what God had in store for them was greater than what they had in front of them. The church willingly gave up their best to receive God's best.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **When we are too concerned with holding on to what we have, we miss out on what God has to give. Ask the Holy Spirit what convenience, comfort or anxiety you need to let go of that may be separating you from God's best in His mission through you.**
- **Our missionary God sends those He saves. God is calling all of us together to leverage our occupation or position in life as a dedicated platform for the gospel. Ask the Lord specifically to whom He is sending you to share the gospel with this week, and ask the Holy Spirit to empower you as you go.**
- **Pray for your pastor and your church to be fueled by faithful worship, fervent prayer and obedience to the Holy Spirit as you serve Jesus on mission together.**

# Day 20

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

1 John 3:22-23

Eli Taft

*Knowing God Church, Concord*

As those on mission for the gospel, we must firmly grasp the importance of prayer. How better than to know that our prayers are answered?

John gives us a simple yet profound formula for an effective prayer life: Believe in Jesus and love one another.

Loving others isn't just about not sinning against them. That's only the reactive side of love. There's also the proactive side to love: going out of one's way to serve others. John talks about this also: "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" (1 John 3:17)

When we live this way, it becomes easy to see how we receive whatever we ask of Him. We become more like Christ. Our heart becomes more like His heart. Our desires become His desires. We start asking for things that correspond to His heart (Psalm 37:4).

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask the Lord to help you seek Him first.
- Ask the Lord to help you see and love others like He does.
- Ask God to change your heart to be more like His.

# Day 21

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Isaiah 56:1-7

**Terry Stockman**

*West Chowan Baptist Association*

Now what?

There's no doubt many have been adversely affected by the recent pandemic. It profoundly affected what many in our culture believe the church should be known for. While much could be learned from this Scripture text, it offers glaring reminders of what the church should be and what it should be doing despite any current reality.

The context of our current world seems reminiscent of the context the nation of Israel found itself in, once they were freed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild God's temple. Nothing was the same when they had returned, and they were being forced to start over much like many of us are now. Instead of quitting because nothing is the same or arguing over secondary matters, let us remember that we, as the church, are to be known for our love for all the nations, our joy about being one of His and our constant dependence upon Him. Let us awaken His church by making them "houses" of genuine prayer and places where all are welcome!

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray we focus on what is most important throughout our state convention.**
- **Pray we would be known as people of prayer.**
- **Pray that the message of Salvation is heard by all from His people!**

# Day 22

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE Ephesians 3:14-21

Robert Hefner

*Pleasant Garden Baptist Church, Greensboro*

Have you ever stopped to think that God loves to answer some prayers? I am convinced that God longs to give us far more than we really ever could imagine. God wants so much more for us than we want for ourselves. Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21 glimpses this "so much more" God wants for us as His people.

Consider this: you will never want to be fuller of God than He wants to fill you. In His abundant graciousness, He wants the cup of our lives to run over with Himself (3:19). He wants us to be so strengthened by our contemplation of His love (3:18) that we live, act and look like a person bursting forth with God overflowing. He wants others to see God's love, mercy and kindness oozing out of our every word and deed because we are so regularly full of God that we can't contain Him. He wants to fill us up and spill over to a world in desperate need of Him.

Paul finishes this prayer with a reminder that our imaginations can't comprehend all God can do (3:20-21). So what if He did more than we could pray for to reach our state? Our nation? Our world? What if He united us on mission together far beyond our ability to comprehend? He can. And oh that He would!

### PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that the Lord would overwhelm you with the goodness of His love. Ask Him to help you meditate upon the great love Jesus showed on the cross.**
- **Ask the Father to fill you with Himself. Pray that your words and deeds be the overflow of His loving goodness today.**
- **His Word teaches us in Ephesians 3:20-21 that His capability far exceeds what we can ask or think. Ask God to bring about His "so much more" in and through us, His people. Ask Him to display His grace, might and power beyond what we can comprehend.**

# Day 23

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

John 17:20-23

**Jonathan Blaylock**

*North Albemarle Baptist Church*

On the very night of His betrayal, the Lord Jesus prayed intensely in the garden of Gethsemane, and He prayed for us! He prayed that we would believe in Him through the word of the apostles, and He prayed that we would be *on mission* together.

Jesus prays that future generations of believers would become one in relationship as the Father and Son are one. Our togetherness as N.C. Baptists should reflect the relationship Christ has with His Father. Our togetherness must be a togetherness with purpose, one in which we share a common mission, that the world may know and believe Jesus.

