

Prayer and Fasting
Season 1
8th-28th January 2024
Corporate Prayer Days

11th January 202418th January 2024

Fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one's flesh to the Spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, quenches the fire of lust, and kindles the true light of chastity. Enter again into yourself.

Augustine of Hippo

Greetings from the Prayer Coordination Group

As we come into this time of Prayer and Fasting for the start of 2024 let us empty ourselves of everything that is not of God. Ask Him to fill us with His presence and Holiness to be prepared to be used by Him for His Glory.

Fasting

This can be a full fast, a partial fast or a fast from an activity to give you more time to pray. The choice is between yourself and God alone.

Prayer

We encourage each office, Board, intercessory group, spouse, and volunteer of African Enterprise to determine your way of spending this time with God. We encourage you to involve the prayer groups around you, both within and outside of AE.

Feedback

Please let us know if you have any God-given messages for the organization. All comments can be sent to prayer@aeint.org.

Biggie Paul

Prayer Coordinator

on behalf of Stephen Mbogo, Emmanuel Kwizera, Salomi Mumbi, Joan Addison, Joana Amegashi, Esther Chongo and Melody Mwangi as the Prayer Coordination Team

Foreword

Dear AE Family,

With the start of a new year 2024, I am delighted to welcome each of you to our January prayer season guide. In the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, it is easy to lose sight of the profound importance of reflection, gratitude, and spiritual renewal.



AE International CEO Rev. Dr. Stephen Mbogo

Beginnings are a time when we naturally find ourselves contemplating the past, present, and future. It provides us with an opportunity to realign our priorities, seek inspiration, and deepen our connection with the Lord. As we embark on this journey, let us draw strength and inspiration from the timeless wisdom of Psalm 119:105, which reminds us, "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

This guide has been curated with the intention of guiding you through a meaningful and transformative prayer season. Throughout these pages, you will find reflections, meditations, and prayers designed to nurture your spirit and foster a sense of unity among us. I encourage you to take a moment each day to pause, reflect, and connect with the shared words. By doing so, may you find the encouragement and guidance needed to navigate the blessings, challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Thank you for being an integral part of African Enterprise. Wishing you a blessed and transformative 2024.







Prayer for the New Year



Dear God,

On this day I ask You to grant this request?

May I know who I am and what I am, every moment of every day.

May I be a catalyst for light and love, and bring inspiration to those whose eyes I meet.

May I have the strength to stand tall in the face of conflict, and the courage to speak my voice, even when I'm scared.

May I have the humility to follow my heart, and the passion to live my soul's desires.

May I seek to know the highest truth, and dismiss the gravitational pull of my lower self.

May I embrace and love the totality of myself? My darkness as well as my light.

May I be brave enough to hear my heart? To let it soften so that I may gracefully choose faith over fear.

Today is my day to surrender anything that stands between the sacredness of my humanity and my divinity.

May I be drenched in my Holiness and engulfed by Your love.

May all else melt away.

And so it is.

Debbie Ford

Job 11 v 13 – 15 "If only you would prepare your heart and lift your hands to Him in prayer! Get rid of your sins and leave all iniquity behind you. Then your face will brighten in innocence. You will be strong and free of fear "(NLT)

- Pray that the word of the Lord would be a lamp onto our feet and light our way for the road ahead
- Pray that we would be humble and not deviate from His commands
- · Ask God to keep us spiritually fresh, especially when times are hard
- Pray that God would restore and renew us to produce more fruit



LORD, if you will, you can.....Mark 1:40 (Praying in the Will of God)



Micheal Cassidy

Founder, African Enterprise

I want to reflect with you on the vexed and complex issue of praying in, or into, the Will of God.

In Mark 1:40, a leper "came to Jesus, beseeching Him and, kneeling, said to Him, "Lord if you will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I will; be clean."" (Mark 1:40-41).

It is clear that the leper was in no doubt as to Jesus' power or capacity to heal. But he just wasn't sure if this was the will of God and his Christ for him. I think many of us feel just the same when praying about issues, whether large or small. We genuinely do not doubt the Lord's power to answer our requests but, simply put, we don't know if it is part of the Father's will to answer these prayers. And this can weaken our resolve or the intensity of our prayer cry.

The Apostle John clearly had some of these thoughts in mind when he wrote in 1 John 5:14, where he puts it this way: "and this is the confidence which we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." This suggests that it is a prerequisite of answered prayer that we know we are asking "according to His will." (vs 14b). In fact, John can be so bold in vs 15 as to add that "if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of Him."

So too does this principle take centre stage in the Lord's Prayer, when Jesus said we should pray "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven."

I use the Lord's Prayer every day in this way in my own devotions. I basically try to pray that I want whatever is said or done in a given situation to come forth with the Kingly rule of Christ pervading the situation, and the Divine Will being manifested in the same way as it would be in Heaven. This is powerful. Very powerful. I certainly find it a very strong personal challenge to try and discern in my praying what the Divine Will would look like if it were manifested in the matter or people I am praying about.

Please think about this principle. In my next article, I want to think specifically about some topics where we can be quite sure they are in the Will of God.

- Pray God's will and purpose for our lives.
- Always pray in the Spirit
- Be sensitive in the prompting of the Holy Spirit

BECOMING SURE WE ARE PRAYING IN THE WILL OF GOD

Day 3

Micheal Cassidy

Founder, African Enterprise

In my last article, I focused in on the important principle of praying in and into the Will of God. I mentioned the leper story in Mark 1:40 where he prayed "Lord, if you will, you can." He was sure of the Power of God, but not the Will of God. As it transpired, it was the Will of God to heal him.

I would like now to think of some situations when we can be SURE we are praying in the Will of God.

