



28 FOR 28

Welcome to the Battle!

We are engaged in a battle of epic proportions. Each of us are warriors fighting on our knees for our lives, our families, our church, and the world. This month isn't about a few soft whispered prayers, it is about rushing headlong into the fight.

Over the next 28 days we will all be praying at the same time and about roughly the same things. But please don't limit your prayers to what is in the guide. Prayer, at its heart, is worship. It is a place where we admit that we can't handle something, but we know that God can. Prayer moves the focus from our limited power to God's limitless power. God is wild and any communication with Him will not easily fit into a mold.

Let these 28 minutes be a time where you worship God. If you want to sing a few worship songs or have some music playing in the background that is fine. Don't limit yourself to "church words" and simply bowing your head. Kneel if you feel like kneeling, but you also need to dance and sing if you feel like it too. If you feel like speaking in whispers then do that, but be willing to shout if you need to as well. What I guess I am trying to say is be free, let go and just worship God through prayer.

I believe if we all approach this honestly, openly, and with a desire for worship God will speak to our hearts. God has called us on a mission to reach our community, our nation, and the world. We are called to share the love of Christ with everyone we meet. This month of prayer is a chance to prepare our hearts to be sent to serve.

Before You Start

This is simply a guideline to help shape your prayers. Feel free to use it as much or as little as you would like. The key is to communicate with God not simply follow a plan.

9:00pm-9:28pm

Our goal is to have everyone praying at the same time each night. By 9:00 most people should be home and settling down for the night. Some of you may be working or sleeping during this time and that is OK just pray at other times. On the weekends you may be with other people at these times. It would be cool to join with them to pray.

A Prayer Journal

If you don't have a journal you use for praying I would suggest going and finding one before you begin this prayer journey. Journaling is an important part of praying because it helps us remember what we prayed about. This helps us see how God works over longer periods of time. This doesn't have to be much of a journal, a \$1 notebook from Wal-Mart will do just fine. You may want to write all of your prayer, or just list specific requests. Either way a journal will be helpful on this journey.

What You Need This Week

At the start of each week you will find a list of things you will need to complete the alternative prayer ideas throughout the week. Most of them are things that you may have laying around the house, but some of them you may need to pick up or borrow. I wanted to put these at the first of the week so you would have them during your prayer times.

Family Prayer

Each family will need to decide how they want to participate in this prayer journey. I would suggest praying as a family at least for part of the time. You may want to let one family member lead the prayer time each night using this prayer guide. Let this be a time where your family seeks God together.

Daily Focus

Each day of the week is dedicated to a specific prayer focus. These will be indicated in the italicized letters beside the day of the week listing. Each day we will be expanding on one of these themes.

Sunday Worship; Monday Church; Tuesday Your Sunday School Class/Small Group; Wednesday Missions; Thursday World Issues; Friday Freestyle Prayers; Saturday Personal Growth

As you read the prayer focus for a specific day, you can follow the suggested prayers or you can follow where God is leading your heart. I would encourage you to try some of the alternative prayer modes. They are designed to help you see prayer with fresh eyes.

Encourage Each Other

As you encounter other church members this month ask them about their prayer journey. Share some of what God is doing in your life through prayer. Get together with other people and have group prayer one night. You will be encouraged and blessed.

Week One:

Items you will need

- As many tea lights as people in your Sunday school class
- A permanent marker
- List of people in your Sunday school class
- Small strips of paper

Day 1

Worshiping God as Creator

Prayer Focus:

God's wonderful power is on display all around us. Each day we walk through a world that is full of color, life and beauty. How many times do we just stop and say thank you for all that God has done for us. Reflect for a moment on God's creation that you pass by everyday. Spend some time in praise of our wonderful creator.

Prayer Activity:

Think of a place you have visited in nature that just took your breath away. Imagine you are back in that place surrounded by God's wonderful creation. If you are praying with a partner describe your place out loud. If you are alone write a description of it in your journal. Then worship in whatever way feels natural: sing, pray, dance, clap, whatever.

Day 2

Praying for Our Church

Prayer Focus:

Spend today (and all of this week) praying for unity within our church. Jesus said that people will know that we are His disciples by our love for each other. We live in a world that is full of people fighting. Just look at the reality shows that are dominating our airways. When Christians get along it draws people to our group and ultimately to our God. Pray tonight that our church will be a unified body. We all won't agree, but pray that it will always be a place categorized by love.

Prayer Activity:

You may have some people you have wronged. If it is appropriate call that person now and apologize. If there are people who have wronged you write a letter of forgiveness in your journal. Ask God help you to be the one who brings about unity.

