

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 1 January 7

Do everything without grumbling or arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.”<sup>[a]</sup> Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.  
Philippians 2:14-15

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1Thessalonians 5:18

You would think, that the people in the Old testament would have lived their lives in awe over everything that God had done for them, but time and again, we see where they gripe, complain, and fall away from Him. The bible repeatedly refers to their complaining in Psalms, in the Prophets, in the Gospels, and in the Epistles. If we choose to live our lives complaining, we will find ourselves in the wilderness as surely as the Israelites did after God had rescued them from Egypt.

What is complaining? It is the dissatisfaction with a circumstance which is wrong and about which I am doing nothing about. Who are you hurting when you sin? You hurt yourself as you nurture a negative lifestyle and you hurt your relationship with God because you are denying that He has control of a given situation. And, you hurt the people around you through the toxicity of your attitude.

Life is about choices. What attitude will you choose to live? Do you want a life that soars? You get there through choosing to live with gratitude. What if you don't feel grateful? Do it anyway! Living with gratitude is not about the way you feel it is about recognizing that every breath you take is a gift from God. Every moment exists for grace.

Prayer

Father help me know that You are good, not through hearsay, but through my experience. I want to recognize everything in my life that has been touched by You. I want to take nothing for granted.

Prayer for RLC

Lord, please give wisdom to Pastor Donnie as he leads RLC. I pray that he will use his time in a balanced manner and that he would find the time to rest when he needs it. Give him the ability to hear and to be obedient to You as he leads. Please guide Renee as she supports and leads with Donnie in this church body. Help them to find friends that they can share this journey with. Give them and the entire family health and wellbeing.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 2 January 8

Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.

<sup>2</sup> When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the LORD and the fire died down. <sup>3</sup> So that place was called Taberah,<sup>[a]</sup> because fire from the LORD had burned among them. Numbers 11:1-3

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. <sup>16</sup> He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? <sup>18</sup> Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” <sup>19</sup> Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.” Luke 17:15- 19

God does not like complaining. In fact, He gets downright angry at it. God is faithful even when we are not. The grumbling in the desert did not begin with the diet of Manna. The children of Israel started showing their discontent right before the parting of the Red Sea, asking Moses, “Weren't there graves enough in Egypt for them?” God saved them despite their grumbling.

Complaining is not just a habit to kick, but a perspective to change. Gratitude unlocks a fullness of life. It turns what we have into more than enough. Gratitude brings us peace and a vision for the future. It is good to give thanks, it lifts your soul.

Prayer

Lord thank You for the blessings that You have surrounded me with. You are the Maker of all things. It is good to give You thanks. It is good to sing Your Praises. NO other is worthy of our praise. Thank you for all of the reasons I have in my life to be grateful.

Prayer for RLC

Father, please guide Eric Hansen and Steve Martz and all of those on the Worship team as they lead us in worship. Help them as they work with Pastor Donnie and the tech team to create a worship environment that leads everyone into the throne room of God. Give them creativity and renewed energy and purpose. Create in them hearts that long to grow closer to You.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 3 January 9

Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord, keep watch at the door of my lips. Psalm 141:3

I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart; before the “gods” I will sing your praise. I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your unfailing love and your faithfulness. Psalm 138:1-2

Ever read the book, Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, very Bad Day, by Judith Viorst? It is about a little boy whose day goes so bad all he wants to do is move to Australia. Ever had one of those days, or weeks, or months? Praying doesn't seem to help. Life is just no fun and you are ready to move to Australia or anywhere that is not where your life is. God understands. That doesn't mean He will immediately remove you from your situation, but He gets it. Take the time to find little things that are a breath of fresh air. Make it a daily habit of expressing the gratitude that you have in the small things, and the general blessings that you are granted every day. Pretty soon, your life will be back on track and Australia can wait for a vacation someday.

Prayer

Father grow my thankfulness toward You. Let it not be based on whether or not I am enjoying life but about what the reality of what You have blessed me with. Help me to know that gratitude is life changing and joy producing. Help me to be less critical. Forgive my proud heart. Fill my life with thankfulness.

