



21 Days

**THE
DANIEL
FAST**

**Dr. John L. Cantelow III, Pastor
Sixth Avenue Baptist Church
1101 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive SW
Birmingham, Alabama 35211**

SABC: The Daniel Fast Devotional Guide

The Sixth Avenue Baptist Church family is devoting the **first 21 days of the New Year, 2017**, to seeking the Lord in prayer and fasting. We're calling this period the Daniel Fast, modeled after the biblical figure that followed a similar pattern as he sought the Lord.

Our purpose in fasting is to join our hearts together as we seek the Lord's presence in our church for the coming year.

The Bible says several things about fasting. Fasting is considered to be a deep and spiritual undertaking. It's intended to direct the heart and focus the attention on the things of God. Mike Turner says, "The principle is that as we give up certain material things—like food—we connect more closely with spiritual things. Often during fasting the Lord will impart new revelation and spiritual authority." This devotional guide is intended to help us move through the days of fasting in an intentional manner, allowing the Spirit of God to speak through the Word of God in a way that touches our congregation as a whole.

You should make use of this devotional guide in whatever way best suits your situation and schedule. Perhaps, ten minutes in the morning before you go to work. Or, you may share during the evening around the dinner table with your family. You may want to consider meeting with a friend or two on the phone or by email. Feel free to share verses, phrases or your own thoughts with others through Facebook or twitter.

This devotional guide is only a suggestion. You may prefer a different Bible reading plan. Our congregation will follow this guide.

The three Wednesday nights during the fast will also play an important role, and you'll be blessed if you attend all of them. We will gather each Wednesday evening in the Sanctuary for corporate prayer, praise and worship. ***We will start at 6:00 p.m. with the full hour. Join us and be prepared to pray with others.***

I'm anticipating God to do a work in our congregation through these three weeks! As we *join our hearts together and seek the Lord's presence in our church for the coming year*, we should expect God to make His presence known in our worship, our Sunday School and small bible study groups, our Children and Student ministries, College and Young Adult ministries, Seniors, evangelism and our missions outreach and in every other area of our church life. Thanks for being a part of the Daniel Fast with your brothers and sisters in Christ!

Brother Rosevelt!
Associate Pastor

Notes: Fasting Diet

The diet is similar to a vegan diet and includes only fruit, vegetables, whole grains and water. Foods consumed on the Daniel Fast should be as close to their natural state as possible. Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables must not contain any added preservatives, salt, sugar or sweeteners. Whole grains, such as brown rice or oatmeal, are also acceptable on the diet. Refined grains, such as most cereal grains, are completely restricted during the fast.

No meat, yeast, baking powder or sodas are allowed. Spices, however, may be used in cooking. Water is the only beverage to be consumed. No herbal teas, fermented or sweetened beverages are permitted. Also when on the Daniel Fast, no chemicals, artificial or processed foods are allowed.

Day One

Sunday, January 1, 2017

What is a Daniel fast and why are we doing it?

Today's Scripture

But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank...Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs has assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, "Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink." (Daniel 1:8, 11-12)

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God... (Daniel 9:3-4)

In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks. (Daniel 10:2)

Today's Thought

Daniel, a young Jewish man and leader in his community, was forcibly taken into exile by the Babylonian Empire that had defeated the nation of Judah. He was taken into the household of the king and there expected to conform to Babylonian customs, education, culture and even religion. But Daniel refused to buy into a society and belief system so far removed from the faith he had known since childhood.

So he made a deal with his captors. He and his friends would observe a partial fast—that is, eating only simple, natural foods instead of the rich, decadent foods of the king—for a period of time (Daniel 1:8, 11-12). Then the Babylonians would see how much healthier such a diet would make the young men, compared to others who had not observed the fast. They would see firsthand the results of godly convictions.

Later, in Daniel 9:3-4, we see how prayer and fasting were the basis of Daniel's spiritual sensitivity and authority.

In the third passage in today's reading (Daniel 10:2), we find the mention of a 21 day period where Daniel devoted himself especially to prayer.

