



## **Hillsong: 40 Days of Revival**

40 Days

This 40 day devotional is an entry-point for learning about our God and growing in our relationship with Him through the study of revival. We explore the attributes common to history's greatest revivals - being present, prayer, purity, power, personal sacrifice and praise - with hearts open to what they might teach us about God and our relationship with Him. Knowing God and His ways is the goal and the prize.

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The art of being PRESENT  
Psalms 90:12  
February 27, 2020

#### WIDE AWAKE

If we are honest, most of us will admit that we have experienced seasons when the moments, days and weeks seemed to slip away without us noticing. Perhaps we were absorbed by the busyness of everyday routines, or by a difficult season when mere survival was challenge enough. Regardless, we often look back on these seasons with a sense of regret and the feeling that moments were 'wasted.'

The book of Psalms (always a great place to start when facing the shortfalls of our humanity and refocusing on God) gives expression to this tendency in a prayer by Moses. He asks God to arrest his impulse to drift through the days, saying:

Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalm 90:12 (NIV)

Easy to learn, this verse has been the prayer of countless Christians wanting to awaken to each moment they have been graced with. Perhaps today, it can become your prayer, too.

As we begin this study of revival, let's resolve to be aware of what God is doing. From the outset, let us number the days, tune our ear heavenward and determine that this season will not slip away. That we might have our eyes wide open to see that the Lord is present and active.

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The art of being PRESENT  
John 20: 24-25  
February 28, 2020

#### CONSISTENCY

John 20:24 is a verse that many Christians have likely passed over often. It recounts how Jesus' disciple Thomas was not present when Jesus first appeared to the disciples in His resurrected form.

Later, Jesus did appear to Thomas, graciously allowing him the physical proof he'd said he needed to believe that Jesus' resurrection was real, to which Thomas responds with an absolute, personal confession of belief.

The Bible doesn't tell us why Thomas was not with his friends that day. We can speculate based on the circumstances and Thomas' personality: perhaps he was grief-stricken or traumatized?

We can say with certainty though, that Thomas was absent from the group of those who knew and loved Jesus on that day, and missed an opportunity to be in Jesus' presence as a result. Another opportunity was given to him (isn't that just like God?) but the initial moment lost, could never be regained.

Evan Roberts of the great 1904 Welsh revival, reportedly read Thomas' story as a young man and resolved that if there was ever a possibility that God would be 'present', 'He would never be absent from such a meeting.' It was a history-changing decision then and it remains a great challenge to us today.

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The art of being PRESENT  
Acts 2: 46-47  
February 29, 2020

#### PRESENT IN THE COMMUNITY

From the earliest days of the church, God has been present when believers gathered. In Acts 2, when early believers met together, the Holy Spirit came like the wind, filling the place and causing those gathered to speak in tongues.

The early church hungered for both God and community. Daily they met and made space for those who God added to their community. They found what Jesus had shared with His disciples to be true; that where two or more were gathered in His name, He was there among them (Matthew 18).

When any unique individual is wholly present in a community, that community is naturally strengthened. When we take our place in the community of believers though, the community is additionally strengthened supernaturally by God's presence - and especially so when we have faith for God's presence.

Perhaps it has been a while since you have taken your place in the community of believers. Or perhaps you have been present physically but lacking faith for God's presence. Let this moment be a turning point for you. Determine that you will be found to be present and faith-filled in the community of God this weekend.

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The art of being PRESENT  
1 Corinthian 12: 18-19  
March 1, 2020

#### PRESENT IN YOUR PLACE

The body! Isn't it a wonderful image that Paul used, writing to the Corinthian church all those years ago? It really gets the point across - we each have a unique, God-given purpose and part to play in the 'body' of His community. Makes you wonder what 'body part' you might be, doesn't it?

Paul describes how ridiculous it would be if one body part decided it wanted to do the role of another, also noting how the whole body suffers when not all the 'parts' are present. The church operates best when all the parts of its 'makeup' are present and working.

One of the best things about taking your place in the community of God's people is the journey of discovering your unique purpose. Unified by a cause so much greater than ourselves - the cause of Christ - provides us with an opportunity to use what God has placed in our hand for His glory and to be a blessing to others.

Take a moment today to write down your gifts and passions. Talk to God about how you can develop them and use them to bless others and build His church. Ask Him to help you find the right 'place' in His community so that you are not just present, but present in your 'place.'

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The art of being PRESENT  
Ephesians 2: 19-22  
March 2, 2020

#### PRESENT IN THE CHURCH

The local church is a place where God's majesty is displayed and His purpose is outworked. We therefore all need to guard against familiarity regarding being present and planted in His House.

That said, there is something breathtaking about God's unified global Church. Just as a present individual believer strengthens a local church, so too a present local church that has embraced its unique calling, strengthens the unified global Church.