Day 3

Your Sunday School Class/Small Group

Prayer Focus:

God has called you to join him on a journey or quest with Him. This is a hard road, but he doesn't send you alone. He has called together a group of people to walk this road with you—your Sunday school class. These are your traveling companions, the ones who you lean on for strength and support when you are struggling. Spend this time praying for each member of your class by name. Be as specific as possible in your prayers. Ask God to show you how you can help support these people.

Prayer Activity:

As a supplement to the prayer time tonight collect as many candles as you have class members (tea lights work great). With a marker write the name of each member of your class on a candle. For those of you with larger classes you may want to have each candle represent a couple or have more than one name on a candle. As you pray for each person light their candle as a visual reminder of your prayers.

Day 4

Same Country, Different World

Prayer Focus:

Spend tonight praying for the mission efforts going on in our country. Everyday there are millions of people who go to sleep never knowing the truth about the gospel who live right here in America. Pray for those people. Pray that God will move in their hearts. Pray for the missionaries that take the truth to these people.

Prayer Activity:

The North American Mission Board posts daily prayer requests at <http://www.namb.net/root/home/prayer/>. Go and spend time praying for these requests. Some of the missionaries have email addresses. Send them an email to let them know you are praying for them.

Day 5

Praying for our Country

Prayer Focus:

Too many times we forget to pray for those leaders that God has placed in positions of authority over us. Pray today for our President. Ask God to give him wisdom and understanding. Ask God to show him the clear path to follow in governing our country.

Prayer Activity: Write a letter to the President letting him know you are praying for him. Be specific about what you are praying.

Day 6

Freestyle Prayers

Prayer Focus:

Pray for needs that are on your heart and things that you have heard about throughout the week. Let this be a time of intercession for your own life and for the lives of the people around you.

Prayer Activity:

Since this is your first “pray as you want” day this activity is going to be the same. Pray however makes you the most comfortable. You can pray out loud, through your journal, kneeling silently, walking outside, or with your family. You can draw what you feel and pray as you draw. You can dance before the Lord as an act of praise. You can sing praise songs to God as you pray. Whatever it is that moves your heart just pray.

Day 7

Forgiveness

Prayer Focus:

Tonight’s prayer focuses on ourselves and our need for forgiveness. Spend a couple of moments praying and asking God to open your heart and mind. Then begin to make a list of unconfessed sin in your life. Remember that things you haven’t done can be just as much of a sin as things you have done. When you are finished ask God to forgive you. Then rest in the knowledge that his blood has taken away all of your sins.

Prayer Activity:

Write your “sin list” on small strips of paper. As you confess each sin burn it in a candle as a symbol of Christ’s forgiveness. God has separated you and your sin as far as the east is from the west. As you burn each sin let it go and revel in God’s forgiveness.

Week Two:

Items you will need

- Baby Powder
- A map, a ruler, and a pen.
- List of potential visitors to your Sunday school class
- One large candle

Day 8

The God who Came

Prayer Focus:

Read Philippians 2:5-11 God, the God that we worshiped last week for creating all things, humbled himself and became a man. He came to live with us and dwell with us. He made himself like us so that we could know him. Let your prayer time tonight focus on God's wonderful act of love towards us. Pray and thank God for his gift. Then think about those people who you could invest your life in. God humbled himself to come and live with us. Who do you need to go and live with?

Prayer Activity:

Take some baby powder and sprinkle it on your arm. Smell the powder and dwell on all of the feelings and thoughts that such a smell conjures in your mind. God himself came to be a baby. He made himself that helpless, that vulnerable. Use this smell and thoughts of God as a baby to begin your prayer time.

Day 9

Praying for Our Church

Prayer Focus:

God has a plan for our church. He has a direction already decided for us. Pray that we join God on that plan. Pray for our church and her continuing mission. Pray that God will give us wisdom and strength. Pray that God will reveal our path to us one step at a time. Ask God to give us our neighborhood and our city as our inheritance. Pray that God will motivate each member of our church to join him on this mission.

Prayer Activity:

Find a map. On that map choose two cities and draw a straight line between them. Now imagine driving that straight line. It may be easy in some places, but in others you would have to drive through fields and houses and maybe even lakes and rivers. God has a map for where our church is going. He can see each little block in the road. Some of them he will lead us around and some of them he will lead us through, but he is the only one who has the map. We must trust him to reveal the path to us step by step. Use this concept as a starting point for your prayers tonight.