The prayer for unity occurs twice in these four verses. The mission occurs first: that the world may *believe* (verse 21) and second, that the world may *know* (verse 23). In both instances the key words are the purpose words, “so that.” Togetherness of believers precedes mission. We are not individual churches on individual missions, but we are local churches on mission together. As N.C. Baptists, our mission depends on our togetherness.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that N.C. Baptist pastors would be together around the Word of Christ.**
- **Pray that local churches would cling to autonomy but abandon the individualism that breeds competitiveness amongst us.**
- **Pray that through the togetherness of N.C. Baptists, the world may know Jesus and believe in Him.**

# Day 24

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Psalm 80 & Jeremiah 29:13

Ed Rose

*Central Baptist Church, Wendell*

Revival is always birthed in and sustained by desperate prayer as God's people come together, passionately looking up to Him in repentance and asking for His manifest presence and power.

Psalm 80 is a prayer for revival and restoration after God's disciplinarian judgment had fallen upon His people. Throughout the psalm, the psalmist looked intently to God, pleading with Him to turn His face back toward His people in order to save them from their suffering (verses 3, 7, 19). Throughout the prayer, Asaph addresses the Lord as the God of hosts — the commander of heaven's armies (verses 4, 7, 14, 19). In verse 4, he implies that God had not sent angels to protect the nation when Assyria attacked. He realized that before God would deliver His people, they would first have to repent and turn back to Him. Therefore he cried out to God to do a radical work in their hearts.

Instead of turning to new methodology and strategy, we would be wise to adopt Psalm 80 as our own, praying for God to reignite our lukewarm hearts and turn us back to Him.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Appeal to God as your faithful Shepherd who will always lead His people back to Him and His mission (verses 1-2).**
- **Ask God to turn you and your church back to Him in repentance (verses 3-6).**
- **Call on God to restore, revive and recommission you (verses 7-16).**

# Day 25

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Exodus 17:8-13

**Jason Miller**

*Dutch Cove Baptist Church, Canton*

Weary from their journey across the wilderness, the Amalekites came upon the Israelites for battle. As enemies of God (Deuteronomy 25:17-19), the Amalekites were being used by Satan to attempt to prevent the Israelites from following God to the Promised Land. Today our enemy is still on the attack when we follow God on mission.

Our mission field is truly a spiritual battlefield. We must remember that we are not on this battlefield alone. First, God goes before us. With raised hands and staff, Moses surrendered his need to God in prayer, depending on Him for victory. Likewise, we must surrender our need to God in prayer if we expect to prevail in our mission field.

Not only is God with us, we have fellow believers beside us. Moses' staff was light at first, but as the battle extended, he needed help to continue. Aaron and Hur came up under Moses and steadied him until the enemy was overcome. As the spiritual battle of the mission lingers on, this is what God calls us to do as churches on mission together: to support one another spiritually in prayer and physically in cooperation, and in unity lift up the banner of Christ Jesus and see the gospel prevail.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Thank God for brothers and sisters in Christ who have come alongside you as you have followed Jesus. Send them a note of encouragement and gratitude.**
- **Pray for at least three churches and their pastors who are near you in your mission field. Call them and ask how you can specifically pray for them as you labor together.**
- **You don't allow your hands to be lifted until you share your burdens. Pray and ask God to direct your heart to another believer whom you can depend on to lift your heart as you follow Jesus on mission.**

# Day 26

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Acts 14:21-28

**Jason Miller**

*Dutch Cove Baptist Church, Canton*

As Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey ends, the team returns through the cities where they had preached the gospel, made disciples and established new churches. Although Paul and Barnabas experienced significant persecution in these places by both jealous Jews and pagan Gentiles (Paul was even stoned and thought to be dead in one place!), propelled by the love of Christ and care for the brethren, they faithfully visited the gathered church of new disciples in every town.

The mission ahead of the church would not be easy, and guided by the Holy Spirit, Paul and Barnabas knew what the church needed most: to be strengthened through doctrine, encouraged through faith, established through leadership and empowered through prayer.

As churches on mission together, we must not miss the importance of gospel-centered, Christ-exalting relationships with one another that accomplish these same objectives today. Just as believers need community among themselves to thrive, churches need community among themselves to thrive in this magnificent mission to which Jesus has saved us. Through the many resources of our state convention, our associations and close relationships among sister churches, we still need to be strengthened through doctrine, encouraged through faith, established through leadership and empowered through prayer.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray for yourself, your church and the churches across North Carolina to have an ever growing desire for good doctrine directly from God's Word.**

- Ask the Holy Spirit to encourage your family, your pastor, your church and at least three other churches around you. Be specific in your prayers, and then follow them up by sending a short, written prayer to the people for whom you prayed by mail or by text.
- Pray for your pastor, church leaders, association and convention leaders by name. Consider praying these verses over them: Father, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ will trust in You with all his heart, and that he will not lean on his own understanding, but in all his ways acknowledge You, and that You, Lord, will make straight his paths (Proverbs 3:5-6).
- Pray for the Lord to empower you and your church in His mission, and pray the same for your sister churches by name. Someone once said, “If you want to know how much you really want to see revival, as often as you pray for it to begin with you, pray that it begins somewhere else too.”