When we think of revival - thanking God for what we see already and believing God for more - our focus often rests on the local sphere of our church, families, friends and neighbors. So it should, for God has entrusted them to us.

Yet by lifting our eyes to also perceive what God is doing and can do globally, we too can be wholly present in the global Church.

Write down what you see God doing, and what you long to see Him do, in your life at home, your local church and in the Church at large.

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The Conversation of PRAYER  
Acts 4:31  
March 3, 2020

#### PRAYER - REVIVAL'S PARTNER

There is power in prayer.

Christine Caine, founder of the anti-human trafficking campaign, A21, describes how she prayed for hours whilst they were building the stadiums for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, 'I used to sit on the edge where the deep holes were dug to pour in the foundations and my tears would drip into the cement.'

Then the Director for Youth Alive in Sydney, Christine prayed that God's glory would be revealed through the gathering of His people in one place, under one accord, with one heart singing praises to His Name. This site is now Allophones Arena, Sydney Olympic Park, where thousands gather every year under the name of Jesus in Australia's largest annual conference, Hillsong Conference.

In 1904, Wales saw more than 100,000 people come to know Christ in under six months in a revival characterized by prayer, praise, joy, victory and the re-discovery of the Holy Spirit. The leader of this Revival, Evan Roberts, was a man known for his intense, fervent prayer who had believed for over 10 years to see the people of Wales come to know Jesus.

As we continue this study, let's allow God to awaken us to the conversation of prayer. With the example of the early church and great leaders like Evan Roberts inspiring us, let us intercede for our families and friends and believe for the salvation of those who do not yet know Christ.

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The Conversation of PRAYER  
Matthew 6:9-13  
March 4, 2020

#### HOW TO PRAY

People often feel overwhelmed when it comes to prayer wondering what to say or pray for. However, there is no formula to prayer. Prayer is simply conversation with God.

As we become more comfortable, we find it easier to speak to God from the depths of our hearts. This 'dailiness' of talking to God can often be consumed with our personal world, but it may also touch on the needs of our larger world - for healing, salvation and justice.

In 'The Lord's Prayer' (Matthew 6) Jesus taught us how to pray, providing a good example for anyone who is starting to build the habit of talking to God daily. It begins with the earnest request that Heaven be established on earth, according to God's will.

During this season, as we pray for God to move miraculously as He has done in the great revivals of history, let us determine to make Jesus' example of prayer our 'true north'- that our prayers reflect heaven's priorities, and that we might be ever submitted to our Father's will.

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## The Conversation of PRAYER

1 John 5:14-15

Ephesians 3:12

March 5, 2020

### WHAT CAN WE PRAY FOR?

It is obviously a great privilege for us to pray, bringing our needs and requests before an omnipotent God. Yet amazingly, Jesus has made it possible for us to approach God with confidence and to come before Him boldly. God hears us when we pray and it is His will that prayer would allow us to know Him more and receive His grace.

Perhaps you haven't always prayed with the confidence that 1 John 5:14-15 and Ephesians 3:12 speak of. Consider why that is and allow the truth of God's Word to replace the old mindsets you may have had about prayer.

During this time as we seek God to see a change in our lives and the world around us, let's be united in prayer for:

1. Salvations - for loved ones in our world who are yet to know Jesus.
2. Our city and nation - let's believe for our leaders and authorities to lead with Godly wisdom and counsel.
3. Revival - let's believe together for people to awaken to the things of God and for Him to move mightily across the earth.

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## The Conversation of PRAYER

Matthew 21: 21-22

James 5: 13-16

March 6, 2020

### WHY PRAY?

Many people have debated why it is that we pray when God is in absolute control. Whilst these questions are worthwhile, they can over-complicate and overshadow the simple truth that God's Word continually instructs us to pray with faith to God for whom nothing is impossible.

Are there specific things in your life that you are believing God to move miraculously in? Why not make a stand this week that says you believe there is great power in prayer, by gathering two or more of your friends or family to pray with you?

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The Conversation of PRAYER  
Ephesians 6:18  
March 7, 2020

#### WHEN TO PRAY

All of history's great revivals have one attribute in common - people fervently prayed for them. In November 1949 in the Hebrides Islands, two elderly women in their 80's were troubled at the state of their parish - not one young person attended church. These two women were moved to action and decided to pray about it. They met twice a week and prayed from 10pm - 3am. The women invited the church leaders and elders to pray with them. A few weeks later Scottish preacher Duncan Campbell visited the island to preach. During his time on Lewis Island, revival broke out and hundreds of people came to know Christ. On the first day of the revival, 122 young people were saved.

Around the time of our Hillsong album recording last year, our Creative Team made a commitment to pray for the recording every time they brushed their teeth. It wasn't a rule but just something fun the team decided to do to help them remember to pray every day (hopefully twice a day!). Since then, the team has done it for every event in the life of our church.

