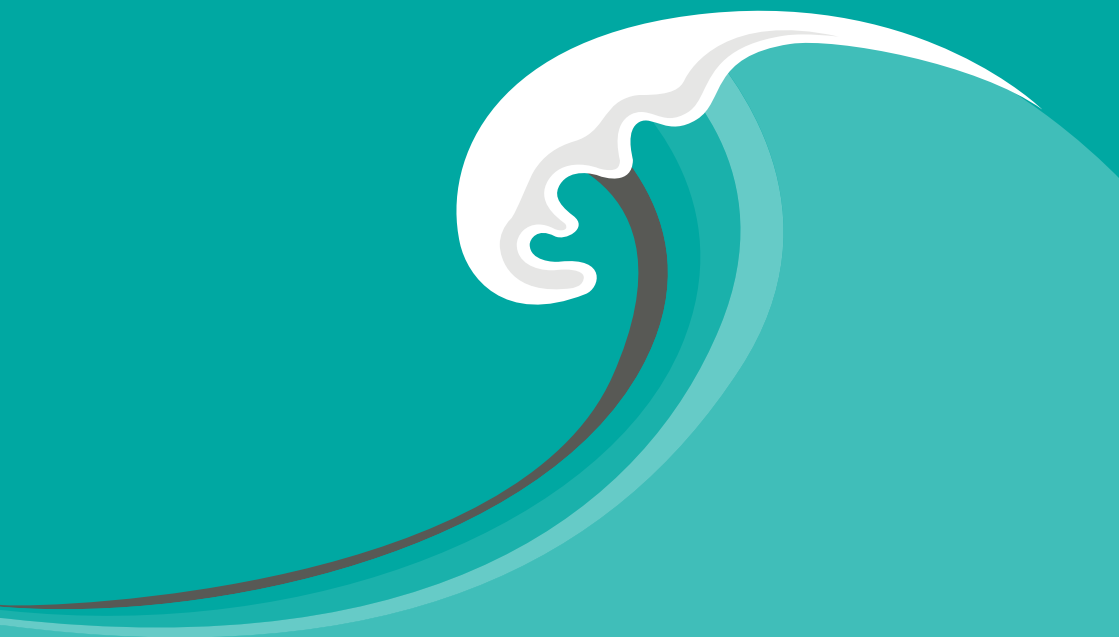


catching  
the  
wave.



40 DAY PRAYER GUIDE

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# Imagine

Imagine what would happen if thousands of people were praying every day and hundreds of churches united in asking God for his will to be done.

Imagine whole communities becoming saturated with the presence of God and people forsaking what is wrong, experiencing his love and finding Christ every day.

Imagine people becoming interested in the message of Christ and widespread social change as people live in hope instead of despair.

Imagine discovering God to be near; answers to prayer becoming common place and church becoming truly glorious.

Imagine... revival



# catching the wave

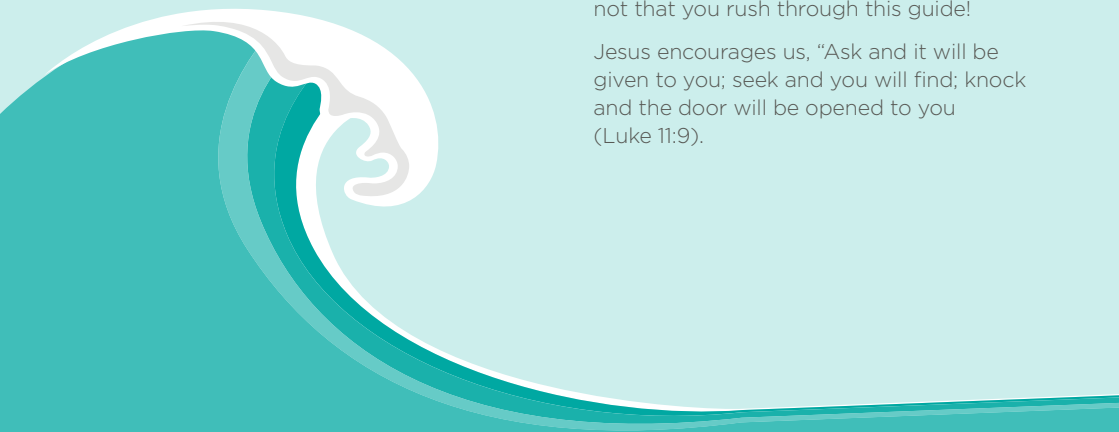
## **40 Days is a united concert of prayer asking God for a new wave of revival.**