For example, we are always on solid ground when we pray for the Will of God to be done, for nothing can be more IN the Will of God than praying FOR the Will of God. So keep this in mind as you pray for different people and situations.

There are also some prayer specifics which make this very clear. Thus in Luke 10:2, Jesus can say, "the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray therefore for the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest." So, whenever one prays for more people to enter the Lord's work, one is praying bang in the middle of how the Lord wants us to pray.

Another fascinating specific comes in Psalm 122:6, "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." I am sure all of us at this time are extremely vexed, graunched and confused by what is going on in the Middle East in the conflict between Israel, Hamas and Gaza.

I feel stricken when I see the dreadful suffering of Palestinian women and children. But then, on Oct 7th 2023, Hamas went in unprovoked and slaughtered 1400 Israeli civilians. So, how on earth does one pray? I can't be sure, but what I am sure about is that the Lord says, "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." That is a prayer in the Will of God, and surely when God hears that prayer, the whole area will be positively affected.

So that is basically how I pray. But confusion returns when, for example, I try to pray about my shingles, which has plagued me for some 5 years. Surely it is the Will of God to remove it, but He doesn't seem to do so. In such a situation, all I can do is fall back on the prayer, "Thy will be done" (Matt 6:10), and rest in the Pauline principle recorded in 2 Cor 12:8,9 "three times I sought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but He said to me "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.""

I close on an AE specific. We are called to evangelise the cities of Africa. So when we pray on a daily basis, as we do through Biggie's Prayer schedule, for effective entry to any given African city, we are again praying plumb centre in the Will of God.

- Pray for Israel and Palestine
- Pray that God would forgive their indifference and stamp out prejudices that lead to hatred
- · Pray for peace within their walls and peace within themselves

Hope Springs Eternal



Gavin John

Communications, AE South Africa

We almost always enter a new year in 'hopeful expectation' of one better than the battles of yesteryear we see in our rear-view mirror before changing lanes or setting course for the new one! But where does our HOPE come from? lessons learnt? fresh optimism of human nature? 'Positive influencers' on social media?

The songwriter calls it for me...

In Christ alone, my HOPE is found. He is my light, my strength, my song. This Cornerstone, this solid ground: firm through the fiercest drought and storm.

Christian HOPE comes from trusting God in all circumstances, especially in times of trial and tribulation, which we are certain to encounter in the coming year - some new and unexpected in our ever-changing world. We are equipped and ready though, because Christ lives in us, the HOPE of glory! Christian hope, though unseen, is never lost!

'For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.' (Romans 8:24-25)

Christian hope, though unseen, can always be trusted!

'Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1)

Christian hope, though unseen, does not put us to shame!

'And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. (Romans 5:5)

Christian hope, though unseen, is part of God's plan for you!

'For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

'And now, Lord, for what do I expectantly wait? My hope is in You.' (Proverbs 39:7)

Sisters and brothers, as you set your course for 2024 in 'hopeful expectation', my encouragement to you is to travel in the safe lane of CHRISTIAN HOPE - in Christ alone! What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease. My Comforter, my All in All. Here in the love of Christ I stand.

May you be refreshed, renewed, reshaped daily in this new year - for worship, for witness and for service! God bless you all!



HOPE

- · For all believers to have Intentional quiet time with the Lord;
- For renewed energy, both physical and spiritual to minister throughout the year;
- For Christian wisdom, knowledge, and discernment to meet the challenges of modern society
- For Godly intervention in opposition to the moral decay, unethical conduct, and corruptive forces that rob nations of justice, peace and concord.



CASH

Day 5

Gary Almeida Training Manager AE South Africa

I want you to think about a specific four-letter word that seems to be in short supply in the world today, and if we had more of it would change the circumstances of many, if not all of us. As you continue to take a swing at what that word might be, let me ease your mind by telling you it is not that four letter word we spell C A S H. It's far greater than plain old cash. Still figuring out what it could be?

I don't think it would be too presumptuous of me to say that each and every one of us can attest to the fact that 2023 came with its own set of challenges, and while those challenges don't just miraculously disappear with the clock striking 00:00 and the sudden arrival of 2024, we have made it through into a new year because of the abundance of God's mercy (5 letters), grace (5 letters) and we are now looking to 2024 with fresh eyes of faith (also 5 letters), for 2 Corinthians 5:7 reminds us, "we walk, by faith and not by sight." Any idea what that four letter would be?

The "Price of Preachers," the world-renowned preacher, Charles Spurgeon said; "Hope itself is like a star – not to be seen in the sunshine of prosperity, and only to be discovered in the night of adversity." As we go into 2024, let us be reminded of the source of our **hope** (there it is, those precious four letters). The source of our hope is a profound concept that is deeply rooted in our faith. It is not something that we conjure up ourselves or something that we can manufacture. Our hope, the hope that is steadfast and unwavering, comes from God alone.

It is a divine gift, a grace that is bestowed upon us by our Heavenly Father. This is a fundamental truth that we must grasp to fully comprehend the power and significance of hope in our lives as we embark on the journey that will mark 2024.

The scriptures provide us with clear evidence of this. In Romans 15:13, Paul writes, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." This verse explicitly tells us that God is the source of our hope. It is He who fills us with hope as we trust in Him. It is not something that we can generate on our own. It is a divine gift that is given to us as we place our trust in God.

Our hope propels us forward. It gives us the strength to persevere, the courage to press on, and the resilience to overcome. It is not a passive resignation to fate, but an active engagement with God's promises and it is a powerful force that can transform our lives and the lives of those around us.

John Piper says this about hope; "Hope is a confident expectation and desire for something good in the future... Hope is power. Hope is strength. Hope is victory in the fight of faith." What a beautiful encapsulation of the essence of the strength of our hope. It is not a passive, wishful thinking, but an active, confident expectation. It is a powerful force that propels us forward, gives us strength to endure, and secures our victory in the fight of faith as we face the coming challenges – whatever they may be of 2024.