Is there a daily activity you could use to remind you to pray? Together, let us resolve to pray regularly for God to move in our nation!

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## The Conversation of PRAYER

Acts 1:14

Romans 12:12

March 8, 2020

### HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE PRAY?

In Acts 1 Jesus has just ascended to heaven and left the disciples with the instruction to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit. While waiting for Jesus' promise, they prayed; they prayed together and they prayed constantly. The disciples knew that they were living in pivotal times and sought God through prayer for what He was about to do.

Meeting in the same place, at the same time with a shared love for God, they were united in belief and their prayers were also. These were a people passionate about spreading the Gospel and they grew quickly in number.

Paul's letters to the early church also upholds the importance of persevering in prayer, with him instructing the church in Thessalonica to pray continually (1 Thessalonians 5.17) and again encouraging those in Rome to be 'faithful in prayer'.

As we consider Paul's instructions on prayer today, it would be inconsistent with what he writes about the unmerited nature of God's grace, for us to take them too legalistically. Rather, let us allow Paul's words to encourage us to develop an attitude of prayerfulness that is characterized by persistence and consistency, and that comes from pursuing a personal relationship with God and being in His presence throughout the day.

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The Conversation of PRAYER  
Acts 13:3  
March 9, 2020

## SACRIFICE

To 'fast' is to abstain from something specific for a particular reason. When we fast as Christians, we often do it to develop depth in our relationship with God. By denying our flesh something it craves, we can allow communion with God to satisfy us instead.

Legalism around fasting is pointless, as fasting is never an end to itself but an opportunity for us to put our God of grace first. Nonetheless, fasting can be a great tool for us to use to seek Him, and to set aside something that may be becoming a distraction to our time spent with God in prayer.

In the early church, we see that they fasted and prayed to hear from God and to intercede for Barnabas and Saul (Paul).

It is told that William J. Seymour, leader of the Azusa Street Revival in California in 1906, gathered with a small group of believers regularly to pray and fast to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. A few days into the fast and after praying all night, William began to speak in tongues. News of this spread and attracted people from everywhere.

Fasting looks different for each person, with the Holy Spirit at different times asking us to give up different things for a period of time. This could be social media, TV, movies, coffee, sugar etc. Fasting something is humbly saying no to the flesh and yes to the spirit. It should put our focus on God and not the thing we are giving up.

Allow God to prompt you regarding whether He would like you to fast from something for a while. Determine to use the extra time in prayer and in His presence, as we believe for people to come to know Him.

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The Process of PURITY  
Psalms 51:10  
March 10, 2020

## COMMIT TO THE PROCESS

No study of revival is complete without a discussion of purity, for it features prominently in history's accounts. Unfortunately though, the word 'purity' is one that is accompanied by much 'baggage' including judgment and self-condemnation. It is therefore important to re-appropriate the word 'purity.'

'Purity'- the noun used to name something that has the characteristic of being pure - is obviously not a word that as sinners, we use to describe ourselves. As sinners saved by grace though, it is a good name for the character development in us that occurs when we accept Christ's work on the cross and submit to the Holy Spirit's work within us.

One of the most encouraging findings of studying revivals such as the Holiness Revival (go ahead and google it!) is that purity is clearly not due to human effort but rather the result of people falling in love with a Holy God and being genuinely changed in character.

That said, God's development of purity within us is a process, not an event. It is not generally characterized by lightning bolts and miraculous character change, although it can be and has been. Usually, God develops purity in us through the process of time.

And hence there is really only one thing for us to do, as we begin to consider 'purity' in the light of revival: commit to the process.

The Process of PURITY  
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March 10, 2020

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The Process of PURITY  
Jeremiah 29:13  
March 11, 2020

## CONSECRATION

The Word says that if we seek the Lord, we will find Him.

This is no small promise! The all-powerful, all-knowing God of the universe would allow us to find Him simply because we choose to seek Him out. More astounding - His commitment to our free will is such that, though He desires greater intimacy with us, He leaves this decision in our hands.

As we seek God, we allow ourselves to be known by God, bringing each area of our lives in line with His will. This is the process of consecration. Though we will always face the temptation of impurity as a consequence of sin and our own flesh, by directing our effort to seeking God and consecrating our lives to Him, rather than striving through our own willpower, we gradually develop a resilient purity of character that is the result of true change.

The great revivalist, John Wesley, said, 'In using all means, seek God alone. In and through every outward thing, look only to the power of His Spirit and the merits of His son.'

Heart Check: Is 'Seek God' at the top of my priority list?

What specific parts of my life have I consecrated to Him?

How can I keep my focus on seeking Him rather than striving?

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The great revivalist, John Wesley, said, 'In using all means, seek God alone. In and through every outward thing, look only to the power of His Spirit and the merits of His son.'