Prayer for RLC

Lord, give Don and Billie Dixon and *Trek X* ministry in Dallas in roads into the immigrant community that they serve in Dallas. We pray that they can build friendships and trust between them and those they meet. Give them the ability to hear, discern, and follow Your will for this ministry. We pray too for their wellbeing and health.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 4 January 10

Let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. James 1:6

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “**This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.**” 1Corinthians11:24

All of us have been guilty of doubting or being blasé about the miracles in our everyday life. We have had times we refused to believe or complained in the dark times of our lives. We have gotten caught up in the moment and forgotten how God had victory over our past.

If we are honest, we know that the story of the children of Israel learning to follow God in the wilderness hits close to home. If we are willing to repent of our complaining attitude, God is right there ready to forgive. We need to look to Jesus at the moment before His arrest. He knew what was about to happen, yet still chose to give thanks. We are reminded that an attitude of Thankfulness begins and ends with seeing the goodness in the Lord and trusting Him.

Prayer

Father, I am so very thankful that You are slow to anger and abounding in love. Thank You for being faithful to forgive me when I complain. God, You are so gracious to me. Help me to turn around and live a life of gratitude. Build a habit in me of listing all the ways that You bless me in my life. Let me focus on the blessings that You shower over me.

Prayer for RLC

Lord, we lift up James and Hanna Sharp, and their ministry *Willing to Go* in Nicaragua. Please allow them to meet and build relationships with those they serve while on mission. Give them wisdom as they lead others and protect their health and wellbeing.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 5 January 11

Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will also be your heart. Matthew 6:20-21

**‘A man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.’** Luke 12:15

Most of us do not see ourselves as greedy. We just play a little game... If I won the lottery... or maybe, If I just had a little more money..., then I would have a better life. What we don’t understand is that if we had more, we still wouldn’t be satisfied. Dave Ramsay would tell us the reality is if we do not believe we can live within our means now, we would only have bigger troubles if we had more. Covetousness is like a thirsty man drinking salt water; the water only makes him thirstier and will eventually kill him. Wanting anything other than God will never fulfill a longing.

Covetousness is wanting the wrong things, or the right things at the wrong time, or the right things in the wrong amount. Contentment, on the other hand, is finding satisfaction with God’s provision and being settled in the adequacy of God. Contentment is not a false face of stifling a craving, but rather a resting in the knowledge that God is enough.

Prayer

Lord You are a shield about me. You are my glory. I rest in knowing You are enough. Forgive me the times that I have longed for more. Forgive the time and energy I spend on idle pursuits. Search me and show me those things that I place ahead of You and let me know that You are enough.

Prayer for RLC

Lord we pray for the mission of MPact Churches. Give this ministry discernment and wisdom as it seeks out pastors to work with as they plant churches in new communities. We pray for their finances as they help launch new church bodies. Grant them Your favor.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 6 January 12

If I have put my trust in gold or said to pure gold, 'You are my security,' if I have rejoiced over my great wealth the fortune my hands had gained, ...then these also would be sins to be judged, for I would have been unfaithful to God on high. Job 31:24-25, 28

<sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. Matthew 6:24

Covetousness is not easily detected in the western world. Aren't we all supposed to be working toward the bigger house, nicer care, the perfect retirement? While the world applauds our success, the bible sees it as a big character flaw. Have you put things before God: your education, your career, your toys? Whatever you value as most important is your treasure. Whatever occupies the center of your personality is where you find your heart.

Be honest with yourself. Have you judged God by saying your life is not complete because you have wanted God to do something He didn't do or be someone He is not? Believing that God is enough is contentment, and nothing else brings us that. Not God and... Not God and A job, or a marriage or more money. Contentment is knowing God is enough. We may have been given many tangible gifts from God, but we are not promised any of them. He is enough for us.

Prayer

Father forgive me my greedy attitude. Open my eyes to the plenty that is in my life. Show me that in You I have an abundant life and I need nothing else. Show me that Your ways are better for me, that Your provision is enough.