The Daniel Fast brings together Daniel's biblical example into a single experience. For 21 days, our church family is observing a fast similar to that practiced by this biblical model of passion and integrity as a way of focusing our hearts on the things of God. *Our purpose in fasting is to join our hearts together as we seek the Lord's presence in our church for the coming year.*

Today's Prayer

Pray today that God would be glorified as we seek Him through the weeks of the Daniel Fast.

Day 2

Monday, January 2, 2017

What can we expect God to do during the Daniel Fast?

Today's Scripture

Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of the God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; he reveals deep and hidden things (Daniel 2:19-22)

Today's Thought

The Babylonian king had a dream that none of his advisors could interpret. Daniel was brought in to provide insight as to the dream's meaning. That night God revealed to Daniel how the dream was a template for the future of the Babylonian empire itself.

Talk about a moment of revelation! Daniel's spirit was receptive to the working of God's imparting truths into his spirit. His first response was to bless the Lord for hearing and answering their petitions. They asked for wisdom and God gave it and gave the men time to pray.

Daniel shows us how prayer and fasting align our spirits with God's Spirit, allowing a deeper insight into what God's doing in our lives and in the life of our church.

Are you struggling with a decision you need to make? Are you wrestling with understanding a situation in your life? The three weeks of the Daniel Fast may well be the time when the Lord brings you fresh revelation for some of the challenging areas of your life. You should take it to the Lord in prayer. Psalm 50:15 says, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me."

Today's Prayer

Pray that God will help you to cast all your cares upon Him.

Day 3

Tuesday, January 3, 2017

What can we expect God to do during the Daniel Fast?

Today's Scripture

And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me..." (Daniel 10:10-13)

Today's Thought

The angel Gabriel (he's named in chapter nine) comes to Daniel, to assist him in response to his prayer. "You are greatly loved," the angel says then lays out a remarkable sequence of events. As soon as Daniel began praying Gabriel was dispatched from heaven. But a demonic figure called the "prince of the kingdom of Persia" kept him from arriving at Daniel's side. So God's response to Daniel's prayer was delayed. Do you know what that feels like?

How did Daniel respond to the delay? He kept praying! He didn't give up. One week. Then, a second week. Finally a third week for a total of twenty-one days! Then our passage says a second angel named Michael came to the rescue and helped Gabriel get through to Daniel. The prince of Persia was defeated, Gabriel arrived and Daniel's prayer was answered.

Prayer is more than a long list of needs to God. Daniel's persistence in prayer is an incredible picture of spiritual warfare and the kind of praying that breaks through! If there are strongholds in your life where you need God to work a miracle, the twenty-one days of the Daniel Fast might be what you've been waiting for. Your breakthrough may be around the corner. Stay focus with prayer.

Today's Prayer Pray that God will help you to oppose and defeat the evil one. *Get in touch with someone you know who's struggling with a long-standing problem in their life. They need a breakthrough. Come alongside them in prayer for the duration of the Daniel Fast, seeking the Lord's intervention on their behalf. Join your faith with theirs to defeat the enemy and allow God's power to be released.*

Day 4

Wednesday, January 4, 2017

Seeking Jesus?

Today's Scripture

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Today's Thought

As you continue forward in our time of fasting, praying, and seeking the Lord on your journey, you must know with certainty of your own salvation. If you believe that God saved you, and you have doubt, you cannot please God with doubts in your heart.

Indicators of Salvation:

John 17:3 (NIV) Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Ephes. 2:8 (NIV) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God

John 10:27 (NIV) My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

2 Cor. 5:17 (NIV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Finding Perfect Assurance:

God Himself gives you the desire to come to Jesus. John 6:44 (NIV), "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Receive eternal life as a free gift. Romans 6:23 (NIV) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus took your guilt and paid the penalty. Isaiah 53:6 (NIV)

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Today's Prayer

God, I know that I have sinned and cannot have eternal life and heaven without Jesus Christ. I believe God's Son, Jesus Christ, died and rose again for my sins on the cross. Jesus, forgive me and come into my heart right now. I turn from a life of sin to follow you. I trust you to now to live in my life and to guide me in the days ahead. In Jesus name, I pray Amen.