Heart Check: Is 'Seek God' at the top of my priority list?

What specific parts of my life have I consecrated to Him?

How can I keep my focus on seeking Him rather than striving?

The Process of PURITY  
Hebrews 4:12  
1 John 2:5  
March 12, 2020

#### SCRIPTURE

One of the best ways for us to grow in purity is by reading the scriptures. His Word is alive and a guide for us to learn how to live a life that is not only pleasing to Him but also best for us.

The great preacher Charles H. Spurgeon explained Psalm 119 and his Treasury of David saying, 'God's Word is His witness or testimony to grand and important truths which concern Himself and our relation to Him. If we keep God's testimonies they will keep us right in opinion, comfortable in spirit, holy in conversation and hopeful in expectation.'

Spending time reading God's Word - allowing it to flood our hearts with a revelation of His character and His love - will affect the way we speak, think, and live. It will produce in us a life that reflects who He is... one of purity.

The honest truth is that it's a challenge to find time and motivation to read the Bible every day but let's not allow the challenge to beat us down. Make a plan today to set aside time every day to be in the Word, whether that be starting a reading plan or listening to an audio reading of the Bible.

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## The Process of PURITY

1 Peter 1: 14-16

March 13, 2020

### OBEDIENCE

What exactly does it mean to obey God? Ticking the boxes next to the 10 commandments? Loving my neighbor? Turning the other cheek when someone hurts me? In essence, yes! But also, no! Obeying God with a 'tick-box' mindset is not only doomed to failure, but simply not what God asks of us.

God's love for us is not based on our actions or effort but on His goodness. 1 John 4 explains that love is not about us loving God, but about Him loving us and sending Jesus. When we realize and understand God's grace, we respond out of a love for Him and all He has done for us, beginning to do things as He directs us through His Word, preferring His ways over our own until they become our ways.

Obedience to God, through the Holy Spirit, therefore brings its own reward of purity. Obedience to His Word, under grace, provides us with the opportunity to be more Christ-like. In this way, obedience is also an act of worship, for when we live a life devoted to God we demonstrate our love for Him.

Have you ever thought about obeying God being an act of worship? How can you worship God specifically through your obedience today?

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## The Process of PURITY

1 Corinthians 4:16

1 John 3: 2-3

March 14, 2020

## TRANSFORMATION

As a result of being in relationship with Christ and the Holy Spirit living within us, we are on a journey of transformation. This is the process of purity. The change is slow, steady and unobtrusive; our thoughts, desires, responses and attitudes are shaped into the image of Christ as we allow Him to work in our hearts. Outwardly our bodies will perish as we age - an inevitable fate of humans. But our inward person - our soul - is renewed and refreshed through our relationship with God.

In 2 Corinthians 4, Paul is careful to mention that the renewal of our soul is a daily process set in motion by the Holy Spirit. We will never be perfect and complete until we meet with Christ face-to-face. As we grow in Him and mature in our faith, so we will start to reflect more of who God is in our own nature and conduct.

What characteristics of Christ would you like to most reflect?  
What areas in your life do you feel most challenged to shape-up?

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What areas in your life do you feel most challenged to shape-up?

The Process of PURITY  
1 Peter 2: 11-12  
March 15, 2020

## INFLUENCE

We all influence those around us whether we are aware of it or not. Perhaps it is when we lead in some sphere of life as a parent, teacher, team leader, captain of a sports team or board member. At some point in life there will be people looking up to you or observing you, especially if you are a Christian.

We need to reflect Christ to those who do not yet know Him. Selwyn Hughes, founder of Crusade for World Revival, posed this question, 'By our attitudes are we nullifying the Christian message? Does our behavior contradict the very truths we are trying to get across to others?'

Take a moment to consider Hughes' question. Does your lifestyle reflect one that is completely in love with Christ and submitted to God? Invite God to work in these areas so that you can be a better influence on others for Him.

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The Process of PURITY  
Colossians 3:12-14  
March 16, 2020

## PERSEVERANCE

The Evangelical Revival in 1739 - 1791, with preachers like John Wesley and George Whitefield, was known for its teaching on holiness and was given the nickname the 'Holiness Revival'. It was marked by those who were convicted of their sin, surrendered to Christ, and therefore lived with purity of heart and life.

Emerging from this was an understanding of 'social holiness' in the teaching of Wesley who understood that salvation was not only about heaven but also about loving God and loving people on earth. Wesley realized that holiness needed to be outworked in the community as a necessary part of church life.

There is nothing like remembering that our pursuit of being Christ-like is not just about ourselves, but for others too. In Galatians 6:9, Paul encouraged believers 'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.' Take Paul's words to heart today and resolve to continue submitting to the process of purity through Christ, for the sake of all those who are, as yet, unsaved.