- Pray for an abundance of hope to fill our lives and flood the continent of Africa.
- Pray that the real Source of Hope will be made more widely known through our outreaches across the continent that are in place for 2024.
- Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit reigniting the fire of God.

"Take off your shoes" Joshua 5:13-15



Mike Odell Former Team Leader and Board Member AE South Africa

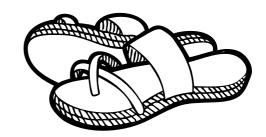
As I write this, TV and the news media are flooded with wars, conflicts, floods, famines and other disasters, all clamoring for our attention. The global landscape is changing but as believers we can be certain that in Christ we have a rock that cannot be moved.

Joshua in these few verses from Joshua 5 must have been very uncertain of what lay ahead of him as he approached Jericho. As he looks up he sees this man with a drawn sword and challenges Him. "Are you for us or for our enemies?" 14 "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord[e] have for his servant?" "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

In middle Eastern culture removing your sandals meant surrendering your rights. Joshua immediately understood who "The Commander" was and submitted to His authority.

It is fitting at the beginning of a new year that we renew our commitment and submission to our Lord and allow Him to guide us is our strategy for the coming year. May we be sensitive to the still small voice as we make our plans. It was after this encounter that Joshua received the strategy for taking Jericho – and the Lord gave it into their hands. It is so important that we line up with God's agenda and being obedient to the Holy Spirit's leading and not just asking him to bless our plans.

Uncertain times are great opportunities for evangelism even though it may seem impossible. Jericho may have seemed impossible to Joshua but with the Lord's strategy it literally fell into their hands.



- Take time to be with the Lord and remind yourself who Jesus is, our Saviour and Lord, but also the Son of God who holds all authority
- Pray for a new sensitivity to the Holy Spirit in all areas of your life.
- Pray for new and strategic opportunities for evangelism
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal his strategy for the missions and events in this coming year.
- Pray for faith to take on seemingly impossible challenges.



Believe you have received it as you pray.



Elizabeth Akeso Okiror AE Associate Zambia

One day as I was waiting for a friend to join the prayer meeting and I was just worshiping through a song by Cece Winans, that says Believe for it, the Lord reminded me of a scripture in Mark that says, "Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours (Mark 11:23-24)". Some of the questions that came to my mind which I want us to consider as I thought of these scriptures. When we are praying, do you think or consider that we are in the presence of God, and that He is hearing? Do we even believe we receive the answers, if so why do we keep going back to God several times asking the same things the same way?

In Mark, we have to pray with complete belief and if we do, we receive the answer in the prayer room, that is why even 1 John 5:14-15, the Bible says, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, He hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him". Please note that we already have what we ask of God, not we, might, may, or shall. So once we have prayed, be fully persuaded that God has heard and the next time you bring the issue to God in prayer it is with thanksgiving and confident expectation, because you know that even though it has not manifested in the physical you already have it and it is just a matter of time and you will be testifying of an answered prayer.

Furthermore, we are made in God's image and so we live and behave like Him, and just as He calleth those things which are not as though they were, so should we after prayer (confess/speak by faith) for example He called Abraham a father of many nations before he became one (Rom 4:17).

In conclusion friends, in this prayer season, as we pray and seek God, let us be fully convinced that because God is in our midst He has heard our prayer and we have all that we have asked of Him and so we continue to wait thankfully until there is a full manifestation of our requests.

- Pray that as we enter into this prayer season, we have the consciousness that God is in our midst and is hearing our prayers.
- Pray that we have no doubt but faith.
- Pray that we start to speak like God who is our father, calling things that are not as if they are, thus giving life to every challenging situation.
- Pray that our confidence in the abilities and sovereignty of God shall grow and stay strong.

The One Indispensable of Life Proverbs 3.1-10



Rev. Canon Dr. John Senyonyi Former International Board Chair

Ask any married person that one thing that keeps marriage together, and they unfailingly mention love. I do not contradict this necessary ingredient to marriage; I think there may be more than love.



Our son once said his favorite verses in the Bible are Proverbs 3.5-6, about "**Trust in the LORD**". Trust enhances confidence and peace between two people. In counseling married people, my wife and I have invariably found that couples who lose trust in each other suffer almost irreparable damage. Even keeping a vital secret for years can be ruinous of trust. No relationship survives without trust, not even with God.

The wise man said, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." To deny the necessity of trust replaces God with other things.

Educated people tend to replace trust with their own understanding because they have been trained to solve problems without God. They trust the results from a test tube! We struggle to trust because of our accumulated experience, handling different situations. As one Christian emerging from driving on a dangerous road exclaimed, "Thanks, Lord. I think I can take it from here." We easily gravitate to trusting our own skills.

The common denominator is failure to acknowledge that the LORD runs the world and is worthy of our trust. For trust is a function of the credibility of the object of our trust. I trust God because He has unfailingly proved times without number in all previous years that He does as He says, and says as He will do.

As you walk into the New Year, not knowing what's ahead, trust Him "with all your heart". Amen.



- · Pray that our trust will be in the Lord and not on our own understanding
- · Pray for marriages that they will put their trust in the Lord
- Pray that marriages would not be built on the foundation of trusting our own skills.



FREE AND RESPONSIBLE



Zenia Swanepoel AE Associate, South Africa Founder of Kingdom Culture Glo

In Rom 8:1-2 (TPT) we as believers in Christ, are guaranteed that we have the greatest freedom as inheritance. A freedom that was paid for by Jesus' death and resurrection to have a life union with Jesus, leaving behind all condemnation from sin, death, fear and shame.