JOIN US IN CORPORATE PRAYER

TIME: 6 PM IN THE SANCTUARY

Day 5

Thursday, January 5, 2017

Ways to defeat and destroy the Enemy daily?

Today's Scripture

2 Cor. 10:5 NIV, We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Today's Thought

What kind of thoughts occupies your mind? Is doing God's will the most important thing in your life? Are you often filled with unclean thoughts? Ask God's forgiveness.

Matthew 5:28 NIV, But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Do you watch movies or read things that stimulate sinful thoughts and feelings? Ask God to specifically help you change your habits and then decide how you are going to do it. Replace sinful thoughts with thoughts that focus on Christ and His life in you.

Col. 3:1-3 NIV, Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Questions: Do you love the things of the world more than God? Do you get excited about doing God's will? Is Christ first in your priorities?

God wants every believer to fill his or her mind with the Word and then to obey it. Make a daily choice to keep God's word in your heart. One way to do this is to memorize a scripture.

Suggestion: write your thoughts down and ponder over them and their meaning to you and others.

Today's Prayer

Ask God to help you with your thought life.

Day 6

Friday, January 6, 2017

“Sins of Attitude”

Today’s Scripture

“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.”
Proverbs 9:9 (NKJV)

Today’s Thought

“The most significant decision I can make on a day-to-day basis is my choice of attitude,” says Charles Swindoll. As God examines our lives, He not only views our outward actions, He especially watches the attitude behind them. God is deeply focused on the attitude of our hearts. In a very real sense, everyone has an attitude (or spirit) about them. Ask God to clearly open your eyes to the heart attitudes within.

Rev. 3:15-16 (NIV), “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm--neither hot nor cold--I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”

God is very clear. He desires a strong and passionate Godly type of love from those who profess to know Him. An attitude of lukewarmness nauseates God. When God’s love expresses itself, sin doesn’t rule a person’s life. “The very root of sin is the love and worship of self over God.”

Questions for Reflection:

“Can you categorize your love and service to God as passionate?”

“Is God and His service the burning priority in your life?”

Rate your zeal for Christ from 1-10, 10 being the highest.

“Are you deeply excited about Bible study, witnessing and serving God?”

“Was there a time you loved and served God more fervently than now?”

“If you sense any lukewarmness, honestly confess this sin to God.”

Today’s Prayer

Will you pray in faith for God to give you a heart that burns with passion for Him?

Day 7

Saturday, January 7, 2017

God's Word speaks to us.

Today's Scripture

Psalm 1:2, But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.

Today's Thought

The Psalmist states, the person of God exercises a deep, serious, and affectionate thoughtfulness about the Word; and by this it appears that his delight is in it, for what we love, we love to think of---day and night.

God wants you to fill your mind with His words from the Bible. You must make a daily choice to read his Word. One way to do this is start reading a book of the Bible. A suggestion is the book of John. Read a chapter a day and meditate on what it means to you. Another suggestion is to read just one verse a day. Meditate on that verse. You will find the Bible verses speaking to your needs. If you will read His Word daily, it will revolutionize your life! Some verses for your meditation:

Philip. 4: 6Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things.

9Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

10I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

11I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

12I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

13I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

14Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.

19And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Today's Prayer

Lord, help me to use your Word as I am challenged each day by life circumstances. Can you think of an example where you use God's Word to help you?

Day 8

Sunday, January 8, 2017

The Truth will set you free.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8:36)

Today's Thought

Congratulations!! We are starting our second week of the Daniel Fast today! Some of you are having an incredible time with it, and God's blessing you. Unfortunately, another group of you are engaged in some deep levels of spiritual battles. Others may be struggling and wondering how you're going to make it two more weeks without coffee, sodas, bacon, and beef patties. And some have left the fast behind, thinking it's too hard to do. Let me encourage you today—don't give up! ***If you've stopped your participation in the fast, you can start back up today.*** This isn't a rigid set of rules we're following in the Daniel Fast. It's instead a simple way of focusing our attention on the Lord. There's grace and mercy! So get back in the game wherever you find yourself today and start moving forward again.