Prayer for RLC

Father, we lift up our elders: Bill Glossner, Lysle Rice, Doug Dixon, and Brian Miller to You. Thank You for the time and effort they put into the leading of our church family. We ask for continued wisdom as they partner with Pastor Donnie. Give them the ability, integrity, and compassion to deal with any situation that arises. Please protect them and their families from negative influence.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 7 January 13

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Mathew 6:33-34

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Timothy 6:10

Do you ever find yourself in the mall or on your favorite website longing for the newest \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)? Have you ever seen someone else's life and said I wish I could have that life? Have you ever wanted a different job, to the point that longing turned into despair? Or just wanted more of something? It might be a good thing, not a harmful thing like health during sickness, but God still said no? Do you have faith that God's provision is enough? Are you content? All of us have days we don't feel blessed. It is when we allow those days to change our perspective on how we view God that we fall into sin.

Prayer

Father help me not to create idols before You. I do not want to put anything in Your place. Let me know that Your provision is enough for me in all things and in all times no matter what my circumstances are. I do not want to lose satisfaction in You.

Prayer for RLC

God, thank You for our trustees: David Branch, Doyle Kitchin and Steve Lowe. We ask for their continued wisdom as they partner with Pastor Donnie in leading RLC. Please keep them and their families as strong witnesses in the community and in RLC. We also ask that You continue to watch over and protect them.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 8 January 14

He (Jesus) told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. <sup>17</sup> He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ <sup>18</sup> “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. <sup>19</sup> And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’ <sup>20</sup> “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ <sup>21</sup> “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Luke 12:16-21

One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. Proverbs 11:24-25

Jesus said more about money in the parables than any other topic. Sixteen out of the thirty-eight were on the topic of finance. Your attitude toward money is a big deal. Money can enslave our hearts if we do not allow God to own all that we have. Jesus let us know that hoarding is for fools. He asks us to trust Him to put our wellbeing in His hands. He tells us time and again that what we cherish is where our heart is. Take your wallet out of your pocket or your purse and as you say today's prayer give it all to Him.

Prayer

Lord today let me know that You are good, and that You have my welfare well in hand. I should not fear over my finances if I trust You and put you at the center of them. Help me to know the right time to give is now, not when I have saved enough or retire. You have blessed me with so much. Let me be a generous person in return. Show me that I cannot out give You. Let me see Your faithfulness and in turn let me live within Your provision.

Prayer for RLC

Father, I ask that all of those serving and leading in the Children's Ministry will be committed to growing closer to You. Please give them awareness of the needs of our families and wisdom in how to love them well. I pray You grant them wisdom in how to partner with parents as they raise their children in knowing Christ. I also ask that You give us wisdom in interacting with our community at large and how to meet the needs of those who are different than us.



## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 9 January 15

<sup>4</sup>The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, “If only we had meat to eat! <sup>5</sup>We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. <sup>6</sup>But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!” Numbers 11:4-6

Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 1 Timothy 6:9

Numbers 11 could really be titled, ‘Be careful what you wish for.’ The children of Israel wanted something more than the Manna God provided them. They wanted it so much they forgot that how bad the slavery was in Egypt and remembered only the different foods that they once had. God gave them so much quail they were knee deep in them. But they did not thank God for His provision. They ate until it came out of their nostrils, but they thought only of themselves, so God sent them a plague.

Solomon also discovered the foolishness of seeking satisfaction away from God. He repented from his way at the end of his life and turned back toward God. He learned that contentment could only be found in God. Solomon urges us to learn from his folly and find our satisfaction in God without the pain that it caused him. The wise learn from the mistakes of others, but the foolish must take the beating on the own back.

Prayer

Father, I have strayed from You. I have followed the lure of money and possessions, and I have found that it leaves me wanting more. I am thirsty and what I am needing is You. Help me to not be tempted by the things of this world, but instead find what I need in You. Let me remember Your warnings about coveting things that I do not have. Let Your words of warning ring in my ears. Help me Father to conquer cravings and to be content in what I have, in where I live, in who I am with, and in what I do. Let me focus on the blessings that You have placed in my life.