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Graced with POWER

Acts 1: 4-5

Acts 1: 8

March 17, 2020

## EMPOWERED

The book of Acts describes how early believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit, carried on the life and work of Jesus Christ after His ascension to Heaven. This account is well known to most Christians but is worth us pausing to reflect on.

Ordinary men and women were able to carry on with the life-changing work of Jesus after He had returned to Heaven. Wait. What? The work that had previously been done by the Son of God, Jesus Christ was carried on by ORDINARY men and women?

How? Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the work of Jesus was carried on by ordinary men and women.

And so it is today.

Sometimes we forget that the Holy Spirit is the source of our power and find ourselves in a place where our well-intentioned diligence has become striving. Sometimes we forget and become overwhelmed by feelings of powerlessness. Take a moment today to re-align and invite the Holy Spirit to empower you once again.

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Graced with POWER

Acts 4:33

March 18, 2020

ENABLED

It is not enough to know that we are 'empowered by the Holy Spirit,' we need also need to know what we are enabled to do.

When Peter addressed the people in Acts 4:8, filled with the Holy Spirit, he was fearless in the face of skepticism. Likewise, in verse 33 we read 'With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.'

It is the Holy Spirit's power that enables us to be witnesses for Christ, both in word and in action.

With the Holy Spirit's empowering we can to go into all the world and tell people that they have a Savior who loves them and literally died for them! This Spirit who draws, convicts and saves people, is a gift to those who are prone to timidity and pride alike, as we cannot boast in our works at all, but only in the Spirit's!

As the British Evangelist Smith Wigglesworth said, 'We may be nothing but in God we can be mighty.' In what ways do you need the Holy Spirit to enable you to share Christ? Ask Him!

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Graced with POWER  
Acts 19: 8-10  
March 19, 2020

**BOLD**

When we choose to live empowered by the Spirit, life becomes an adventure. We develop a boldness to take risks. Freed from the fear of others' opinions and self-reliance, our lives are characterized by having a go, taking a leap and the thrill of being in that faith-place where you can do nothing but trust God to come through!

On our recent Hillsong United Album there is one song that has resounded with the heart of our church, becoming something of an anthem for us in this season as we seek to discover God's heart for revival individually and collectively.

In a bold declaration of faith, the lyrics are:

Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders  
Let me walk upon the waters wherever You would call me  
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander  
And my faith will be made stronger  
In the presence of my Savior

Let us all allow these words be the cry of our hearts today. Resolve to tune your ear to the Holy Spirit's voice and when He asks you to do something that makes you nervous - step out and do it!

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Graced with POWER  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18  
March 20, 2020

## GRATEFUL

Every now and then, life presents us with the opportunity to cultivate a grateful heart. A moment when we are suddenly aware that we have much to be thankful for and that we haven't been thankful at all. A moment when the phrase 'spoilt-brat' comes to mind.

Sometimes we shake it off. Other times, with the best intentions, we realign our perspective, only to find it soon slipping away again.

Why do we fail to maintain a grateful heart when we try so hard?

Perhaps the answer lies in the question itself.

Perhaps it is because we try.

A Spirit-led life is one characterized by responding to the Holy Spirit's prompting. It can be as simple as encouraging someone when we feel that 'nudge' in our spirit. When we live empowered beyond our human limitations in this way, we can not help but be astounded by God's grace, wondering: How can it be that Almighty God chooses to be intimately involved in my life, prompting me by His Spirit? It is too much.

And we find that over time, the Spirit-led life shapes us into someone who is genuinely grateful and doesn't take life for granted. To be that kind person who makes people want to get right up close and ask 'why?'

Today, share with someone the daily things you are grateful for and the work of God in your life.

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Graced with POWER  
Hebrews 11:1-2  
March 21, 2020

#### FAITH-FILLED

One can not study the revivals of history without being struck by stories of great faith - men and women with a Hebrews 11:1 kind of faith who were confident in what they hoped for and assured of what they did not see.

Phoebe Palmer, for example, was a bold evangelist and writer in the 1800s and was considered one of the founders of the Holiness Revival in America and the United Kingdom. Greatly criticized for speaking publicly as a woman and for addressing mixed crowds, she was so assured of her calling and confident in relying on God, that she was not shaken from her hard work and persistence. As a result, thousands of men and women came to know Christ under her teaching.

If faith comes from hearing the message of Christ (Romans 10:17) and faith without good works is dead (James 2:17), then let us today take God at His Word and do something!

Write down the name of someone who you would like to share the message of Jesus with. Do something to actively build the relationship or strengthen your friendship with them - it is relationship that will make a way for you to share Jesus with them! What other areas in your life are you believing God for breakthrough?