I have had the privilege to work with homeless people for many years. Most of them are struggling with various addiction issues. It's painful to see how this unseen power holds them in bondage, but there's nothing like the moment when they realize what Christ did for them and the chains begin to slip off. This freedom is extremely personal, but it brings them from a selfish mindset and lifestyle to a place where they choose to surrender their desires to God and become a living sacrifice to Him, allowing the Holy Spirit to transform them from cultural ideals and opinions to a completely reformed person (Rom 12:1-2 TPT).

It is essential to understand when we take hold of the freedom Christ gave us, we cannot separate it from the responsibility that now rests upon us to work with the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of self-control and to use our freedom to be a blessing to those around us. 2 Peter 1:5-9 (TPT) words it beautifully; "devote yourselves to supplementing your faith with goodness, so that your pursuit of knowing Jesus becomes more intimate".

Christ took it all on Him to set us free and reconcile us with the Father, but it remains our responsibility to continue partnering with the Holy Spirit to develop our character so that walking His character will assist us in growing the influence and the anointing Jesus gave with the freedom He paid for (Tit 2:11-12, Col 1:10).

- Lord, I thank you for the freedom that you gave at such a high cost that I may have life in your beauty (Rom 6:4;14-22)
- Holy Spirit, please show me in what area of my life I should grow in character so that I can live responsibly to the wonderful gift you gave me (1 Pet 1:13-16).
- Jesus draw me closer to your heart so that I will love unselfishly, as you love us (Eph 4:1-2)



ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE NEW YEAR 2024



Diana Dow Melbourne Prayer Group Australia

Reading: 1 Samuel 7 v. 1-12

"Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and he named it Ebenezer (stone of help), saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."

The Ark of the Lord has been brought to Kiriath-Jearim and Samuel calls the people to Mizpah to repent of their worship of other gods. The Ark had been captured by the Philistines in a battle seven months previously when the Lord had not helped them because of their sin. The Philistines come to attack them again, and while Samuel was crying out to the Lord for Israel, the Lord thundered against the Philistines, threw them into confusion and they were defeated. Samuel sets up a remembrance stone, Ebenezer, (stone of help) as a reminder that it is Y-H-W-H who has delivered them, again.

As we begin this new year, we come with thanks, because the Lord has helped African Enterprise thus far. Prayers have been answered and many have responded to the good news of Jesus, because the Lord is faithful and desires all to be saved. In 1 Samuel 12:24, Samuel instructs the people, "But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you." As we reflect on the Lord's grace to us in the past year, allow the Holy Spirit to show you any other gods that have taken first place in your heart; any way in which the solid foundation is insecure. Isaiah 28:16, quoted in Romans 9:33 and 1 Peter 2:4-6, says, "So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic." Let us bring ourselves into alignment with the Lord Jesus Christ, as living stones built to bring God glory by all we do and say; a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

- Samuel promised (1 Sam. 12:33) As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. May we keep our promise and pray.
- God changed Saul's heart and the Spirit of God came upon him in power (1 Sam. 10:9,10). May our hearts be changed and the Spirit of God equip us with everything good for doing His will.
- For all national teams. May their dependence on the Lord be their firm foundation against all disturbances.
- For all trainers and participants in new Community Transformation groups. May they be encouraged as they gain skills and discover more of the Father's love for them.



SO DO NOT FEAR...



Joana Amegashie AE Ghana

ISAIAH 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

What a powerful verse of scripture of encouragement for the believer in today's crooked and perverse world. As Christians we live in a world where we experience good things as well as bad things.

Sometimes the righteous and the wicked appear to suffer punishment together when God decides to punish an unrepentant nation. Thus, Christians are not exempted from sufferings and persecutions as can be seen in 2 Timothy 3:11-12.

When we look at the negative occurrences in today's world, we are overwhelmed and afraid. As we encountered the uncertainties of life (wars, earthquakes, flooding, living standards skyrocketing, job losses, sicknesses, etc) we fret and don't know what to do.

But as believers in the Almighty God, He has promised that He will never forsake us – Hebrews 13:5. God's words of encouragement in the Bible are uncountable. In Deuteronomy 31:6, Christians are encouraged to be strong and not fear. In 1 Peter 5:7 we are encouraged to cast all our anxieties on God because He cares for us.

Ps 31:24 encourages Christians to be strong, take heart and hope in the Lord. God gives us hope and encouragement for every uncertainty and tragedy we encountered – Ps 33:18-19. The 3 Hebrews Boys in Daniel 3 refused to bow down to King Nebuchadnezzer because they know and are encouraged that God will save them.

My dear brethren 2024 is here with us. Are you afraid? Are you discouraged? Are you overwhelmed by the tragedies and uncertainities in this year? Yes, as humans you would be fretful. But the good news is that as Christians we have a heavenly Father who does not slumber or sleep (Ps 121:3-4).



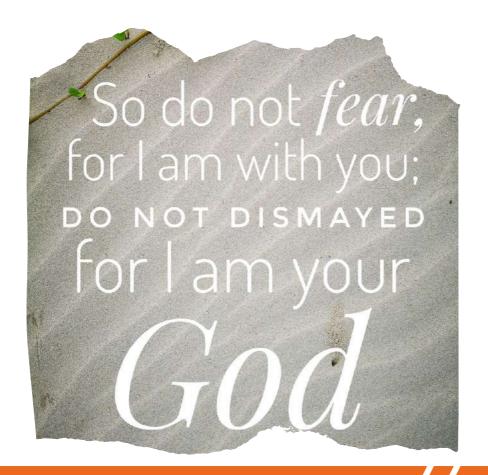
SO DO NOT FEAR...



