

PRAYING WITH JESUS:

40 DAYS TOWARD CHURCH REVITALIZATION.



Rebuilding Trust in God's Word

Days 6-10

TRUE WAY BAPTIST CHURCH

2020.

Adapted from



DAY SIX

“IF YOU CONTINUE IN MY WORD, THEN YOU ARE TRULY DISCIPLES OF
MINE AND YOU WILL KNOW THE TRUTH,
AND THE TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE.”
(JOHN 8:31-32)

CONTINUE IN MY WORD

Perhaps the most important dimension of revitalization is the restoration of God's people to a profound confidence in God's Word. Jesus' promises surrounding His Word are numerous. In John 8:31-32 He promises that faithfully giving heed to His Word on a continuing basis proves we are His followers. In John 15:7 He promises that abiding in His Word and allowing that Word to transformatively abide in us opens the doorway of prayer and allows us to bear much fruit for His glory. In John 14:23 He promises that those who keep His Word will be loved by His Heavenly Father and will eventually make their home with God. In John 8:51 He promises those who keep His word will never see death!

The beginning of a new week is an ideal time to recognize and confess any lack of confidence we have been demonstrating, real or otherwise, in God's Word. His Word is timeless and unending; it is fully dependable and trustworthy. Throughout the revitalization process you will need to daily profess your confidence in, and dependence upon, His Word. *“Do not lean on your own understanding, [but] in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight”* (Proverbs 3:5b-6). *“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”* (Psalm 119:105).

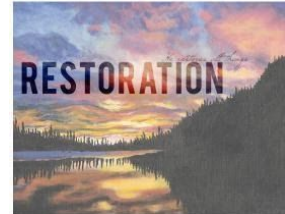
PRAY...

Father, I confess that I have not always delighted in, nor trusted in Your Word. I turn from my faltering faith and ask Your forgiveness for my lack of confidence in Your Word; forgive my failure to believe that Your Word is settled in heaven forever. Today I am asking You to restore my full confidence in Your Word and that You will use Your Word to guide me, and our church family, through every phase of the restoration and revitalization process for Your eternal glory and praise. I ask this in the Name that is above every other name, Amen.

DAY SEVEN

There were plenty of accusations. “They want our property so they can sell it to fund their own ministries,” suggested one opponent to the revitalization partnership being offered by a sister church. Another used scare tactics among the few remaining homebound members by overstating the value of the church’s property and how a partnering church would use this value to their own advantage. Still another accusation came from the chairman of the few remaining deacons, “Those offering us assistance only want to make a name for themselves and they care nothing about us.” These, and many other misguided, yet painful, accusations may very well be a part of your church’s efforts toward revitalization. Despite their opposition, stay the course because part of the process of revitalization is the cleansing of hearts and motives among those who resist the process.

Sometimes there are church leaders who have lost their faith perspective and have forgotten whose church it is after all – if it is a church, then it belongs to Jesus. And he has the right to change whatever He wants to change in the restoration process.



INSIDE OUT

Jesus challenged the Pharisees on more than one occasion to be careful about putting on a religious front when, in fact, their hearts were yet unclean in motive or attitude. “Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but inside of you, you are full of robbery and wickedness” (Luke 11:39). “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like white-washed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness” (Matthew 23:27). Not only must we make sure our attitudes and actions are pure before the Lord in this revitalization effort, but we must also pray for our brothers and sisters who are demonstrating something less than pure motives and attitudes in their reaction to God’s work of revitalization.

PRAY...

Jesus, thank you for giving our church the opportunity for restoration and revitalization. I know the process will not be easy, but with You all things are possible, and we are trusting in Your ever-present help throughout the process. Please cleanse my heart, and the hearts of all our church members of any evil, conspiring, or uncooperative spirit in the revitalization process so that You alone can gain glory and Your church be reclaimed for Your great purpose. I pray in Jesus’ Name. Amen.