Our Bible passage today speaks of the particular kind of freedom Jesus offers. It is a freedom that brings *identity* and *destiny*. When we have a saving relationship with Jesus, our *identity* is a child of God. Our *destiny* is how God includes us in His redemptive plan for the world. Freedom is when we accept our *identity* and live out our *destiny*.

The context of our passage was a dispute between Jesus and some Jews over just these two issues. They believed their identity as descendants of Abraham somehow entitled them to a privileged destiny. Not so, Jesus said. If you're trusting in human lineage or even national reputation to save you, you're a slave and will always be a slave. The truth is that only Jesus can set us free.

Have you been set free of an addiction or bondage lately? Consider sharing that experience with others as you walk in your destiny with Jesus. God is able to set us free from the entanglements of the world. Be set free.

Today's Prayer

Pray today for someone in your life who is captive to sin and doesn't yet know the liberating power of Jesus. Pray that their hearts would be open to Jesus' love and that they might find true freedom.

Day 9

Sunday, January 9, 2017

Enjoying God's Company

Today's Scripture

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:23-24)

Today's Thought

Our Bible passage today is taken from the famous conversation Jesus had with a Samaritan woman. Our pastor preached from this passage several weeks ago on the first Sunday of Advent. The Samaritan woman was trying to understand *what worship* was all about. Jesus re-directed her concern. God's much more interested in the worshiper than in whatever place or style the act of worship takes place, He told her.

So, let's talk about the term Worship. I have often heard people say something like this: he worship was really great today, meaning they really like the music. What about the prayers, the offering, the sermon, the testimonies, or the mere meeting together of the believers? Perhaps, we have lost the meaning of the term Worship. In the Old Testament, worship was commonly expressed as prostrating one's self face to the ground. On the other hand, the New Testament expresses worship in terms of two words meaning kiss or adore.

In his book, *Worship*, Stuart Lee Sheehan, makes the following statement: "Worship is the proper state of submission before God: It acknowledges who He has been, is now, and will be; and it recognizes who I was, am now, and will be." Worship to me means giving myself away to the Lord through various expressions of faith. According to my friend, Mike Turner, "Worship isn't a religious performance. It's not a ritual we do on Sunday. It's not the expression of a tradition. Worship is when we step into the presence of our heavenly Father and give Him our hearts." People understand Worship differently.

Today's Prayer

Pray today for our church family in worship, that as a united congregation we would enter into the fullness and power of God's presence.

Day 10

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

I will be a witness for Christ.

Today's Scripture

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Today's Thought

What could happen if every member of Sixth Avenue Baptist Church shared his or her faith at least one time here in Birmingham? There is no reaping if we do not sow or witness for Jesus. We must plant seeds of life into the hearts of people. The kingdom of God will be expanded. New relationship will be started. There must be a verbal witness from us.

Today's Prayer

Pray that God will lead the members of our congregation this year to share their faith with someone beyond the walls of our facilities.

Pray that God will bring persons in our midst to share our personal testimonies about what Christ has done for us.

Pray for new opportunities to share your faith.

Pray for those who will make decisions to follow Christ more closely today.

Day 11

Wednesday, January 11, 2017

I will be a witness for Christ.

Today's Scripture

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Today's Thought

What could happen if every member of Sixth Avenue Baptist Church shared his or her faith at least one time here in Birmingham? There is no reaping if we do not sow or witness for Jesus. We must plant seeds of life into the hearts of people. The kingdom of God will be expanded. New relationship will be started. There must be a verbal witness from us.

Today's Prayer

Pray that God will lead the members of our congregation this year to share their faith with someone beyond the walls of our facilities.

Pray that God will bring persons in our midst to share our personal testimonies about what Christ has done for us.

Pray for new opportunities to share your faith.

Pray for those who will make decisions to follow Christ more closely today.