Day 10

Your Sunday School Class/Small Group

Prayer Focus:

The heart of our church is in our Sunday school/small groups. It is the place where we can minister to each other. It is also a key tool in evangelism and reaching new people. Pray for potential new members in your class. Ask God how you can minister to these prospects. If you don't know any prospects pray that God will show you someone you can invite to Sunday school this week.

Prayer Activity:

Write letters to class prospects and let them know you are praying for them. Offer to help them with any needs that they may have.

Day 11

God's Heart for the Nations

Prayer Focus:

If you want to see the heart of God then you have to look at the nations of the world. God desires that all nations know Him. Tonight pray for those who are taking the message of Christ around the world. Pray for house churches that are meeting right now in countries where they are illegal. Pray for missionaries who are willing to go into places where the gospel has never been.

Prayer Activity:

Light a large candle in the middle of the room and turn out all of the lights. Imagine you are in a country where having a prayer meeting is illegal. You don't own a Bible, or any Christian literature, but you love God. Hold a candlelit worship service complete with songs and prayers. As you close imagine a country trapped in darkness then imagine a missionary family trying to share Christ with that country. As you look at your candle imagine that family trying to carry the light to those people trapped in darkness. Pray for those missionaries and pray that God will reveal to you how you can help take the gospel around the world.

Day 12

Praying for our Troops

Prayer Focus:

Right now we have soldiers fighting for freedom all over the world. Spend this time praying for them. Pray that God will keep them safe. Pray for peace in the places where they are fighting. Peace, real peace, can only come from God. Ask God to transform the hearts of our enemies. Pray that our soldiers can come home soon.

Prayer Activity:

- 1) Turn on the news channel and begin to pray. As countries are listed pray for our troops there. Pray for those situations and ask God to intervene.
- 2) Gather a few other people together and send a care package to our troops overseas. Include letters of encouragement and prayers.

Day 13

Freestyle Prayers

Prayer Focus:

Pray for needs that are on your heart and things that you have heard about throughout the week. Let this be a time of intercession for your own life and for the lives of the people around you.

Prayer Activity:

Sometimes it can be difficult to find the words to pray when faced with pain we don't understand. We know that we want to see God intervene and bring healing, reconciliation, and peace, but it can be hard to find the right words for complex painful situations. Sometimes we feel we're running out of words if we've already prayed many times about the same thing. We know we need to be persistent in prayer, but we don't want to keep repeating the same phrases. This prayer will help you pray when you don't know how to put it into words.

Gather some art materials. Get whatever you would like to create with; paints, pencils, markers, crayons, whatever. Read Romans 8:26-27 aloud. Say this simple prayer "Lord you know the deepest desire of my heart. Hear my prayer, even when I have no words to pray."

Now draw the situation you want to pray for. These drawings don't have to be exact representations. They can use color or shapes to express your feelings. As you draw, be aware of God's presence within you as you are honest about how you feel. You might find it helpful to repeat a simple phrase to God as you paint.

Day 14

How God Sees You

Prayer Focus:

Do you know that God has chosen you? He has picked you and called you to a special purpose. He has selected you for a quest that only you can accomplish. For most of us this is hard to hear. We understand that we are sinners; it is much harder to think of ourselves as chosen. Spend this prayer time asking God to speak to your heart. Ask God to show you how He sees you. Ask Him to give you courage for this quest that you are called on. Be sure to spend some time listening as God speaks to your heart.

Prayer Activity:

Spend a moment and look into the mirror. What do you see there? What do you think God sees there? Take a moment to pray and ask God how He sees you. Then in your prayer journal imagine God is speaking and describing you to you. What would he say about you? What words of comfort would he give you? Write his words. Don't judge what you say. Don't try to edit your words to see if they are true or not, just let the words flow and let God speak to you through you.

Week THREE:

Items you will need

- Nails
- Paper and pens
- A city map and highlighter (optional)
- Things to draw with
- Index cards
- Some soft cologne or perfume
- Some modeling clay or Play-Doh

Day 15

Worshiping God as Savior

Prayer Focus:

Christmas is so easy to think about. All of the images of angels and babies and sheep just make us smile. We tend to push from our mind the thoughts of what Jesus came to earth to do. His was a suicide mission from the start. He came to die so that you could live. Tonight spend some prayer time focusing on the cross. Don't quickly jump past it to the resurrection. Spend some time with the sacrifice that God made for you. As you dwell on the cross let prayer flow from you.

Prayer Activity:

Hold 3 nails in your hands. Think about a time when you have received a pin prick. Now magnify that as you imagine nails being driven into your feet and hands. In your journal come up with a list of words or short phrases that describe the nails that Jesus took for us. If you are praying as a family you can say these words out loud. As you create your list ask God to guide your heart. After you have written your list pray as God leads you.