Prayer for RLC

Father we know that You desire for us to live in community. We ask that our Life groups would be a welcoming safe place where people find and grow closer to You. We ask that You draw new leaders to come forward so that everyone might find a place to belong. We want our groups to be welcoming, and that You would draw people to them. We ask that our leaders continue to grow the groups in learning, fellowship, sharing and prayer. Make our groups place that people can share their lives so that we will become closer to Christ.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 10 January 16

Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor depend on God, He is my mighty rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge Psalm 62: 5-8

Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice. Proverbs 16:8

Contentment is not about settling for less; it is actually about wanting more- more of Christ. It's not about being settled with the lot of your life but about seeking joy in a deeper relationship with God. The original Greek word for contentment had to do with a country that needed no imports. So how is your Contentment? Do you need to import anything into your life? Have trivial wants brought the enemy to your borders, or have they brought you enslavement? You can be content, but you have to choose to live in the blessings of your life. Have you heard the saying if the grass looks greener in someone else's yard it is time to start watering your own? It's true! Our lives abound in blessing. It is a personal choice as to whether or not we see them.

Prayer

Lord I ask You to help me see all of the blessings in my life: my job, my house, my abundance. Thank You for the people you have place in my life to journey with me. Thank You for Your grace and mercy. Thank You for forgiving me the times that I have missed the abundance that You have given and instead have focused on things I have wanted. Probe my heart and help me to see those areas that I need to find renewed joy. Show me those things that distract me from a deeper relationship with You. Fill me with a Holy discontentment to know more of You. Make the things of You and Your Kingdom the desire of my heart.

Prayer for RLC

Father we ask that RLC would find new ways to become involved in the Waugh Chapel Town Center and the surrounding communities. We want to love well and foster good relationship with the people of the local community.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 11 January 17

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:29-32

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 1 John 4:10-11

Few things can send you to the wilderness faster than a critical attitude. It is like a slow poison that can bring grave injury to our relationship to God and others faster than we are aware. All of us struggle with being critical. It may start with hearing others talk down a person or situation and then we start thinking on it. Criticism is to dwell on the perceived faults of another with no view to their good. Just because we may think something is a fault in another person does not mean we are correct. When you allow these thoughts to run over and over in your mind without ever thinking on what you can do to help, you run into dangerous territory. Pretend that every thought today is being captured on video tape and will be played tonight on television during prime time this evening. What would it show? What will your family, friends, and coworkers hear? Will damage or blessing be taken away from the broadcast?

Prayer

Father let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to You. Let me be quick to respond to the prompting of Your Spirit when critical words or thoughts come from my mouth. Let me instead fill others with Your grace and bless them with my words. I know that at times I can be over analytical and forget to praise the good in others. I need Your help in exhorting others and in finding way I can help instead of harm.

Prayer for RLC

Lord, help the youth of RLC to be bold workers in the kingdom. Give them a love for each other and for all Your people. Protect them from evil that wants to see the torn down. Give them a heart after Your own heart. We pray for Richard and all the leaders that work alongside the parents, helping to create healthy relationships between the youth and the adults of RLC. Help them to begin their own leadership roles within our church family. Help with finances and planning so that the youth can continue to attend *Mission Serve* this summer.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 12 January 18

Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. <sup>2</sup>“Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?” they asked. “Hasn’t he also spoken through us?” And the LORD heard this. (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.) <sup>4</sup> At once the LORD said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, “Come out to the tent of meeting, all three of you.” So the three of them went out. <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When the two of them stepped forward, <sup>6</sup> he said, “Listen to my words:

“When there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”

<sup>9</sup> The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he left them. <sup>10</sup> When the cloud lifted from above the tent, Miriam’s skin was leprous<sup>[a]</sup>—it became as white as snow. Aaron turned toward her and saw that she had a defiling skin disease, <sup>11</sup> and he said to Moses, “Please, my lord, I ask you not to hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed. <sup>12</sup> Do not let her be like a stillborn infant coming from its mother’s womb with its flesh half eaten away.” Numbers 12:1-12

This story is just one example how God looks at a critical spirit. God hears criticism and judges it as a sin. Criticism changes our capacity to love; it hurts us and it hurts others. Criticism is petty. It begins with unforgiveness in the heart, and leads to envy, jealousy or resentment. As we dwell on one person’s success or our own failure, we may become critical about who they are or how they do things. Beware of any thought that puts you superior to someone else.