Every year has its unique challenges and uncertainties, but Christians should be encouraged that God will definitely see us through. As we read and meditate on God's word, and communicate with Him in prayer, let's be encouraged that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us – Phil 4:13.

Welcome 2024, Christians are ready to sail through this year successfully because we are encouraged by God's love, His provision, protection, and blessings in this year.

- Pray that our love and trust for God will not change; and that the Holy Spirit will always be our helper at all times
- Pray that we will always be reminded of the goodness and faithfulness of God always
- Pray that God will perfect our faith and establish our thoughts in Him. Heb 12:2;
 Proverbs 16:3
- Pray that God will direct our steps in His way Proverbs 3:5-6
- Pray for good health for all AE staff and their families.





DO YOU WANT TO GET WELL? John 5:1-9



Charity Kivengere Board Member AE International

Picture a crippled man sitting at a well year after year, for 38 years, waiting to be healed. This is the story of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda, a pitiful sight of a man who had become a fixture at the well, with no more hope of ever getting healed. Sadly, nobody it seems cared enough about him to try and help him.

This man's problem had become a way of life, so much, so that when Jesus asks him, "Do you want to get well?' He says "I can't" and goes into reasons why this is the case.

Aren't we like the crippled man many times, stuck in our troubled situations that have become the norm. We seem to be trapped and in a state of paralysis, resigned to crippling situations after trying so many times to deal with them and nothing has happened. This could even be an organisation, a ministry in a state of paralysis, static, even retrogressing, facing challenges that never seem to improve, perhaps like the cripple waiting for the helping hand which never comes.

Jesus' question "Do you want to get well?" is therefore very relevant in our current and different contexts. He is asking this question because:

- He earnestly wants us to be well "I came that they may have life and have it in abundance" (Jn 10:10)
- He is able to deal with our troubling circumstances however long they have been "If the Son sets you free you will be free indeed" (Jn 8:36)
- He knows that whatever is crippling us, is stopping us from being fruitful as a person, a ministry, an organization. "I chose you. .so that you might go and bear fruit, fruit that will last" (Jn 15:16)

Jesus is encouraging us to raise our faith this year and trust him totally concerning those matters paralyzing us.

Our answer to the Lords pertinent question should be, 'Yes Lord I want to get well. We want AE to be well and healthy.' To the crippled man, the Lord says, stand up, pick your mat and walk, and in faith the man believes the lord, gets up and walks, having been healed by the one who is the very source of healing. We too need to listen to the Lords instruction in our circumstances and obey him in faith.



DO YOU WANT TO GET WELL? John 5:1-9



May we search ourselves as we begin a new year and see where we are defeated and in a state of paralysis, where we are relying on the hand of man instead of looking to the Lord himself.

May we be released from any crippling situation as we respond to the Lord's instructions in faith, so that we are set free indeed and able to go and bear fruit.

- · Pray that we will abide in Christ and rest in Him for our provision and sustenance
- · Pray that we might not only bear fruit but much fruit for His glory
- Pray that God will increase our faith that He is able, no matter what our circumstances are





He Equips Those He Calls



Melody Mwangi Personal Assistant to the International Team Leader

In this journey of faith, we often find ourselves facing the daunting task of fulfilling the calling(s) that God places on our lives. If you were to take a moment to examine yourself, there have been times when you have felt inadequate, ill-equipped, and uncertain about how to navigate the path ahead. You are not alone in this. God's word, however, serves as an unwavering reminder that our calling is not contingent upon our abilities but on the authority and equipping that He provides.

Consider the disciples, for instance. They walked with Jesus, learned from Him, and witnessed His transformative power. When we read the gospels, it is evident that Jesus did not send out His disciples haphazardly. They had been under His guidance and instruction, learning from Him through various experiences and teachings. Yet, they were far from perfect. Many instances reveal their shortcomings; for example, Mark 14:37-38, where Jesus found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Similarly, in Luke 18:34, it is noted, "But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said." They were not characterised by exceptional prayerfulness, education or charisma. They were ordinary people, much like us, and yet Jesus saw it fit to send them out to the world to do extraordinary things in His name (Luke 9:1-2).

Many notable figures in the Bible were often unremarkable individuals prepared by God and given authority for their callings. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things — and the things that are not — to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him."

Whenever you feel weak and inadequate for your assignment, remind yourself that you are in good company. God truly calls whom he chooses and then equips them. All He asks of us is our surrender and willingness to follow him. My prayer for you as we begin a new chapter this year, is that you rely on the indwelling presence of Christ, trusting that He will guide you, strengthen you, and fulfil His purpose through your surrendered life.

May the Lord himself encourage and strengthen you today.



- Pray that God would empower and equip us for the work of God.
- Pray that the Lord would renew us and our calling.
- Pray that the lord would call us to the place of deeper prayer.
- Pray that the Lord would renew our vision of the calling he has given us.
- Pray that the Lord would resource the vision that he has give us.





THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD



Georgiana Collington Ex Foxfire Canada

When I think of God's faithfulness in my life, this old, yet relevant hymn often comes to mind.

"Great is thy faithfulness, Oh God my father There is no shadow of turning with thee Thou changest not, thy compassion they fail not As thou hast been, thou forever will be

Great is thy faithfulness, great is faithfulness Morning by morning new mercies I see All I have needed thine hands hath provided Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me"

In a Christian- God-fearing household, we faced many challenges as most of us do-discrimination, domestic violence, physical and verbal abuse, mental health issues, hospitalization, financial challenges, near-death experiences and too many others to name... I know some will read this and think or even share out loud that serving God or growing up in a Christian home meant that It would be effortless, easy or a bed of roses, soaring on the clouds, oh no my friends - that was not our reality. We had our fair share of trials. Notwithstanding, we had great moments, yes we did, however, being transparent I wanted to include some of the struggles we experienced, even to this day.