**JOIN US IN CORPORATE PRAYER
TIME: 6 PM IN THE SANCTUARY**

Day 12

Thursday, January 12, 2017

Starting or Planting A New Church

Today's Scripture

And he said unto them, "The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." Luke 10:2 (ASV)

Today's Thought

What could happen if our church decided to start a new congregation and help support and send forth workers from your congregation to reach new people for the Kingdom of God? Excitement! Imagine Sixth Avenue reaching more people, making disciples, in another part of the city, state, or across the seas. People need the Lord. We must plan to reach greater numbers of people than presently. One way, start a new church. Churches start new churches. Who will go and start a new church? Our association, the Birmingham Baptist Association, has identified areas and opportunities to start many new churches. Let's seek God's heart about advancing His kingdom through planting a new church.

Today's Prayer

Pray that God will lead our church to help start a new congregation in our state.

Pray that God will use our church to provide financial support and other resources for a new church start.

Pray that God will expand our church's heart to see the harvest field around us and respond in obedience to reap the harvest with whatever it takes.

Pray that our country and the peoples of the world will respond to the gospel in faith to follow Christ.

Day 13

Friday, January 13, 2017

Financial Stewardship

Today's Scripture

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:21 (NKJV)

Today's Thought

What if Christians stop buying or investing in so much earthly possessions. Would it take our minds off the temporary things in life? Perhaps, the people of faith should not accumulate earthly treasures at all. If so, can Christians re-direct their monies, investment, and other fortunes toward kingdom opportunities? What could happen if every member of Sixth Avenue Baptist Church was committed to regular sacrificial giving to the cause of Christ throughout the world? Wow! Will you trust God by giving sacrificially this year?

Today's Prayer

Pray for people to give sacrificially to the Kingdom of God.

Pray for Christians to steadfastly give to local, state, and global mission causes.

Pray for wisdom among Christians as they make strategy investments toward Living Trusts, Wills, Endowments, Estate Planning for the Kingdom of God.

Pray for individuals to give generously to the Kingdom of God.

Day 14

Saturday, January 14, 2017

Multiplication of Disciples

Today's Scripture

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:1-2 (NKJV)

Today's Thought

"Teach others also" is the essence of multiplying disciples. It is the biblical model given to us by Jesus Christ and here, by Paul. That which we are taught we are to entrust to or deposit into faithful people so that they can teach others. When Christians embrace this model of multiplying disciples by teaching others the truths of Scripture and equipping them to teach others also, the Church will begin to fulfill Jesus' command to "Go...make disciples...and teach them..."

What will it take for you to pour into the life of another for the sake of the kingdom?

Today's Prayer

Father God, help us to commit ourselves to the biblical model of multiplying disciples as Jesus and The Apostle Paul demonstrated and taught.

Day 15

Sunday, January 15, 2017

God's grace.

Today's Scripture

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Today's Thought

We are starting our last week in our 21 days of Fasting and Praying. The purpose of the Daniel Fast is to *join our hearts together as we seek the Lord's presence in our church for the coming year*. These three weeks are the invitation for our congregation to come before the Lord at the start of the New Year, 2017.

Today's Bible passage goes to the heart of the gospel. Most of us are very familiar with this passage. On the one hand, the gospel of Jesus proclaims that our saving relationship with the Father through Jesus is the result of what He did on the cross. It has nothing to do with what we've done or haven't done. That's what grace means—unmerited favor. "By grace you have been saved through faith."

Then, on the other hand, we have this perception from experiences that the more we do stuff for others, God loves us more. The result is that our theology says one thing while our experience teaches us something else. We get entangled in a kind of performance way of salvation that robs us of joy. We strive more and more, work harder and harder and enjoy the things of God less and less. It's not a pleasant way to live. God's people must learn to experience the joy of God's grace.

Let's be honest. Either God is a God of grace or He's not. Either our salvation is a gift or it's not. Which will it be for you?

Today's Prayer

As you pray today, ask God to relieve you of any performance driven approach to your relationship with Him. Remember the promise of Jesus: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

Day 16

Monday, January 16, 2017

Volunteers Engaged in Mission

Today's Scripture

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Today's Thought

What could happen if every member of our church was involved in a mission project locally, statewide, or globally? Our local community and the surrounding areas would see the eyes, hands, and feet from Sixth Avenue engaged in ministry opportunities that advances the gospel in the city, the nation, and the world.