Besides having different topics though each week it has a daily emphasis of praying for your 'Big Issue', your '3 Friends' and revival. It also incorporates a study guide with material relating to each of the weekly topics (page 76).

The Guide is designed to be used over 40 days. The first 'week' contains only 4 'days' to fit into the church calendar for Lent. Obviously it can be used at other times but bear this in mind. The rest of the weeks have 6 articles and a rest day on Sundays which gives an opportunity to reflect and catch up.

This can be seen as a prayer journey. What is important is that you meet with God, not that you rush through this guide!

Jesus encourages us, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you (Luke 11:9).



# Extending your prayer life

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests” (Ephesians 6:18).

## Pray more

Pray a bit longer than usual. Rather than just praying for your own needs, pray for the needs of the area.

## Pray with others

Take part in your church’s programme of prayer. Commit to praying with your partner or friend. The prayer guide can be used in group prayer as well as personal prayer.

## Come into his presence

Start your prayer time by making a conscious effort to come into God’s presence. Open your heart to allow him to speak to you. In Rev 3:20 Jesus knocks at the door asking to come in. You can have that promised fellowship with him.

## Praise and worship

Praise God at the beginning of your prayer times. Offer Him prayers of worship for who he is and thanks for what he has done. Intersperse your conversation with him with prayers of adoration and gratitude. You could even sing!

## Listen

Remember that conversations are two-way! Whilst you pray and fast God may well challenge your own life. By spending more time than usual, you are giving the Holy Spirit a wonderful opportunity to show where you need to change or perhaps to inspire or empower you for some ministry.

## Pray from the scriptures

The scriptures reveal God’s will for mankind. Many believers find it helpful to use passages of scripture in their prayers.

You can take the promises or themes and pray them into situations today.

## Keep going

Keep on praying even when you don’t see immediate answers. Praying for a topic once does not necessarily mean that this issue is dealt with! God may give you a determination to pray about something in particular. If so, you should keep on until you see the answer come.

## Consider fasting

Fasting is a demonstration to God that you mean what you pray. It is an outward expression of the commitment that lies behind the prayer. It has been practised by the Christian church throughout its history. It was also an important part of the prayer life of many Biblical characters. People fasted: to be in God’s presence ready to hear him (Acts 13:2); to seek God’s special help or blessing (2 Chronicles 20:1-4, Ezra 8:21-23); to express repentance (Nehemiah 9:1-2); to petition God to fulfil his word (Daniel 9:1-3). For guidelines about fasting please see page 74

# My 3 friends

**During these 40 Days you are encouraged to pray for people to become Christians. When someone comes to Christ usually someone has been praying for them.**

Choose three 'friends'. These should be people you know who do not know the Lord, or who are not walking with him at present. They could be members of your family, neighbours, colleagues, friends or contacts

1

2

3

- Pray for each person specifically. Pray for their personal needs. Try to look at life from their standpoint. What are the worries and joys, pressures and decisions, dreams and fears that they face? Pray for those things.
- Pray about their spiritual life. What are the things that keep them from God? Pray that God would soften their hearts and bring them to faith in Christ.
- If you are doing this as a group or with a friend pray for their three friends also. Pray that the Lord would give opportunities to share something of His love with them.
- Believe that these three people will change during the 40 days of prayer.