# Day 27

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Matthew 13:1-9

**Amaury Santos**

*Richland Creek Baptist Church, Wake Forest*

In this parable, the Lord Jesus represents His word as seed, preachers as sowers and soil types as heart types. Just as the same seed fell into different soils to varying effect, so the same Word of God produces dramatically different results in different hearts.

What does this mean for us, as sowers? First, we do not change the seed, because we must not add, modify or take anything away from the Word of God. Second, we do not change the soil, although we can ask the Lord to touch hearts. What is our role? The Lord expects us faithfully to proclaim His message. God knows the response and the yield. Our responsibility is to be on mission with Him and on *mission together!*

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask the Lord to help you be faithful to His Word.
- Ask the Lord to help you look at the lost with compassion.
- Ask the Lord to help you boldly proclaim His message.

# Day 28

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Psalm 78:4-7

**Cheryl Markland**

*Ebenezer Baptist Church, Indian Trail*

In today's culture we have many ways to communicate with each other. We can call, text, message, email or "snail mail" critical information. What if the only method we had to communicate with others was word of mouth? How would that impact your message?

In the time of David, telling the stories of God's work and provision was the primary method of ensuring the transfer of faith to the next generation. In Psalm 78:4-7, we are reminded that God's call is for people to tell others of His work and desire for a relationship with Him and, in this case, the call is to tell children of "His might and the wonderful works He has performed."

Today's families may say they are busier than ever and don't have time or the ability to disciple their children. Being "on mission together" in the lives of our families can mean helping equip and train parents so that discipleship is as simple as telling a story. It means ensuring parents have a story to tell of their own faith journey. It means children understanding their role in the plan of God so they are prepared to be future disciple-makers of their children.

How can you be on mission together with families?

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Pray that parents accept their responsibility to faithfully disciple their children.**
- **Pray that your church will accept their responsibility to equip and train parents to be disciple-makers in their homes.**
- **Pray for parents who seek God's will in all aspects of their families, so that children witness the "might and wonderful works He can perform" in their daily lives as families of God.**

# Day 29

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Matthew 11:25-30

**Mike Pittman**

*Vertical Church, Lumberton*

It is amazing how busy life can be. Work, family, activities, occupation and hobbies all take up time. Even your vacation can make you feel like you need another vacation. All of this action can make life feel heavy. What do you do when life gets heavy?

In the referenced passage, which is a prayer and a promise, Jesus reminds us that His Father has entrusted our lives to Him: “come to me” — when you’re weary, anxious and burdened. When life gets heavy, we can go to Jesus and lean into Him like a weary child might lean on their daddy at the end of a very long day. Lean.

As we lean into Jesus, He makes another offer: “learn from me.” When we come to Jesus with whatever we are burdened with, He wants to teach us about whatever it is that brought us there. An “on mission” life is one that leans and learns. As we do, Jesus will give rest to our tired souls.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Lean:** Ask God to prompt you throughout your day when you need to come to Him.
- **Learn:** As you pray through your situation, what can you learn about it?
- **Rest:** Spend time resting in the truth that He is with you.

# Day 30

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

Psalm 46:10

**Brian Upshaw**

*The Summit Church, Fuquay-Varina Campus*

Anxiety has been identified as a mental health crisis with studies revealing that as many as two-thirds of adolescents show symptoms of stress and anxiety. Each one of us is vulnerable to the dangers of our anxious thoughts and challenging circumstances. Fortunately, our Heavenly Father knows that we are prone to discouragement and stress.

It is God's understanding of our anxiety that prompted Him to remind us in Psalm 46:10 to "be still and know that I am God." Scholar Alec Motyer translates "be still" as "relax." God knows it is hard for us to relax. We are anxious people who live among a generation of anxious people. We try to conquer our anxiety by either trying to tighten control of our circumstances or trying to escape them all together. Both responses are unhealthy and ineffective.

How can we relax? The verse shows us the way. We can relax because we realize. The antidote to an anxious heart is to know who God is and what He can do. True trust results in relaxing.

This psalm goes further to help us see that we can relax even when it comes to our mission. We must trust God with the results of our missionary efforts. We can relax because it is a fact that God will be exalted among the nations. He will be known as the sovereign King. He is in charge of His mission.

## PRAYER PROMPTS

- **Relax:** Pray that God would give you grace to surrender all your anxious thoughts over to Him.
- **Realize:** Acknowledge God's greatness and power to save, deliver and heal.
- **Rejoice:** Praise the Lord for the definite truth that one day He will be exalted among all nations.



---

# WE ARE ON MISSION *Together*

Together we are part of a movement to see the gospel advance. We partner to resource, connect and mobilize the church to reach communities and the nations for Christ, in North Carolina and beyond. Visit [ncbaptist.org](https://ncbaptist.org) to learn more.



@ncbaptist  
#onmissiontogether

[NCBAPTIST.ORG](https://ncbaptist.org)