Day 16

Praying for Our Church

Prayer Focus:

Tonight we are going to pray for the leadership of our church. Pray that God will place a hedge of protection around those whom He has called to lead us. Pray that God will give them vision and passion. Pray that God will help us all to step up and work along side these leaders to accomplish God's purpose for our church.

Prayer Activity:

In your prayer time write a letter to a few key leaders of our church. Let them know that you are praying for them and that you are willing to work along side them.

Day 17

Your Sunday School Class/Small Group

Prayer Focus:

Last week we prayed about people that we needed to reach out to. Tonight, pray about what activities you can do to reach more people. It may be a party, a parenting seminar, a trip out to eat, or a service project. Pray that God will use you to bring new people to your class.

Prayer Activity:

Brainstorm a list of activities that your class can do. Write the list down and take it to Sunday school with you on Sunday. As a supplement to your prayer time pray through your Sunday school roll again.

Day 18

Same City, Different Worlds

Prayer Focus:

Tonight's prayer focus is on our city, specifically your neighborhood. As a country the concept of neighborhood has changed. We don't know the people we live around as much as we once did. Take a walk in your mind around the streets in your neighborhood and pray for each family. Ask God to show you how you can share His love with each of them.

Prayer Activity:

If it is nice outside take a prayer walk around your neighborhood praying for each family. (You may want to schedule this for tomorrow). If you have a local map unfold it and find your neighborhood. Use a highlighter to highlight each street as you pray for it. If you don't have map draw a rough sketch of your neighborhood on paper. As you draw each street pray for the people who live there. After you have finished place your map up on your mirror or refrigerator to remind you to pray for your neighbors.

Day 19

Praying for our Peers

Prayer Focus:

Tonight we are going to pray for those people we regularly come in contact with who are not Christians. These could be friends or family members. Write each name in your journal. As you write their name imagine their day tomorrow (they will get up go to work, etc.) and pray for them through each section of the day. You may want to write them a note and let them know you are praying for them.

Prayer Activity:

On an index card write one name that you are praying for. Pray for an opportunity to share the love of Christ with this person. Decorate your card with several pictures or symbols that remind you of this person. You should pray about each situation as you draw it—the person's job, family, health, and so on. Do as many cards as you wish. When you have finished decorating your cards read 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 aloud. Spray some perfume (or cologne) on yourself and the cards. This is to remind you that you will be the aroma of Christ to the people you have prayed for. Take the cards with them to remind you to keep praying. If you feel it is appropriate, give it to the person you prayed for.

Day 20

Freestyle Prayers

Prayer Focus:

Pray for needs that are on your heart and things that you have heard about throughout the week. Let this be a time of intercession for your own life and for the lives of the people around you.

Prayer Activity:

I want to invite you to invite you to participate in an ancient prayer activity—silence. In our world it is a hard thing to sit in silence. It is a hard thing to still our mind to think only of God, but God often speaks through stillness.

Find a comfortable place to sit. If you are one of those people who watches the clock then set an alarm for 9:28 so you won't have to look at it. Close your eyes and for just a moment focus on your breathing. The goal isn't like eastern meditation where you clear your mind. The goal is to still your mind so you can more easily worship God. You may want to repeat a phrase of praise in your mind to help you relax. Once you still your mind focus in on God and pray as you are led.

Stillness is a difficult practice to master. It takes practice. Don't get down on yourself if your mind wanders. Just turn your thoughts back to God.

Day 21

Moldable

Prayer Focus:

Tonight's prayer focuses on our need to be moldable in the hands of God. He is the potter who shapes us into instruments of his service. What is God shaping you to do? Who is He shaping you to be? Are you accepting his molding, or are you resisting? Are you being used by Him or have you chosen your own path? Pray that God will shape you into an instrument for His service. Ask him to use you to accomplish His plans. Be sure to spend some time listening as God speaks to you about how he is shaping you.

Prayer Activity:

Set a lump of clay in front of you. Look at it. Think about what good that lump of clay is. Now think about what that lump of clay could become in the hands of a master sculptor. It could become art or a tool others could use. Begin to mold the clay in your hands as you pray. As you ask God to shape you into an instrument He can use, shape the clay into something useful. Your creation may not be all that pretty, but God is the master sculptor. He can make things beautiful. Set your creation somewhere you will see it often as a reminder to be moldable in the hands of God.