Nevertheless, God has been and still is the main constant in my life. Like that line in the song states, "Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not.", Even throughout those difficult and heartbreaking times or even when I've been unfaithful, disloyal, disobedient to God, choosing to do my own thing or neglected my relationship. He has never changed! God's love for me has never wavered. He remains faithful, loyal, trustworthy, my provider, confidant, immovable, dependable and my forever friend. The one I can call upon at all times and without failure, He is present and always on time.

My friends, we have a faithful God who loves us even when we are unfaithful. Won't you trust him today? Won't you allow Him to show that He will never disappoint you and that He loves you even with all your faults God's love knows no bounds and it doesn't come with conditions... I'm excited and so happy about that! Aren't You?



"But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance." 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5 NIV

- Thank the Heavenly Father, thank him for his faithfulness towards you
- Thank Him for His unconditional love.
- · Ask Him to Help you be faithful to Him
- Ask Him that you may become more like Him every day
- Pray that He transforms AE into the organisation
 He wants it to be reflecting His faithfulness



Jonathan L. Addison Former Board Chair AE International

As Christians, we look to Jesus as a leader par excellence. He was prepared to think beyond the conventions of His day and step forward for His Mission. Jesus maintained that He came not to invalidate the Law of Moses, but to accomplish it. He complained about the hypocrisy and excessive regulations and rites of imposed by the Pharisees.

To begin I refer to three short passages of scripture:

Matthew 23:1-12 (New International Version)

A Warning Against Hypocrisy

- 1. Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples:
- 2. "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.
- 3. So, you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.
- 4. They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.
- 5. "Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries[a] wide and the tassels on their garments long.
- 6. they love the place of honour at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues.

Mark 7: 5-8:

5 So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?" 6 He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites as it is written:

"These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

7

They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.'[b]

8 You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions."





Reflection

The passage from Mark's Gospel above and also in Matthew 23 have been seen, in the past by some, as an attack on the Jews of His day, however if we look closely, it is more an attack on the Scribes and Pharisees, after all Jesus was a Jew, indeed of the line of David, Great David's Greater Son. Nobody pays much attention to the anger of a bad-tempered person. But when a person who is characteristically meek and lowly, gentle and loving, suddenly erupts into anger, even the most thoughtless person is shocked into taking thought. That is why the anger of Jesus is so awe-inspiring a sight.

It is seldom in literature that we find so unsparing and sustained an indictment as we find in these words when the wrath of Jesus is directed against the Scribes and Pharisees.

The Jews are a people of The Law, The Book. Indeed, they had a saying, "Moses received the Law and delivered it to Joshua; and Joshua to the elders; and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue."

Jesus said he did not come to set aside the law. On the cross with his arms outstretched for all of us. He cried out "It is accomplished" he had fulfilled the Law and the Prophets for all humankind[1]. The Pharisaical outlook on religion had one fundamental effect. It made it a thing of thousands upon thousands of rules and regulations; and therefore, it made it an intolerable burden.

In more modern times The Reformation railed against the popery of the then Church. leaders such as John Wesley and George Fox were concerned about the excessive rites and regulations of The Church of England. They sought a Church that presented a loving, forgiving saviour for all humankind. They believed in word and action.

Perhaps we should look at Jesus' leadership and contemplate how in our generation we should model His leadership.

Various attempts have been made to pin down the differences between leadership and management. Managers, according to an influential article by Abraham Zaleznik in the Harvard Business Review in 1977, value order; leaders are tolerant of chaos. A later article in the same publication, by John Kotter, described management as a problem-solving discipline, in which planning and budgeting creates predictability. Leadership, in contrast, is about the embrace of change and inspiring people to brave the unknown.

[1] See Mark 9: 2-13 (The Transfiguration)



Day 15

Warren Bennis, an American academic who made leadership studies respectable, reckoned that a manager administers, and a leader innovates. This is not to denigrate good management and governance they are essential. Good leaders are usually support by good skilled, and trusted managers and experts.

Jesus innovated and sought to lead us to a new dispensation, a new way of thinking. He dealt with all of humankind's transgressions and at that dread day in the Garden He accepted the cup presented by God with the words "Thy will be done". He then proceeded to the cross of salvation. Then with His arms outstretched he embraced all humankind and paid the price for all transgressions of all time. Then He could cry out "It is accomplished".

Followers of Jesus should put God first, and we should use our intellectual and spiritual resources in the service of others: God first, others second and self-last. Jesus is the true leader and successor of Moses. His followers, including us are of equal standing before Him. Servanthood and humility are the attributes of true ministry. Jesus was cross because many of the Sadducees and Pharisees failed to grasp this.

Leaders in government the corporate world, the church and agencies should look at this. In my professional life I was variously described as: eccentric, a maverick, or even, an absent-minded professor. At a conference one of the delegates approached me after a talk and said, "ah...I see you are an endogenous economist. sometimes we do need to step aside from conventional wisdom and take a wider look at what is the best way forward.

However, a leader must be accompanied by expert and trusted followers. The work of good governance and adherence to legal strictures is guided by managers who can at times encourage the leader to go forward, or, at times, pull them back. We need technical experts who can guide as to what is possible. A good leader needs time and space to read think and consult. Importantly he/she must have a clear idea as to the ultimate mission or goal. I would encourage all leaders set time aside to read, contemplate, and pray. Maybe take half a day or a full day out of your diary?

Jesus retreated to a quiet place on occasion. Notice that Jesus selected 12 disciples who he could teach encourage and sometimes chastise. Jesus sought to put substances over form, not like some of the church, including the Pharisees who put form above substance.

The disciples seemed to me an eclectic bunch not well qualified for the task ahead. However, Jesus always pointed to the task ahead, He was prepared to put aside conventional wisdom and focus on the ministry. It is well said that God does not necessarily call the qualified but qualifies the called.