The local church has the opportunity to share the gospel by touching people lives and becoming advocates of the faith in Soup Kitchens, school reading programs, tutoring students, helping the elderly, running errands for the home bound, Women Shelters, HIV homes, Nursing homes, Fire Shelters, Men Shelters, Abortion Clinics, Injustice venues, writing encouraging notes, finding employment for the unemployed, and economical and educational avenues that raises the levels of all marginalized victims in our communities. What will you do? When? How often?

Where is this power that exists with Christians? Is it there? The Word states, "we have receive power" to be witnesses at home, the next neighborhood, and around our state, nation and world. Join me this year by participating in a local opportunity that helps change lives.

Today's Prayer

Pray that people of our church will respond to the missional needs of our community.

Pray that our church will become actively involved in missions this year.

Pray that members of our church will participate in at least one mission project at home, in our state, our nation and world.

Day 17

Tuesday, January 17, 2017

Impacting Lostness

Today's Scripture

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. 2 Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. 3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, [a] and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." 6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. 7 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."

9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Today's Thought

Christians believe that people without spiritual direction, meaning or hope is the essence of spiritual lostness. In our communities, there are many people who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. Since Jesus came "to seek and to save" those who are lost, is that not the primary task of the body of Christ. The church has a responsibility to seek out and introduce every person to the Savior.

In today's Bible passage, Jesus is making his way to Jerusalem. The incident with Zaccheus happens in Jericho, as Jesus is passing through. Notice, it was not Zaccheus who invited Jesus to his house for a meal. Zaccheus was trying to see Jesus, and perhaps to avoid the crowds as well. They did not like tax-gatherers. Indeed, he was a "chief tax-gatherer" (verse 2). Jesus looked up into the tree and saw Zaccheus. Jesus knew this man's name, and called him by name, and then invited Himself to his house for a meal. Zaccheus was delighted, of course, but the crowds were very unhappy about this. Why? Because they considered Zaccheus to be a great sinner—and so he was. Jesus came to save those who are unworthy sinners. What could be better news than this? So, I ask you today, who do you know that need the Lord Jesus?

Today's Prayer

Heavenly Father, help us to discover ways to seek out those who need you, giving to us in word and deed the ability to introduce them to Your Son and our Savior. In His name...AMEN.

Day 18

January 18, 2107

Relational Evangelism

Today's Scripture

And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:39 (NKJV)

Today's Thought

The work of the Kingdom is about loving God and loving people. Jesus reminded His followers that everything written in Scripture is built upon these two commandments. Unfortunately, those with no relationship to Christ are incapable of understanding the implications of such obedience for salvation.

So how are these principles of love best communicated to a lost world? Christian believers must be willing to love others until they ask, why! In a post modern world, building relationships is the primary way to overcome the cynicism and skepticism that separate so many from a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Who is God calling you to start a new relationship with today? Perhaps, you can start by getting to know someone new. Relationships are important. What if you invited someone to lunch that you normally would not? What if you asked someone how you could pray for them? What if you started talking to someone at the gym? These examples could very well lead to you extended the love of Christ to them in your conversation, workout, or lunch opportunities. How will you make yourself available this week?

Today's Prayer

Heavenly Father, grant us the patience to love the lost until they ask us, why? Then give us the wisdom to reveal Your love for them by revealing the love you have placed in our hearts. AMEN.

JOIN US IN CORPORATE PRAYER

TIME: 6 PM IN THE SANCTUARY

Day 19

Thursday, January 19, 2017

Empower Others to Lead

Today's Scripture

Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself. Exodus 18:18 (NKJV)

Today's Thought

It is amazing how independent we are? Somehow we think we wear capes and have a big "S" on the front of our shirts. SUPERMAN! We think we are able to leap tall buildings in a single bound and so on.

Moses father in law, Jethro, came for a visit one time and noticed how much his son-in-law was taking on. He told Moses that he was doing way too much. His caution was that he was going to wear himself out if he continued.