Somewhere along the way Miriam started to feel that it should have been her not Moses, who was in charge. It didn’t start with his new wife, that was just the catalyst. She wanted the authority Moses had. God judged her and gave her leprosy. God cares about how we treat one another and holds us accountable for our criticism. It was only through the prayer of Moses that she was saved and made whole again.

Prayer

Father search my heart and see if there a critical spirit growing in me. Are there thoughts that have taken root that I need to repent of? I want to love as You love. Forgive me of my arrogance and thinking that my perspective is always right. I want to lift others up and cherish who they are as You do. Give me Your grace and love. Help me to lift those around me to be the best they can be.

Prayer for RLC

Father I ask You for renewed energy and strength today for our transportation and set up teams. Draw people to the ministry as they hear and become excited about the vision and purpose of being a portable church body. Pray for wisdom when it comes to provisioning RLC with new equipment. Pray for the safety of the drivers, the team and the equipment as it is transported every week.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 13 January 19

<sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8

If I speak in the tongues<sup>[a]</sup> of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,<sup>[b]</sup> but do not have love, I gain nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup> It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup> Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

There was a farmer that saw a large wagon filled with household goods moving toward him. The driver shouted to him, “We are moving from Jonestown to Brownsville. How much farther is it?” “About thirty miles.” said the farmer. The driver then asked, “what kind of people can we expect?” “Well,” said the farmer, “what kind of people were in Jonestown?” The driver responded, “they were so negative and cheerless. They were deceptive and ungrateful, just a godless bunch of people. That’s why we are moving.” The farmer then commented, “The people in Brownsville are pretty much the same.” The farmer said this because he knew that was what the traveler’s outlook would be determined to find.

We can make a choice as to how we see people. We can see the speck in their eye while disregarding the log in our own; or we can choose to see them in the truth of God’s love. We can choose what we put our focus on. Love does not want what it doesn’t have, it is not arrogant and does not force itself on others. Love does not have to be first and doesn’t fly off the handle. Love does not keep score; it instead looks for the best in people. Love extends grace and builds others up. Love trusts God and sees things through to the end.

Prayer

Father help me to love. It doesn’t have to be big acts; it can be small words. Show me if there is a sin in my life that is blocking love in me. Help me to build up those around me and to see the best in them. I want to have a heart like Yours that extends grace and love to others.

Prayer for RLC

Father I thank You for the men and women You ‘ve placed at RLC who serve on the Tech Team, and for their weekly dedication. I pray that You would multiply these gifts of time and skills for Your kingdom. I thank You for their commitment to excellence and ask that 2019 would be a year of ideas and creative ways to foster a worship environment that encourages personal encounters with You every week. I also pray for those who You will call in 2019 and ask that You bless them and integrate them into this family team.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 14 January 20

<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24

And so, we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:16-18

There is an Aesop fable about an old man, his grandson, and a donkey. The Old man walked while his Grandson rode a donkey into town. Some people saw them and said, "Isn't it a shame that a strong boy is riding while his Grandfather suffers on his feet and walks." So, the old man hearing this, let the boy walk while he continued the journey on the donkey's back. Now he heard people saying, "would you look at that? A grown man is taking advantage of his Grandson, can you believe it?" Grandfather and boy both got off and walked until they heard some people saying, "How pitiful a perfectly good donkey not being used!" And so, the man and boy rode the donkey. Down the road, they heard people saying, "Would you look at those heavy brutes, making that poor donkey suffer?" The Grandfather thought about what to do. He tied a pole to the donkey's legs and the man and boy carried the donkey. The point of the story: when you try to please all, you please none. Or, if people have a critical spirit there is nothing you can do to make them happy.

Loving and extending God's grace to others does not mean that we have to please everyone all the time. That is not what God asks us to do. But we are asked to put aside our critical spirit, to leave our mistakes at the foot of the cross and to forgive others. We are asked to listen and pray for one another. We are asked to love the unlovely and lead others to Christ.