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Graced with POWER  
John 15:16  
Psalms 92:12-15  
March 22, 2020

#### EMPOWERED TO BEAR FRUIT

One of the most wonderful things about living a life that is led by the Holy Spirit is that we are empowered to bear fruit. That means we can actually expect that the work we put our hand to would achieve good results, be that in business, in our relationships, in our creative pursuits, in our character and even in our efforts to share Jesus. As we see evidence of this and it becomes one of our foundational beliefs, we live with greater confidence and faith.

Psalm 92 is a 'Song for the Sabbath Day.' Make time this weekend to allow it become your own song. Copy verses 12-15 down and put them somewhere visible for the coming days. Choose to have a mindset that expects everything that you put your hand to, to flourish!

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Graced with POWER  
Acts 2:1-4  
March 23, 2020

### UNIFIED IN POWER

There is power in gathering together under the name of Jesus. We see this in the early church in Acts. When they gathered the presence of God and the power of His Spirit was evident as they began to speak in tongues, prophesy and preach the Gospel with a Godly confidence.

When the church gathers and experiences a time of awakening and refreshing, it has an overflow effect into homes, workplaces, communities, cities and even nations. Never underestimate the power in gathering and how far reaching what we can achieve together is.

The British preacher Charles H. Spurgeon once said, 'A true revival is to be looked for in the church of God. Only in the river of gracious life can the pearl of revival be found. It has been said that a revival must begin with God's people; this is very true, but it is not all the truth, for the revival itself must end as well as begin there.'

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The Decision to make it PERSONAL

Romans 15:1-2

Philippians 2:3-4

March 24, 2020

A PERSONAL DECISION TO “COUNT THE COST”

Are you prepared to count the cost to see people come to know Christ for the first time? What about to see a passion for Him be awakened in the hearts of believers? Are you prepared to give up your seat, park further away from church, stand in a queue and wait for the service to start? Will you grumble and leave or stay and celebrate?

It is one thing for us to say that we long to see an outpouring of the Spirit that leads to many coming to know Christ as their personal Savior and to find their home in the church. It is another for us to pay a personal cost to our own comfort or routine to make room for others to encounter God.

Take a moment to do a little heart check, asking God to reveal areas where you may not yet be willing to pay a personal cost for others’ salvation. Allow Him to stretch you in this area.

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The Decision to make it PERSONAL  
Ecclesiastes 9:10  
Colossians 3:23-24  
March 25, 2020

#### WHAT'S IN YOUR HAND?

Several years ago Pastor Brian Houston preached an outstanding message about “Using what’s in your hand to establish what’s in your heart.” Sports people, business people and others were encouraged that their love for God and desire to serve Him could be outworked in their sphere of influence and were encouraged to excel.

It was a mindset-changing message at the time for our church, releasing many people to pursue success in whatever it was that they were gifted in and on whatever platform they had as a result of their gifting and effort and to do it for God’s glory!

Now, many years on it has become second-nature to our church to understand that we each have gifts, passions and “tools” in our hands that we can use to achieve what it is that God has set in our heart.

What is in your hand? An instrument, a pen, a paintbrush, a computer, a hammer, a drafting board or a camera? What is it that God has set in your heart? Have you considered the connection between your heart and hand recently? How well are you stewarding both?

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The Decision to make it PERSONAL  
Philippians 2:3-7  
March 26, 2020

### A HEART OF SELFLESSNESS

Being selfless - placing other's needs above our own - is not a natural human characteristic. Our natural instinct is to look after ourselves and loved ones first and consider others as a secondary priority.

In contrast, Jesus' example was one of servanthood. Continually, He served those who were around Him putting aside Himself to prioritize others.

Take some time today to wander through the gospels (the books Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and look for your own examples of Jesus' selflessness, allowing them to challenge you personally. Mark them in some way so that you can be challenged by them at a later time.

Consider how selflessness and generosity go hand in hand. How can you put your own wants and needs aside to be generous with your love, time, words, skills and gifts?

Make a list and highlight three that you can do today to serve someone else.

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Philippians 2:3-7  
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The Decision to make it PERSONAL

Psalms 133: 1-3

March 27, 2020

#### INVESTING TIME

We are coming up to Hillsong Conference, a landmark event in the life of our church. Every year thousands of people from across the world gather to be inspired, encouraged and glean from our guests and team. There is something powerful about the people of God from across different denominations and countless nations gathering together for one purpose.

Conference is about our collective here and now, and it is about the future. Taking the time to attend is a sacrifice but an investment. This is your opportunity to be present, to pray, to be empowered, to give and to praise.

Across the communities, cities and nations of the earth there are still multitudes in the valleys of decision and despair - many in our own world. Hillsong Conference Nights are open to the public at no cost. We are praying and believing for many to come and meet Jesus. Who can you invite and bring along?

Setting aside the time, finance and holiday to come to conference is a commitment and devotion to seeking God in this week.