DAY EIGHT

Read John 17:13-21

Use whatever resources you have at your disposal (commentaries, Bible software, Bible dictionaries, etc.) to examine John 17:17, and particularly the word “sanctify” as it appears in that verse. Write what you discover here:

SANCTIFY

In your research on the word “sanctify” you should have come across information that says “sanctify” means to “set apart for special use.” The word comes from the Greek word from which we get the word for “holy” or “holiness.” It is an action initiated and carried out by God Himself in the lives of His people. And in the case of Jesus’ prayer request in John 17:17, it is a work God performs through His Word in the hearts and minds of His people. We are set apart unto God, out of this world, and beyond the reason and logic that drives humanity, through the work God does in us as we give ourselves to His Word. He “sanctifies” us in the truth, which is His Word. No tool in your revitalization process will be more valuable than God’s Word. Keep it close. Read, study, meditate on, and memorize it daily.

PRAY...

Father, in keeping with Jesus’ own prayer on behalf of His disciples present with Him, as well as for all those who would believe in Jesus because of the testimony of those first disciples, I plead with You for Your sanctifying work in my own heart and life as I give myself daily to Your Word. Let Your Word dwell richly within me, and within our church family, that we will be sanctified in Your truth, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in our hearts for all that You are doing among us. I ask this in Jesus Name. Amen.

DAY NINE

Jesus is both the essence of life and the Giver of life. *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men'* (John 1:1-4).

“THE THIEF COMES ONLY TO STEAL AND KILL AND DESTROY.
I CAME THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT ABUNDANTLY.”
(JOHN 10:10)

This life that Jesus gives is not just fire insurance against an eternity in hell, but it is the very substance of life in the present. He knows better than anyone else exactly what your church needs in order to be a life-giving force in your community.

FROM WORD TO LIFE

Read John 5:24. Fill in the blanks below:

“... he who hears My word, and _____ Him who sent Me, has _____ life...” “... [he] does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into _____.”

When we believe God's Word we avoid judgment, pass out of death's claws, and receive LIFE!! This is true for eternity and for today! You and your church, as you believe God's Word, His promises and assurances, will begin to experience NEW LIFE in Christ!

PRAY...

Lord Jesus, help me to cling to Your Word as the very substance of life for me today and throughout eternity. Thank you for giving us Your Word; I want to thirst for it like the Psalmist, as the deer pants for the water brook, so let me soul thirst for You and Your Word. Use Your Word in me to build my faith and to help re-shape our church into an effective instrument for the Gospel in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, I ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.

DAY TEN

Read Luke 6:46-49

Which person in Luke 6:46-49 are you most like right now, today?

____ The person building a house on a rock-solid foundation because you do whatever Jesus says.

____ The person building a house with no foundation because you are ignoring Jesus' instructions.

RETURNING TO THE WORD

Revitalization is about a group of Christ-followers surrendering all their own pre-conceived ideas about what their church should look like and how it should behave, and returning to the Author of their faith, upon whom the church is founded.

“WHY DO YOU CALL ME, ‘LORD, LORD,’
AND NOT DO WHAT I SAY?” (LUKE 6:46)

We started this section of prayers by renewing our confidence in God's Word. Not just for the sake of our church's revitalization, but ultimately for God's own glory and for our personal and corporate good. Let's close out this section by asking God to transform our minds according to His Word so that we might prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God concerning our church.

PRAY...

Lord, I love Your Word; I praise You for providing such a wonderful road map for life and living. You are my hiding place and my shield; from now on I wait for Your Word. I place my own thoughts and ideas in submission to Your Word. Sustain me according to Your Word, that I may live the life You designed for me, and in so doing be a part of a renewed church family set upon the very same purpose. Uphold me by Your Word; strengthen my resolve to seek Your Word before the counsel of others, and then compel all of us together to obey whatever You say. We love you and Your Word. In your Son's Name, Amen.