Prayer

Father, we love You because You first loved us. We know love because of You. Thank You for all of the ways You continue to teach and grow me to be more like Your Son. Fill me with Your Spirit so others would see that I have been marked by Your love. I want to please You in how I treat and love others God. In Your great name I pray.

Prayer for RLC

Father we pray for the future of RLC. Please provide a clear vision of the path that You want us to take and to meet our financial needs. Give us wisdom for the next steps we should take as You continue to draw people to You and this body.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 15 January 21

They (the spies) went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob, toward Lebo Hamath. <sup>22</sup> They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, lived. <sup>23</sup> When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, <sup>[a]</sup> they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. <sup>24</sup> That place was called the Valley of Eshkol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. <sup>25</sup> At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land. Numbers 13:21-25

That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. <sup>2</sup> All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! <sup>3</sup> Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?" <sup>4</sup> And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt." Numbers 14:1-4

Faith is so important, and doubt is so detrimental that God places tests of faith in front of His children. These are not intended for our failure but for our success. Think about how many times life comes down to the choice, 'am I going to trust God or am I not?' Doubt and faith are both attitudes. They are formed over time and create patterns in our lives. If you can't trust God and hold onto His promises expect a lot of defeat in your life.

The children of Israel had seen God come through time after time. Yet at the moment when they stood on the threshold of the land that God had promised them, they doubted because men said they couldn't conquer the people who lived there; so, God sent them back to the wilderness.

Prayer

Father forgive my doubting heart. Help me to recall the countless victories You have had in my life. Let me grow in trusting You. Help me grow into faith and out of doubt. I know in my Spirit that You are faithful help me know it in my heart too. Help me see beyond the obstacles to the possibilities and opportunities that You have set before me.

Prayer for RLC

Thank You for the heart of service that You have given those who are part of this church body. We ask for guidance and wisdom in how we live out Your will each day. Thank You for the hearts of our youth as they continue to serve together in Baltimore and Washington DC. We ask for leadership and growth as we live out Your mission to reach our community, our county, our state and our world.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 16 January 22

Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the convictions of things unseen. Hebrews 11:1

Now Thomas (also known as Didymus<sup>[a]</sup>), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

<sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” <sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” John 20:24-29

Thomas sometimes gets a bum rap, but He was willing to say, “I have questions and I want an answer.” When we have doubts, are we willing to ask God the questions and listen for His reply, or do we choose to doubt? Sometimes we are surprised by our doubt. We think to ourselves, “God has been faithful to me. He has done so many good things in my life! Why am I doubting?” Have we listened to Jesus say, “Peace, put your finger here and feel my wounds. Believe.” There is no half way with faith, if we are caught off guard, we can tumble into doubt, but if we recount His blessings to us, we can stand firm and believe.

Prayer

Lord forgive me my times of unbelief. Help me to understand where my doubt comes from. Sometimes my fear and worry overwhelm me. Thank You for understanding my struggles and listening to my questions. Thank You for knowing that when I struggle and cry, I still love You. Thank You that You included people like Thomas in Your story so that I could see that there are others like me. Help me to choose faith over doubt; to choose listening to You over listening to my own fears.

Prayer for RLC

Lord we ask that You show favor to Michael Fletcher of Manna Church in Fayetteville, North Carolina, for Chris Halleran of Grace Church in Newport News, VA, and for Lew Schrumm of MACC in Crofton, Md. as they lead their respective churches and serve on the Board of overseers of RLC church.



## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 17 January 23

As for me I would seek God and to God would I commit my cause who does great things and unsearchable marvelous things without number. Job 5:8-9

<sup>28</sup> And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who<sup>[a]</sup> have been called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. Romans 8:28-29

Faith is one of the most talked about subjects in the Word of God. It is used in the Greek form 243 times; the verb is used 249 times and as an adjective 67 times. It is one of the most common words of the New Testament and that's not even mentioning its synonyms. So, what is it? Faith is not a matter of personal strength. Biblical faith is a dependence on God in whom we believe. The key to faith is focusing our attention on God instead of on the answers to our prayers.