The Decision to make it PERSONAL

Psalms 133: 1-3

March 27, 2020

#### INVESTING TIME

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The Decision to make it PERSONAL

Ezra 9:8-9

March 28, 2020

#### A HEART FOR HIS HOUSE

At Hillsong Church we are unashamedly passionate about the House of God. We are convinced that the Bible teaches that God uses the local church to both proclaim the good news of salvation through Jesus, and to establish His Kingdom, bringing righteousness and justice to the earth.

Hence, one of the standout events in our church calendar each year is our 'Heart for the House' offering weekend, when we bring what we have prayerfully decided to give personally (in accordance with 2 Samuel 24:24) and give it together.

At the beginning of the year our Senior Pastor Brian Houston explained to the church how God had been speaking to him from Ezra 9, encouraging us that he believed this year would be one of rebuilding, repairing, restoration and release for our church as individuals and corporately.

If you have never been a part of our 'Heart for the House' offering before, then we would like to invite you to experience the joy of playing your part in building God's House. If you have, join with us in praying that God would have His way across our services again this weekend. To be involved in what we do as a church in helping making Jesus' Name known and practically meeting the needs of those in desperate situations, visit our website here <http://hillsong.com/giving>.

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The Decision to make it PERSONAL

Isaiah 58: 9-11

March 29, 2020

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

As a church we are always committed to being an agent of God's justice upon the earth, bringing solution to the poor, needy and disenfranchised. We extend our efforts locally and globally to initiatives and projects that meet the needs of people practically and spiritually, choosing to work through the local church in any area as much as it is possible.

Once a year, we highlight a handful of these as the special focus for our annual 'Heart for the House' offering inviting the whole church to combine our effort, make a significant impact and achieve a greater outcome. This year we are focusing on local missions, City Care, global and local Church plants, Vision Rescue, the Africa Foundation, the A21 Campaign and the expansion and upgrading of church facilities in Australia.

This week, as we lead up to our 'Heart for the House' offering, we would like to encourage you to research these initiatives yourself. Look at their websites and allow God to speak to you about the social justice He desires to bring to each of the situations. Pray for those in need who are the focus of these projects, along with those who serve in these ministries. Together, let's believe God to work through these projects in a miraculous way that brings glory to His name and restoration where there is brokenness.

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The Decision to make it PERSONAL

Matthew 5:14-16

March 30, 2020

#### PERSONAL GIVING

A collective offering and a common cause has always been a powerful force on the earth for building unity and resource takes the church forward. There are numerous biblical examples of just this, ranging from the offering for the tabernacle in the wilderness (Exodus 35), to David's collection for the temple (1 Chronicles 22) right through to the early church (Acts 2:42).

When we gather together under the one name of Jesus, for His purposes, we can achieve so much more together than we ever could individually and we are even stronger than the sum of our individual parts.

Today, as one church we are gathering to give collectively that which we have purposed in our heart privately, and set aside prayerfully, in our yearly 'Heart for the House' offering. A sense of shared sacrifice unites us in heart, intention and purpose.

Take a moment to commit this day to God personally. Pray also for your fellow believers in Christ, asking God's blessing to be upon them on this significant day.

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A Heart of PRAISE  
Acts 3:19  
March 31, 2020

### BE REFRESHED

In Acts 3 we learn that a time of refreshing is the immediate comfort we can expect when we repent and accept Christ as our Savior. Where does this sense of refreshing come from? It comes from being in the presence of the Lord; from His Holy Spirit. Our sins are wiped out and we receive a refreshing from the Lord? This is an incredible and incomprehensible exchange for our sin.

Does this mean we repent once and that sense of refreshing is always present? No. In our human nature, we want our actions to follow a genuine heart to change but we will fail. It is crucial for us to continually turn back to God, remember all that He has done for us, and hold onto the anchor of His hope.

One way we can do this is to praise God regardless of how we feel emotionally, by bringing what the book of Hebrews calls a 'sacrifice of praise' (Hebrews 13:15). As revivalist Thomas Charles of Bala, wrote in 1791 'those who have struck the deepest note of penitence can reach the highest note of praise.'

Take a moment to remember when you first met Jesus and the sense of 'refreshing' that came with finding joy in the Lord in the midst your circumstances, past failures and hurt.

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A Heart of PRAISE  
Acts 4:10-12  
Philippians 2: 9-10  
April 1, 2020

#### DECLARE JESUS

We've all experienced seasons in life when we have felt that our life - perhaps due to relationships, work or finances - has become overly complicated. Thank God that we can call on the name of Jesus at these times! Unchanging and always present, Jesus' name can simplify life as we lift Him up as the focus of our praise.

Likewise, sharing our faith does not need to become complicated. The Holy Spirit convicts (John 16:17) and we are released to simply declare Jesus' name by sharing our story and show others that there is a Savior who deeply loves them and has a plan and purpose for their lives.

