

Let Prayer Change Your Church

Last year, my congregation prayed through the personal revival devotional prayer guide *Thirsty: A 31-Day Journey to Personal Revival* by Jamie Morgan. At the same time, for 5 Sundays I preached on spiritual thirst and hunger using the themes of the guide. God used it to change the direction of our church.

We caught fire! People got excited about their faith, their church, and seeing the Kingdom of Jesus expand.

While certainly you need to seek the direction of the Holy Spirit in this, I highly recommend this prayer initiative to use in your own church.

Actually, in all my 29 years of prayer ministry, I know of no better way to engage people in deeper levels of prayer *AND* to get them more unified in a desire to grow the Kingdom of God, than doing an all-church prayer initiative.

Why is that? Here are a few reasons:

1. Most initiatives have scripture-based prayer guides which both teach people to pray God's Word, but also move people to pray a more kingdom agenda rather than their own.
2. Because the entire church is involved, people are reminded week after week to participate. There is also a built-in accountability as people hear others talking about their experiences. That builds within each person a desire to participate more.
3. The unity of everyone praying together on the same theme is spiritually very powerful. In Acts 12 a praying church saw Peter miraculously released from prison, and Herod removed so the Kingdom could flourish. My church (averaging about 90 each Sunday when we started *Thirsty*) has experienced some healings, growth of around 75%, 11

salvations and our first baptisms in 2 years!

4. Prayer initiatives have a twofold manageable time commitment. First people are not making a commitment to pray every day for the rest of their lives (while that would be great, it is too scary a commitment for most). Instead they know they are committing to 30 days or two weeks. But secondly most prayer initiative guides ask for no more than a one to 10 minute commitment each day. That fact is not intimidating to people at all.

Of course for a prayer initiative to succeed, it needs to have the blessing and promotion of church leadership. When that happens, you will be amazed at what a prayer initiative does to unify a congregation and you will see powerful results from the prayers of your people.

Let me recommend a few prayer initiatives to you besides *Thirsty*:

General Topic

Love to Pray: A 40-Day Devotional for Deepening Your Prayer Life – This devotional will transform your prayer life. More than 175,000 people have used *Love to Pray* to deepen and enrich their prayer lives. One of the main reasons is the simplicity yet theological depth of the guide. Personally, I believe this book has the most complete, easy-to-understand, theology of prayer of any book written to every-day followers of Jesus.

Revival

Do It Again, Lord! 30 Days of Hope-Filled Prayer for Revival – *Do It Again, Lord* is a 30-day prayer devotional that will inspire you, your congregation, or prayer or revival group to pray for revival and spiritual awakening with faith, hope and perseverance.

Children and Schools

Reclaim a Generation Volume 2: 21 Days of Prayer for Schools – Our children and schools are under attack. Now more than ever we need to pray! *Reclaim a Generation Volume 2* is loaded with relevant information about the issues schools and kids face today. It includes targeted prayer points and Scriptures to pray through each day. While it can be used any time throughout the year, it is especially effective to use when kids are going back to school after summer break. (Many believers and churches are praying through it from August 1-21, 2024.)

Nation

We Declare: 31 Days of Intercession for America – Written by Dave Kubal and Intercessors for America, *We Declare: 31 Days of Intercession for America* is a 31-day devotional prayer guide that will fill you with hope as you meditate on its content and pray through its prayer points. Each day provides content about current issues from a biblical perspective, prayer points to pray, and an action step that will help you become the answer to your prayer.

Men-Outdoorsmen

Hunt of a Lifetime: An Outdoorsman's Journey to Prayer – If you have a lot of hunters and fisherman in your church, why not get them praying with *Hunt of a Lifetime*. This book has both 7 chapters loaded with the author's hunting and fishing stories that will disciple your men to go deeper into a relationship with Jesus, and then a 30-day devotional guide to get them regularly spending daily time with God.

Teaching Initiatives

A little different from a prayer initiative that has prayer points to pray over a subject, we also have 2 resources that

each have 21 chapters/days, which teach a concept about prayer. Many churches use them to teach their people more about prayer. Both were originally designed to be used in a major world-wide prayer initiative held each January, the 21 Days of Prayer Global Event but can be used anytime. The two books you may want to consider are:

21 Keys to Answered Prayer

The 21 Most Effective Prayers in the Bible

If you are a pastor or church leader (prayer leader or otherwise) and you want to see your people and church grow deeper in prayer, I highly recommend doing an all-church prayer event like this.

Jonathan Graf is the president of Church Prayer Leaders Network and the author of five books on prayer including *Restored Power: Becoming a Praying Church One Tweak at a Time* and *The Power of Personal Prayer*, both available from prayershop.org or Amazon.