My question to all of us is" When we are faced with visibly impossible decisions or are quite lost for direction, our intellect and advice is exhausted do we seek God's word and are then prepared to take that first step in faith? Are we prepared to be a leader and deal with the chaos all around and to embrace change and take that first step into the unknown?"

- That AE's Leadership are prepared to work through chaos and confusion, seeking God's will and keeping their eye on the mission.
- That every leader is supported by expert and trusted followers, committed to the same mission.
- That we may seek and listen for God's word in promoting the Gospel through the grace of The Holy Spirit.
- That we may all take regular time to; read, learn contemplate and pray.



GOD USES THE WILDERNESS TO SHAPE US



Curt Du Preez-Miles
AE Associate
South Africa

My splendour is gone and all that I had hoped from the LORD." I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. — Lamentations 3:18–26 (NIV)

God doesn't want us merely to 'get through' our problems. He wants us to 'grow through' them - Gary Oliver

We frequently find ourselves in difficult situations in life as a result of our decision to follow our own path and our wilful disregard for God. If we accept that these difficult times in life are the result of our refusal to listen to Him, we will continue on our destructive path until we come across God's loving discipline. We exclaim, "God...HELP!"

Then, via our present circumstances, God, who is ever-present, is suddenly revealed, and we somehow arrive at the point where we can see and feel the warm, comforting embrace of our Heavenly Father. The author of Lamentations believed that God had driven him to the brink of despair before showing him kindness and gladness. God loves us so much that He will not think twice to put us in a difficult situation so that we must face the complete agony of our current situation. It is only after we have faced our suffering that we can truly enjoy God's consolation.

When it seems like no one is interested in us and that getting by each day is impossible, that's when He steps in. He soothes us with His presence and gives us a loving hug in His arms. It literally envelops and swallows us in a way that justifies our little period of seclusion. You will receive a profound vision of God's true nature in the solitary zone of discovery known as the wilderness.

Be cheerful even when everything is getting darker around you because there is still hope. God is willing to come to your aid and comfort you. He requires us to rely heavily on His grace in order to survive in the desert. Recall that until God accomplishes what He desires within us, we shall remain in the wilderness with Him.



GOD USES THE WILDERNESS TO SHAPE US



Curt Du Preez-Miles
AE Associate
South Africa

Though not at first, we discover that the wilderness is not something to be afraid of, but rather a place where you can hear God's voice like never before, where He can reveal himself to you in amazing ways, where your intimacy with Him grows, where the rushing wind of the Spirit of God will smash the idols in your life and drive out all of your enemies, and where you will encounter the amazing reality of the one true living God and realise that He is a loving God who sincerely wants a relationship with you!

It is written in the pages of the book of Hosea God would bring Israel into the desert and court her far from all of the distractions so He could speak plainly to His children. Even though His people turned away to worship other gods, in His infinite kindness, He talked to them gently with the intention of mending their connection with Him and turning what had been a very trying period into a hopeful day.

We start to see that one way He does this is by placing us in circumstances that are diametrically opposed to the fruit He is attempting to develop. We also learn that most of the time, a person's brokenness and suffering magnify our powerlessness and clearly show how much we need a Saviour. "For judgement I came into this world, that those who do not see may see; and that those who see may become blind," was how Jesus stated His purpose to the man who had been blind. —KJV John 9:39

- Pray that as we seek God in this prayer and fasting season that he would encounter us in fresh and new ways.
- Pray that we would learn from the wilderness, often the wilderness is of our own making.
- Pray that we would learn important lessons from the wilderness and trust the Lord in all we do.
- Pray for the Lord to help us navigate our way through the wilderness.
- Pray that God would guide us through our wilderness experiences.



PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT



Pastor Greg Smerdon Former Team Leader AE South Africa

Our relationship with our Lord Jesus is deeply spiritual. As human we often yield to the temptation of attempting to grow a spiritual relationship naturally as oppose to tapping into the spiritual means provided to us by the Holy Spirit.

Apostle Paul, talking on the gift of tongues reminds the believer of how this incredible channel enables us to connect to Father with precision and purpose.

Consider the three suggestions below as point of departure as you pray this morning and note what an enormous difference praying in the spirit will make in your intimacy and walk with the Lord.

Praying in tongues [praying with your spirit] during your devotional prayer time builds up your spirit man. The Apostle Paul makes reference to this in his epistles to the church at Corinth and Jude:

- [14] For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. [15] So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding.1Corinthians 14:14-15 (NIV)
- "[20] But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit" Jude 1:120 (NIV)

In the Apostle's epistle to the church at Romen he highlights that praying in tongues enables us to pray accurately even when we are discouraged or "not feeling it" or sometimes don't know what to pray for:

"[26] In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.
 [27] ...because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. Romans 8:26-27 (NIV)

I have personally benefited enormously when unexpectedly required to zone into the Lord for unplanned ministry purposes by praying in tongues as this gives you quick access (a hotline) to the power and presence of God when the need arises.

"[11] And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life [quicken] to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you." Romans 8:11 (NIV)

"[18] And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests..." Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)



PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT



Pastor Greg Smerdon Former Team Leader AE South Africa

The joy accompany praying in the Spirit enables us to grow in our intimacy with the Lord and follow the example of the Apostle Paul's ministry approach:

• 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 (NIV) [4] My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, [5] so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

- · Pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit
- Pray for more intimacy with God
- Pray that God would reveal His will for your life as you pray in the Spirit





BELIEVE FOR WHAT YOU ASK FOR...