Week FOUR:

Items you will need

- Paper and pens
- Building blocks, cans, paper cups, or something you can build a pyramid with
- Stationery
- Salt

Day 22

The God who Lives

Prayer Focus:

There is an awesome power in the cross, but there is even more power in the empty tomb. We don't worship someone who came and died. We worship a God who conquered death and even now is alive. As you pray think of what it means that Jesus is alive. He is at work around you in the world today. He defeated death and took away the sorrow of the grave. He lives and we can rejoice in Him. Thank God for the fact that He rose from the grave, and that he promises new life to you as well.

Prayer Activity:

One of the benefits of worshipping a living God is that we can speak to Him and know that he will listen. Spend a few moments just telling God what is going on in your life. I know he already knows, but share with him like you would a friend you haven't talked to in a while. You may want to talk aloud, or write in your prayer journal. As you speak, take time to listen to what God is saying back to you. Don't use church words or repetitive phrases, just talk to God.

Day 23

Praying for Our Church

Prayer Focus:

Tonight as we pray for our church spend some time praying for your role in our body. Many of you have already found a place to serve and give your time, but many of you are still looking for the place where you can be used. Ask God to show you where you need to step up and start working at our church.

Prayer Activity:

Find something in your house that you can build a pyramid with. It can be children's blocks, cans, paper cups, or anything that you have 10 to 15 of. Build a pyramid. Slowly begin removing some of the blocks. You won't need to pull out many blocks before the whole thing falls down. Our church is very similar. We need everyone to be able to do what God has called us to do. Restack your pyramid praying that God will use you in our church.

Day 24

Your Sunday School Class/Small Group

Prayer Focus:

As you pray for your Sunday school class this week pray specifically for your teacher. Ask God to give your teacher wisdom and understanding. Pray for their daily lives as well as their life inside of the classroom. As you pray ask God what leadership roles you should be having in your class and in our church.

Prayer Activity:

Use part of your prayer time tonight to write a thank you letter to your teacher. Be specific about how he/she has touched your life.

Day 25

God's Heart for our Neighborhood

Prayer Focus:

God has our church in our neighborhood for a reason. We are a light to this community. Pray that God will open doors that we can't see right now. Ask God to show you how you can reach out to the people in our neighborhood. In your journal list the ways that God shows you that we can reach out to the people who live around our church.

Prayer Activity:

Take a sheet of paper and draw a symbol in the middle of it representing our church. Use a pen to slowly draw a spiral coming out of our church filling the whole paper. As you do, pray for our church's expanding area of influence. Pray for the homes around our church and for our role in taking the light of the Gospel to them.

Day 26

Praying for World Needs

Prayer Focus:

You are rich. You may not feel very rich, but even the poorest among us are rich compared to the world's standards. Spend tonight's prayer time thanking God for what you have and praying for those who are hungry and thirsty tonight. Also pray for those people who are ministering to those needs. Ask God what you can do to meet the needs of others.

(Go to <http://www.globalrichlist.com/> and enter your yearly income. It will show you how your salary compares to most of the people in the world.)

Prayer Activity:

It is hard for us to know what it means to be hungry. Most of us have never been truly "starving." We can simulate what it feels like to be thirsty though. Before your prayer time today eat a small amount of salt. Don't drink anything until the end of your prayer time. As your thirst grows imagine living in a place where water isn't in a faucet 10 feet away. Pray that God would help you to be aware of the suffering going on around the world. Ask God to show you what you can do to meet the needs of others.

Day 27

Freestyle Prayers

Prayer Focus:

Pray for needs that are on your heart and things that you have heard about throughout the week. Let this be a time of intercession for your own life and for the lives of the people around you.

Prayer Activity:

As we come near the end of our prayer time you have experienced many different ways to pray. You have used tastes and smells and touch and words to focus your prayers and express your love to God. Tonight think back on the different ways we prayed and choose one to express your prayers to God tonight. Get your tea lights back out and light them as you pray for the requests on the web site. Go outside and just worship God. Write God a letter in your prayer journal. Eat a piece of candy and think about the sweetness of God. Sing a song of praise. Whatever you want to do, just pray!

Day 28

Finding Your God Given Mission

Prayer Focus:

You have a mission, a quest to perform. God didn't call you to simply be a critic who sits in the pews and talks about how things should be done. He called you to be involved, to jump into the arena and be on mission with Him. As we close our prayer time pray about what that mission is. Pray that God will send you out to reach the world. Ask God to give you the strength and ask Him where He wants you to go.

Prayer Activity:

What stirs your heart? What makes you come alive? Who are you? Who do you want to be? Who is God calling you to be?

Choose one or more of these questions to answer in your journal. Ask God to speak through your heart. Simply be honest with yourself and with God. Don't edit yourself just write from the heart.