# MY BIG ISSUE

If there is one thing that you want God to do during these 40 Days, what is it? What situation, person or trial is there in which you want to ask God to intervene? This period is a special opportunity for you to bring this need to God every day.

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If it helps, write it here >

## catching the wave

Every day we want to be praying for revival in this area.

**‘Lord we ask that you would act not according to the poverty of what we are, or believe, but according to the greatness of who you are and what you can do.’**

So each day one of the three things to keep praying for is ‘revival’. That’s where you can pray this kind of prayer.

### **But what is revival?**

Revival extends and enlarges God’s work. It’s like a new wave rolling forward, breaking and reaching more ground.

It is an activity of the Holy Spirit deepening people’s commitment and bringing an awareness of eternity. Christ’s message is heard and believed. Historically it has affected large numbers of people and transformed communities. People have described it as ‘communities saturated with the presence of God.’



# WEEK 1

# Father





## Something happened

Virginia had started a prayer meeting on a Monday morning at her church. She is a church warden and felt it was the right thing to do even though most Mondays she was on her own, sometimes joined by the vicar. She also felt it was right to leave the door open so people could come in if they wanted, even though this made it fairly cold!

One morning a young woman came in. When she saw Virginia she hugged her and cried explaining that she had saved her life. It turns out that Virginia had nursed her as a premature baby many years ago.

This young woman was in a difficult place, lost and upset. They prayed and talked with her. Virginia gave her the trypraying booklet (see page 79). A week later she came back and she prayed to commit her life to Christ. Virginia had been present for this girl's physical birth and then for her second birth too!!

## Something new

If we want something we have never had then we need to do something that we've never done.

Remarkable church growth is taking place in many places with churches full and thousands coming to prayer meetings. We'd love God to drop revival down from heaven: the complete thing in one easy-to-open package! But perhaps he wants us to be part of the process. Are we prepared to do something new to bring about revival? Perhaps our expectation of, and preparation for, revival should start with ourselves.

We may need to go deeper in prayer, to come to a place of honesty and brokenness before him. A breakthrough in areas of our lives in which we struggle may be necessary. Praying all night, fasting for a week, or meeting with other churches might be what is needed to bring about a new level of fruitfulness.

Historians have identified certain activities that precede revivals. J. Edwin Orr points to extraordinary united prayer. Other accounts tell of how revivals have come as God has responded to the cries of a handful of people. In the Hebridean revival men and women called upon God, often in desperation on their knees before him. Sometimes the persistent and faithful prayer of a small group of believers is what God answers; God powerfully touches the lives of individuals and works through them to reach others even whole communities.

So when it comes to praying, do we need to do something we have never done?

## Prayer focus

### FAMILIES

The family as a basic unit of God-ordained stability is in disarray in UK society. People living together without being married is common. Adultery destroys many relationships. Married couples often experience separation and divorce. There are many second families and single parent families. Children as well as parents are often hurting and confused. Single parents do a fantastic job in trying to bring up their children and need our prayers. Nevertheless many children from families where there has only been one parent end up in crime. (70% of criminals in the UK come from single parent families.)

- Let's pray this week for families to be strengthened.
- Pray for love to prevail in your own family and those known to you.
- Pray for families under pressure.
- Pray for a single parent known to you that God will help them in their demanding task.

# DAY 1

## Protecting

**Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!**

Matthew 7:9-11

I remember the laughter. We were on holiday playing with an airbed on a lake: pulling, splashing and pushing each other in the water. Then came a howl of pain and blood. My sister's and my brother's heads had collided and she was bleeding profusely. My father immediately took charge and we swam back to the shore. Strong arms of both my father and elder brother carried her back to the tent where we were camping and quickly help was summoned and the injury managed.

Fatherhood. As I remember that childhood incident it was a good picture of the protection and the care of a father (and an elder brother). Strength and security gave confidence that it was going to be all right. Not all of us have experienced that from our earthly fathers, nevertheless this is the role God intends them to have. This image is what God wants us to have of him: not only present in crises, but watching over our lives in protection and love. We have a Father in heaven, as the Lord's prayer says. He longs for us to experience confidence, love and power in our relationship with him as we work our way through this life.