The plan was simple: Spread the Leadership Load. Moses was supposed to keep on leading. He would take on the really tough issues, but he needed to trust others with some of the work load. It's called empowering. That's a key word for us at Sixth Avenue Baptist Church.

We've got the concept of the Kingdom. We all want to see it grow. The compelling issue is empowerment. The only way to empower is to trust. If we don't, we will wear ourselves out.

Today's Prayer

"Lord, help me to trust You and empower others!"

Day 20

Friday, January 20, 2015

The church abiding in Jesus

Today's Scripture

And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ...“I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself...”

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.” (Revelation 3:14-20)

Today's Thought

Jesus' words to the church at Laodicea are stern and convicting. I think these words points directly at today's church. We have so much--So much money, many buildings, organizations, plans, and educated leadership. Yet there seems to be little genuine spiritual authority to our ministry. Our nation continues to be filled with spiritual decay and our churches continue to pursue their individual agendas.

At the end of the day, when we stand before the Lord, which would we rather say? Would we rather point to the money and buildings we accumulated as evidence of our faith? Or would we prefer to identify the lives of men and women who've come to a saving knowledge of Jesus? I think the local church is in trouble.

In verse 20 Jesus gives the antidote, “Behold I stand at the door and knock,” He says. “If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.” In other words, I'll come in, sit down at the table, and we'll get to know each other as we share a meal. We'll abide with one another.

The answer to rote and powerless churches is Jesus abiding with them. Let's make sure that Jesus is abiding with us. That's the most important prayer we can ever make.

Today's Prayer

Pray today that your spiritual ears would be alert to the knocking of Jesus at the door. Pray that you will be welcoming to His presence in your life.

Day 21

Saturday, January 21, 2017

The Pleasure of Christ

Today's Scripture

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand there are pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11)

Today's Thought

Our church family observed the three-week Daniel Fast for one reason: *to join our hearts together as we seek the Lord's presence in our church for the coming year.* Today our fast is completed. Your presence have filled our hearts and challenged us to be more like Jesus.

I pray these weeks have made an impact on each of you! For some of you, the Lord may have brought revelation concerning a decision you need to make or a change that needs to happen or an attitude in your heart that needs to be altered. For others, you may have spent more time in prayer than in the past, and the Lord has answered your prayers in some remarkable ways.

What should we expect to happen now that our fasting is completed for this season? I hope and trust that you have genuinely sought after the heart of God for this congregation and your spiritual journey. Prayer and fasting is work. It is not magical but spiritual. God hears the prayers of his people.

When God's people pray, it moves the heart of God. Undoubtedly, we need the presence of God in our ministry at Sixth Avenue. The Daniel Fast, I pray, has moved us more heavenward.

Today's Prayer

Lord Jesus, we give thanks for the opportunity of walking with You. You are great and mighty. Your name is worthy to be praised. We've sought You these weeks with all our heart and now we want more! We want more of You and more of Your Kingdom. We invite you more fully into our lives and into the life our church. And even as we move more deeply into Your grace, we ask that we might see the needs of the people around us with Your eyes and feel their need with Your heart. Thank You for meeting us in this season of prayer and fasting. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

WEDNESDAYS CORPORATE PRAYER TIMES

IN CONCERT WITH DANIEL FAST

Purpose:

To unite the members of Sixth Avenue to come together and seek God's presence in our ministry for the New Year.

Setting:

Prayer stations all over the sanctuary (groups of three's) with structured prayer opportunities

FLAGPOLE INDICATORS (different colors)

Each group will be giving a card with ways to pray for God's presence in this congregation

Music:

Will ask Vicki to provide worshipful music during our hour together

MEETING TIMES@6pm-7pm in the Sanctuary

January 4th

January 11th

January 18th

How to Pray for Your Neighborhood?

1. Pray for all God's people to get God's heart for the city
2. Pray with understanding for specific aspects of your city
3. Pray against stereotypes, prejudices, and misconceptions
4. Pray consistently for churches and faith-based ministries in your city
5. Pray for strong families in your city and community
6. Pray for Christians to share their testimonies about Christ