Everything You're facing has to do with faith. There is nothing in Your life that is void of faith. You cannot compartmentalize your life. Either you have faith, or you don't, no matter the circumstance, the burden, or struggle. God wants to be the center of everything.

Prayer

God, here is my need, \_\_\_\_\_. This is where I am struggling, \_\_\_\_\_. I know that You want to be in the center of all of my life. It may be messy, but You do not care. You want to be a part of it. I lay it down before You right now. I will not take it back and carry it any more. It is Yours. I am going to trust You with Your help I am going to wait on You and have peace in the midst of all that is happening. Thank You for wanting me to rest in You. Thank You for your love and care.

Prayer for RLC

Father give us generous hearts. Thank you for all that you have given us. Help us to realize that we are only stewards of what You have placed in our lives. You have been so generous to us let us be generous in return to You and to those around us.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 18 January 24

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. Proverbs 16:25

Korah son of Izhar, —became insolent<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>2</sup> and rose up against Moses. With them were 250 Israelite men, well-known community leaders who had been appointed members of the council. <sup>3</sup> They came as a group to oppose Moses and Aaron and said to them, “You have gone too far! The whole community is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is with them. Why then do you set yourselves above the LORD’s assembly?”

<sup>28</sup> Then Moses said, “This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these things and that it was not my idea: <sup>29</sup> If these men die a natural death and suffer the fate of all mankind, then the LORD has not sent me. <sup>30</sup> But if the LORD brings about something totally new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the realm of the dead, then you will know that these men have treated the LORD with contempt.”

<sup>31</sup> As soon as he finished saying all this, the ground under them split apart <sup>32</sup> and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households, and all those associated with Korah, together with their possessions.

<sup>33</sup> They went down alive into the realm of the dead, with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community. Numbers 16:1-4, 28-33

Rebellion is serious! It has many faces but at the root it is knowing what God wants You to do and refusing to do it. Rebellion lives at the heart of all of us. It is as old as the Garden of Eden. Every little baby, every toddler who won’t pick up his toys, every child that wants to play in the street, has in his or her heart a wish to go their own way and to be in charge. Rebellion reveals a deep rebellion against God’s authority and brings devastation into our life if we do not ask for forgiveness and submit.

When we choose to rebel, we lose God’s protective umbrella of authority over our life. When we go our own way, we open ourselves up to a lot of hurt and put our self at great risk to the consequences that can bring us pain, sometimes for the rest of our lives. When You hear God’s word, do something about it. Everyday that you live in rebellion is another plank kicked out of the bridge you back to God.

Prayer

Lord I ask that You break any rebellion in me. I do not want to live apart from You in disobedience. Lead me to submit to You in all areas of my life. Confront me where I am living outside Your will. Give me wisdom to break free of the chains that I have bound myself in. I do not want to live in a war of wills with You.

RLC Prayer

We ask for renewed excitement for the Greeting and Hospitality team. Help their joy in meeting others to be contagious. Help them show those they meet that they are loved and welcome.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 19 January 25

<sup>18</sup> Make sure there is no man or woman, clan or tribe among you today whose heart turns away from the LORD our God to go and worship the gods of those nations; make sure there is no root among you that produces such bitter poison. Deuteronomy 29:18

**1** To humans belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the proper answer of the tongue. **2** All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the LORD. **3** Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. **4** The LORD works out everything to its proper end— even the wicked for a day of disaster. **5** The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished. **6** Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the LORD evil is avoided. Proverbs 16:1-6

Pride is the root of all rebellion. It is defined as: a conceit in one's own superiority; insolence; rude treatment of others; personal exaltation; an elevated opinion of self; self-esteem springing from a consciousness of your own worth. This isn't a decision made in ignorance. We stiffen our necks at a rule or authority we just flat out do not like! When you come to a place where You say, "I don't really care what God wants or says or thinks. I want what my comfort, my pleasure, my desire, now and forever," you begin down the road of antigod and it goes no where good. God will not force His will on you. He cannot overcome the state you put yourself in. You are the only one who can choose to turn around, ask forgiveness and submit to His will. The trouble is, the further you travel the road of rebellion against God, the harder it is to turn around. The very nature of the sin of rebellion makes it almost impossible for us to seek forgiveness.