In the Old Testament God reveals how he feels about people. In Jeremiah, for example, he speaks to the Jews who were 'idol-ing' around. He says how gladly he would treat them as sons and give them a desirable land. He says "I thought you would call me 'father' and not turn away from following me." In the New Testament Jesus speaks of our Father in heaven observing, rewarding, caring and loving.

Here we have 40 days to get to know God better. 'Father' is waiting, watching, listening, longing for you .....

### Prayer points

- Thank God that he is a loving, living and caring father to you.
- Many people do not have a good experience of their fathers and are suffering from the effects. Pray for someone you know (yourself?), who needs to be freed from the effects of bad fathering. Pray that they (you) will be able to forgive and discover freedom from the bondage they live with.
- Pray for the many fathers, especially young ones, who do not have a good role model of fatherhood and yet are now fathers themselves, that they will do good to their children.

Pray for your 'big issue'

Pray for your 'three friends'

Pray for a new wave of revival

## DAY 2

**This is what the LORD says:  
“Stand at the crossroads and look;  
ask for the ancient paths, ask  
where the good way is, and walk  
in it, and you will find rest  
for your souls.”**

Jeremiah 6:16

### Prayer points

- Pray for a greater intimacy with God.
- Pray for those who need to return to God – the ‘prodigals’ in your family or the family of a friend. Pray that they will long for what they have lost and begin their ‘return.’
- Pray for a greater understanding of what God is like among people in your church so that there will be many who return to the full experience of him in their lives. Pray for a greater depth to the life of the church.

## Returning

**Come near to God and he will come near to you.**

**(James 4:8) There’s movement here! As Christians we can think that if we have placed our faith in Jesus then we are home and dry in relation to God. All sorted. We have all we need in Christ. We are forgiven. We are going to heaven and in fact are already experiencing eternal life now. All this is true. It’s as true as my relationship with my father: I will always be his son; he will always be my father. Nothing can ever change either of those statements.**

However if God says we should come near then it implies we have moved away! At the very least there is an invitation to come closer. Distance can come in our relation with God, just as there can be distance with friends or family. A coldness can come, an awkwardness in his presence or when we pray we’re not really on speaking terms. Lack of communication allows ‘ice’ to form. There can be specific issues of offence, failure or disappointment that cause distance and need to be cleared. In fact even standing still brings distance from God. Our ‘walk’ with God is always a journey towards God.

In the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15) God is portrayed as a father waiting for his son to return. No failure or sin is too great. His love compels him to watch for his son’s return and to give him a lavish welcome. It is the same with us. So we are invited to make a move, to return. If we fail in this then we live uncomfortably with the distance – and like the prodigal – we’re deprived of the good that God would do. Drawing close to God is what we do as Christians.

Go for a walk today – a soul walk. Start from where you are and move towards God.

Pray for your ‘big issue’

Pray for your ‘three friends’

Pray for a new wave of revival

## DAY 3

**See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!**

1 John 3:1

**For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.**

Psalms 139:13-14

### Prayer points

- Take some time to consider what it means for you to be a child of God. Thank God for what is true of you as a Christian. Put away everything that undermines your confidence in your relationship with your heavenly Father.
- Pray for those in your church who are 'at the edge'; not quite sure that they are yet children of God (yourself?) Pray that they will have an experience of the 'Spirit of sonship' when God's Spirit tells them they are God's children (Romans 8:15,16).

## Adopting

I cried. I knew it was going to happen. For months it had been expected. But when the twins were born I cried. There's something about seeing new life brought into the world that does this. Our children were brought into our family with all its love, characteristics and quirks! Interestingly, there is something about becoming parents that we have inherited from God (Ephesians 3:15).