Make a list of any challenges that you are currently facing. Beside each of them, write the name of Jesus. Begin to praise God, focusing on Jesus and declaring the power of His name over your situation.

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A Heart of PRAISE  
Psalms 100:4  
April 2, 2020

#### CELEBRATE HIS GRACE

In Old Testament times, there was only one entrance to the tabernacle - the place where one would go to meet with God. Once an Israelite entered the gate into the outer court with his sacrifice he was standing on 'holy ground.'

Under the new covenant, Christ is the gate; the 'one way' by which we enter into God's presence. The Psalmist reminds us here that it is not the act of walking into a physical building or a gathering of the church that we enter into His presence; rather it is in recognizing that Jesus is the only way by which we can come before God. A heart of praise sees the grace of Christ - that by His sacrifice alone we are once again in His presence - and it is in His presence that we are revived and renewed.

In a place of 'ruins,' we most need the presence of God, yet it is in those very places that we often don't feel like we can come before Him.

Remember that it is not by our own efforts that we can stand before Him, but by His grace alone. Instead of being consumed by a list of worries and needs, pause to remember Jesus Christ, and enter into His presence with boldness.

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A Heart of PRAISE  
Psalms 40: 9-10  
April 3, 2020

#### GIVE THANKS

A heart overflowing with gratitude and thanks results in praise. When we pray and experience God moving and answered prayer, our natural response is praise in gratitude, which in turn creates an opportunity for further prayer to God and praise! Thanksgiving brings glory to God and makes Him known.

Yet, even in difficult times, gratitude has power. Novelist, theologian and Christian apologist, C.S. Lewis said, 'We ought to give thanks for all fortune: if it is 'good,' because it is good, if 'bad' because it works in us patience, humility, and the contempt of this world and the hope of our eternal country.'

The expression of gratitude and thanks to God magnifies His majesty and power. As we bring our attention to His sovereignty, whilst still remembering what He has done for us, our faith is stirred up and our hope for what is to come is increased.

Give thanks daily - write down or tell someone two things you are thankful for at the end of each day. Perhaps make it a regular dinnertime activity. Be determined to develop a spirit of thankfulness and praise.

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A Heart of PRAISE  
Acts 16: 25-27  
April 4, 2020

#### PRAISE HIM IN YOUR SECRET PLACE

Acts 16 is an incredible story of the power of praise and worship. Paul and Silas are in prison for doing the work of the Lord. In the midst of their bleak circumstance, their choice to praise not only brought about their freedom, but salvation to the jailer and his family.

God does not need our praise and worship. We worship Him more for our benefit than His. Bringing praise and worship to God reminds us of His power and authority, and positions us in a place of submission and awe. It diminishes the power of sin and darkness over our lives, and brings attention to who God is and not only to what He can do.

Whatever your circumstance - praise! Praise in our 'midnight' hour magnifies God for who He is, and not just what He can do. God dwells in the praises of His people, so we can be sure that as we lift His name in worship, He is here! The style and how you express your praise and worship is not as important as the response of the heart behind it.

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A Heart of PRAISE  
1 Chronicles 16: 8-10  
April 5, 2020

#### PRAISE HIM IN HIS HOUSE

As the church gathers together, His House becomes a place where we can bring our hearts, voice, music and words to sing and give praises to our Heavenly Father. The strength of worship in community is the encouragement it brings to one another in our different seasons of life.

Our freedom in worship allows others to feel free to worship, creating an atmosphere of sincerity where people can be real with God as they encounter Him through praise. It lifts those silenced by weariness and puts a new song in their mouths.

There is an undeniable sense of JOY when the church gathers to worship - a joy not dependent on circumstance, rather a characteristic of being renewed by the Holy Spirit.

Music enriches our worship. There are anthems sung around the world declaring the greatness of God. Some of these have begun as an expression of our House and have now become a resource that enriches local churches, leading people into the presence of God through praise.

Take a look at the praise song beginning in 1 Chronicles 16:8. Read it aloud as you prepare your heart for tomorrow's services. Give Him praise for all He has planned to do.

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A Heart of PRAISE  
Matthew 9: 37-38  
April 6, 2020

#### PRAISE HIM FOR THE HARVEST

The harvest is God's domain. He is the harvester and He says in His Word that people are ready and hungry to hear about Him, there just aren't enough people to tell them. It is our responsibility to do the work preparing the 'ground.'

'My food,' said Jesus, 'is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.'

John 4:34-36 (NIV)

God is not looking for our ability but more our availability and heart. If we seek Him with all our heart, pray, be aware of the Holy Spirit and open to be used - it is amazing what God can achieve in and through us.

Every week in our church many people make a decision for Christ. Let's all resist the temptation to 'go through the motions' or become familiar with the miracle of people making a decision for Christ. Press in. Pray. Petition God for people to respond. And let us praise Him for the harvest we see now and the harvest we are yet to see!

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