Prayer

Lord, give me humility and a submissive spirit. Teach me what You want me to learn and teach it soon. Drill it deeply into my life, so I will live under the protection of Your authority. Lord, have Your way in me. I surrender all of my hopes, dreams, ambitions and plans into Your capable hands. Keep my heart soft in Jesus name.

Prayer for RLC

Lord thank You for the use of Regal theater and for the management and all the workers. Help us to be good witnesses to them and to show them love. Give us wisdom and creativity in using this meeting place and make us attractive to those who come in for the movies and see us there. Make them curious and help us to point the way to You.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 20 January 26

He said:<sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.<sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.<sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.<sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.<sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.<sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.<sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.<sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:3-12

Humility is the fear of the Lord; its wages are riches and honor and life. Proverbs 22:4

Submission takes us out of the wilderness because God loves heartfelt humility. We are called to follow in Christ’s footsteps, to be humble servants of those around us, not only with those who are easy to get along with but also with those that are difficult. Jesus was reviled yet He uttered no threats. He even asked God to forgive them while he hung on the cross. We need to practice Christ-like submission in our daily lives.

Submission is a choice from the bottom up—not the top down. You choose to put yourself willingly under the authority of another; it is not a demand from someone who wants you to place yourself under their rule. When submitting is a choice, it is a commitment made in humility; when it is demanded, it can lead to harm and abuse. God places the choice in our hands.

Prayer

Father, without apology I can say I want Your favor! I know that if You are for me who can stand against me? You will never use or abuse me. You fill my life with abundance and joy. I choose to submit myself to You and Your path for my life. Lord, turn my eyes to You let me walk in faith and obedience before you.

Prayer for RLC

Lord, we ask that You open doors in the community to get the Gospel message to the unreached and unengaged people who live there. Help us to love each other well so we can show others love. Make us honest. Do not allow hypocrisy to fester and grow. We want to be the shining beacon on the hill and show others the grace and love that You have given us in abundance.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Day 21 January 27

The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.”<sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived. Numbers 21:8-9

Return, all of you who have turned away from the LORD; He will heal you and make you faithful. You say, “Yes, we are coming to the LORD because he is our God. Jeremiah 3:22

Can you imagine that there were those that refused to look at the bronze snake that Aaron held high? There were those that either refused to believe they were in danger or thought that they could get well on their own. They flat out said that they did not need or want God to heal them. No matter what, their refusal to accept the way God had given them led to their death.

We do not always receive God’s Word with an open and soft heart. If we are to be healed of attitudes that are contrary to God’s will we need to listen now, turn and ask forgiveness, and then submit to His ways. God gave us only one way to find our way back to Him and that was through His son Jesus. We are told He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. All are given a chance to follow Him and it is up to us to choose His healing or to choose death.

Prayer

Father thank you that You allow us to return to You. Thank You for Your healing grace and for Your forgiveness when we choose the wrong attitude. Lord, help my heart to be soft so I do not spend time in the wilderness without You. Help me to have the strength to follow Jesus in faith and to walk humbly before You.

Prayer for RLC

Father, we ask to continue to hold to our core values, that we first and foremost love You in all we do, that we would grow in faith, and that we find new ways to express that love to each other and to the community at large. We ask to find ways to live connected, sharing our lives authentically with each other. Give us the desire to influence our community, boldly living out our faith and advancing Your Kingdom.

## 21 Days of Prayer

Thank you for participating in the RLC 21 Days of Prayer. God deeply cares about our attitude; this study is based on the Israelites journey out of Egypt in the book of Numbers with lots of other biblical support. There is hope for changing our attitude, but it takes a choice to break habits that may be a long time in the making. Join us as we journey to change complaining into thanksgiving, covetousness into generosity, criticism to love, doubt into faith and rebellion into submission. The inspiration for this series is from the book, Lord, Change my Attitude, Before it's too Late. by James MacDonald And Lord Change my Attitude study guide by James MacDonald and Barb Peil.