Jesus describes the process of becoming a Christian as becoming a child of God. God has children - those who receive (or believe in) his Son Jesus (John 1:12). Think about this for a minute: when we become Christians we are adopted into God's family. We take on the family characteristics and have its privileges:

- We have a new family - a good one (John 8:35, Hebrews 2:11)
- We have a new Father - the best there could be (Matthew 7:11)
- We have a new status - children of royalty (1 Peter 2:9, 10)
- We have a new access - so we can receive the mercy and help he gives (Hebrews 4:16)

So how do we feel about ourselves today? Low self esteem? Feeling we don't really count? Not worth being taken seriously? Perhaps instead we should remember we are children of God: having the most amazing Father caring for us. He is ensuring that we will become like him; sharing in the family characteristics of love, holiness, power and kindness. We matter to God. We are his children.

Pray for your 'big issue'

Pray for your 'three friends'

Pray for a new wave of revival

## DAY 4

## Knowing

**I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.**

Ephesians 1:17-20

In the 1992 Olympics Derek Redmond was tipped for a medal in the 400m. Immediately after the start of the race he experienced a ham-string injury. In that moment all the years of preparation and training came to an end. But he was determined to finish the course and began to hobble along in immense pain.

It was at this point that a figure pushed through the crowd onto the track. It was his father. He had realised that Derek was going to finish the race, come what may. So he put his arms round Derek and the two of them hobbled along together with Derek burying his head on his father's shoulder. There was a great cheer when they crossed the finishing line.

Derek says of his father: 'I'm very, very close to my father. He has a massive influence on my life. He was never my coach but he came to every race. He was everything else. My motivator, my hero, my pal, my bodyguard, my physio and my masseur some days. You name it, he was it.'

Jesus knew his Father in heaven. He said some striking things about that relationship, but most astonishing is that he invited us to join in the relationship they had together. In a single phrase Jesus says something that turns most religion on its head: 'Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent' (John 17:3).

Jesus was saying that people can know God personally. Being a Christian is not a matter of being religious but having a relationship. We can know God, not just things about him, because he is our Father.

### Prayer points

- Pray for yourself to know God better. Pray some of the things stated in Ephesians 1:17. As one commentator says: 'that your "pre-school" experience of God will develop into maturity'.
- Pray for your church leader to know more of God.
- Many people struggle because of false views of God. Pray for someone who is a prisoner to a false view of God.
- Pray for a young person you know that they would know their father's love. When girls know they are loved by their father they are far less prone to search for intimacy in wrong relationships.

Pray for your 'big issue'

Pray for your 'three friends'

Pray for a new wave of revival

# Sunday

## **Mmmmm have a break. Time to catch up.**

You **can** do this 40 Day journey but you need a short break – so here it is. We've put one day a week just so you can have a break from your 'fast'. It's the Lord's day.

Stop and have a think. How are you getting on? Is there anything that has worked well for you? Is there something that has not worked for you? If so do you want to change what you do next week?

## **Ideas!**

This week has been about God as father:

- What about writing to your father or mother to tell them you are grateful for them or thankful for something they have done for you. It need only be a short note. They will appreciate it. Or if you are a parent, why not write to your children and tell them you think they are great.
- Talk with a friend sometime this week about what's good about fatherhood.

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## **HEBRIDES 1949-53**

In revival, God moves in the district. Suddenly, the community becomes God conscious. The Spirit of God grips men and women in such a way that even work is given up as people give themselves to waiting upon God. In the midst of the Lewis Awakening, the parish minister at Barvas wrote, "The Spirit of the Lord was resting wonderfully on the different townships of the region. His Presence was in the homes of the people, on meadow and moorland, and even on the public roads."

This presence of God is the supreme characteristic of a God-sent revival. Of the hundreds who found Jesus Christ during this time fully seventy-five per cent were saved before they came near a meeting or heard a sermon by myself or any other ministers in the parish.

The power of God, the Spirit of God, was moving in operation, and the fear of God gripped the souls of men - this is God-sent revival as distinct from special efforts in the field of evangelism. (Duncan Campbell of the Hebridean revival).