Clive Lawler
AE Associate
South Africa

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it shall be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord. (James 1:5-7)

A little Girl asked her dad to buy her a doll. She remembered all the times he had given her what she asked for before. So this time she thanked him and began telling all her friends that she was getting a new doll when her dad returned from his trip.

Doubt is the opposite to faith. It is actually unbelief. When you doubt you are actually saying to God that he is not able to provide for you, that he is not capable of answering your prayers and requests appropriately. We need to confess that we have what we have requested. If we are doubting then our prayer should be, "Lord help me in my unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

So, the key is to ask in childlike faith, putting our intellectualism aside and grasping hold of God's word as truth. We need to have an attitude of expectation, believing that we have received what we have asked for. It means seeing in your mind's eye and in the Spirit realm what you have asked for that it has arrived.

And the final step is to thank God for answered prayer. That is the greater act of faith. Asking is not enough. Thanksgiving, displays confidence in God like a little child.

- Thank God for granting your request
- · Pray for a childlike faith
- Pray that he will remove any doubt as you build your trust in Him



WAKE UP FROM YOUR SLEEP Isaiah 61:1 – 2 & Ephesians 5:8 -17



Songe Chibambo Former Pan African Missions Director

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it shall be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord. (James 1:5-7)

The story is told of a young girl who used to listen to the chiming of a town clock almost daily. One day, as usual, she began listening to the clock as it struck the noon chime. She started counting: one, two, three..... on it went.... twelve, thirteen, fourteen.... The clock was continuing, and the little girl was frightened. She rushed to her mum, screaming, "Mummy, mummy, it is later than it has ever been!"

"It is later than it has ever been" because Christianity is under siege. Yet, the Church has become unresponsive to the current challenges, including syncretism, rumours of wars, and natural disasters in many parts of the world.

The Church worldwide is fast asleep in the light because it has become comfortable, unconcerned and irrelevant to answer life's challenges. Despite seeing the danger looming and the writing on the wall, the Church has been quiet and conducts its business as usual.

Isaiah is reminding us to ARISE and SHINE. Why?

The Light of Jesus has come. We are expected to live according to God's standards by pointing others to God's greatness and lightness.

Deep darkness is covering the earth. Leonard Ravenhall wrote, "The appalling arrogance of sin is most disturbing. Iniquity does not slink down a side street any more with its head down but swaggers down the main street. Neither does it cover its poison as in days of yore, but openly defies the old standards and mocks Biblical morals.

The Shortness of Time and the Endless Eternity. God has given the Church a window of opportunity to share the Good News. The night is fast approaching when such freedom may disappear.

The Urgency of the Hour. The harvest is ready to be harvested now. Delay may cause waste.

- We must ask for forgiveness for failing God (2 Chronicles 7:14).
- May the Spirit of God jolt the sleeping Church to wake up to see what God is seeing.
- May the Lord cause the Church to hear His heartbeat for the lost in sin.
- · May the Lord revive His Church again.

YOUR IDENTITY: KNOWING YOU! Genesis 1.26-31



Rev. Canon Dr. John Senyonyi
Former International Board Chair

We asked candidates for job interviews to introduce themselves. They waxed long about what they had done!

Many have a functional identity or derive identity from their titles and are never addressed by their name. People self-identify by their appearance - skin color - or status and achievements - educated, rich or poor - or by their 'sexual orientation'.

None tells accurately the content of who 'YOU' are as a Person. These lead inexorably to emptying us of our human worth. If you self-identity as 'good for nothing', you may not reach your full potential. If you make this life all there is to live, you may make pleasure your purpose in life.

Genesis 1.20-31 clarifies our inestimable identity derived from the Godhead, created after the likeness of God – that is our Identity and our Worth. We are distinct from all other creation by Nature and Vocation.

By nature, we bear certain attributes of the Godhead. By vocation, we are stewards of all His creation, with His authority and ability to harness it.

Like God, but simultaneously unlike God and not God. We mirror Him partially, yet truly and authentically. Our likeness to God is faintly shown in our rationality, morality, languages, capacity to relate in love and commitment, and a creativity peculiar to humanity.

Further, we are blessed for purposeful birth to subdue the earth. God appointed us His Vice-Regents, to develop the earth for God, not for our greed. We study and work to bring the earth under God's rule.

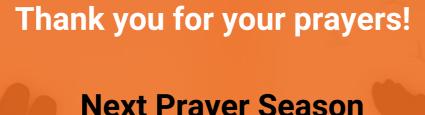
Finally, you are Very Good, not Junk! Manufacturers label their product, you similarly wear God's label, "VERY GOOD"! Do not remove it. After making man and woman, God looked at His Masterpiece and said "Very Good", signed, God.' Take care of His Masterpiece God's way. Amen.

Like God, but simultaneously unlike God and not God

- Praise God that we are His representative on this earth
- Thank Him for the very breath that He gave us and for creating us in his image
- May we represent Him on this earth and show the world of His majesty, might and mercy

PRAYER FOR AFRICAN ENTERPRISE

- Pray that we would be willing to sacrifice whatever God asks to serve Him well through the Ministry of African Enterprise
- Pray for those in AE who are tired and exhausted will be renewed in the strength of the Lord.
- Pray that our trust and hope would be with the Lord for the future of African Enterprise
- Pray that God would rise Fathers in the Ministry to mentor and guide future Leaders
- Commit all our Missions, Social Action Projects, and Training to the Lord
- Pray for our Founder Michael Cassidy for good health and strength
- Give thanks for the International Team Leader Dr Stephen
 Mbogo and all the National Teams, may the Lord's blessing and anointing be on them
- Pray for the finances of AE. Pray that the Lord would supply all the resources needed for Missions
- Pray that the Lord would help us to work in love and harmony and that we would be the light that leads the world to Christ



Next Prayer Season
9th May - 19th May
Pentecost Sunday 19th May