

Grace Guide



SEPTEMBER 28 – OCTOBER 4

“And the Whole Church Prayed” World Communion Sunday

MONDAY
9/28

2 CHRONICLES 20:1-22

When Jehoshaphat, king of the southern kingdom of Judah, learns that a vast army is coming against them, his first response is to seek the Lord. He gathers the people together, reminds them of who God is and what God has done, and openly admits, “We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.” That may be one of the most honest descriptions of prayer in Scripture. Prayer doesn't require us to have answers before we come to God, sometimes prayer begins precisely because we don't have the answer. The people of Judah still have a battle to face, but they face it differently because they have placed their uncertainty in God's hands. When circumstances overwhelm us, we can bring our fear, confusion, and helplessness to God through Jesus Christ, trusting that even when we don't know what to do, we know where to look.

1. What does it mean for you personally to say, “our eyes are on you” when you cannot see how a situation will turn out?
2. How might your response to a difficult circumstance change if your first question were not “What can I do?” but “What is God asking me to trust?”

TUESDAY
9/29

HABAKKUK 3:1-19

The prophet Habakkuk's prayer is remarkable because his circumstances have not suddenly improved. He has heard what God is doing, he remembers God's mighty acts, and he trembles at what lies ahead. Yet his prayer gradually moves from fear toward confidence: even if the fig tree does not blossom, the crops fail, and the fields produce no food, he declares that he will rejoice in God. This isn't pretending that hardship doesn't hurt, it is choosing to anchor our hope in someone greater than our circumstances. Faith does not mean that we will always understand what God is doing, it means that we can continue to trust God even when we don't understand. Through Jesus Christ, our confidence rests not in having a trouble-free life but in knowing that God remains faithful through every season.

1. Habakkuk acknowledges his fear before expressing his confidence. Why is it important for us to bring our honest emotions to God?
2. What blessings or acts of God's faithfulness can you remember when your present circumstances make it difficult to see hope?

WEDNESDAY
9/30

ROMANS 15:30-33

The apostle Paul asks the believers in Rome to “strive together” with him in their prayers. He is preparing to travel to Jerusalem, and he knows that difficulties await him there. Rather than viewing prayer as something private and individual, Paul invites other Christians to participate in his ministry and struggles by bringing them before God. There is something powerful about knowing that others are praying for us, and equally powerful about carrying someone else's burdens before God. Prayer connects us to one another because it reminds us that we do not have to carry everything alone. The church becomes a community in which we can ask for help, intercede for others, and trust that God is at work beyond what any one person can see.

1. Who is someone whose struggles, decisions, or ministry could benefit from your intentional prayers right now?
2. How might your relationships with other Christians change if you became more intentional about carrying one another before God in prayer?

THURSDAY
10/1

EPHESIANS 6:18-20

After describing the armor of God (verses 10-17), Paul tells believers to pray “at all times in the Spirit” and to keep alert as they pray for all God's people. Then, remarkably, he asks them to pray for him – not for an easier life or freedom from hardship, but for the courage to proclaim the gospel faithfully. Prayer is not simply asking God to protect us from difficult circumstances. Sometimes prayer prepares us to remain faithful within those difficult circumstances. Paul knew that speaking about Christ could cost him, possibly his life, yet his greatest concern was that fear would not keep him from saying what needed to be said. We, too, can ask God not merely to change our circumstances but to strengthen us to live faithfully wherever God has placed us.

1. Paul asks others to pray that he will speak boldly. Is there an area of your faith where fear tends to silence you? Why or why not?
2. Who among the people you know might need your prayers for courage, perseverance, or faithfulness today?

FRIDAY
10/2

PSALM 20

This is a prayer spoken on behalf of someone facing trouble and rather than simply wishing for success, the people ask God to answer, protect, strengthen, and remember the one who is in need. Prayer can be an act of faith on behalf of someone else and, while we may not be able to remove another person's burden, solve their problem, or know what God will ultimately do, we can bring that person before God. The closing words are especially significant: “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.” Who or what we trust ultimately shapes how we face uncertainty. Our security does not rest in the resources we can see, but in the God we cannot always see working.

1. Who comes to mind when you read this Psalm as a prayer for someone facing trouble?
2. What are the “chariots and horses” that people today might be tempted to trust instead of God?

**SATURDAY/
SUNDAY
10/3-4**

ACTS 4:23-31

When Peter and John return to the believers after being threatened by the religious authorities, the church responds by praying together. Notice what they do not pray: they do not ask God to make their opponents disappear or to make their lives easier. Instead, they begin by remembering who God is and what God has done, they acknowledge the opposition they are facing, and then they ask for boldness to continue speaking God's word. Their circumstances have not changed when they finish praying, but they have changed. They are filled with the Holy Spirit and will continue their witness with courage. As we've noted multiple times this week, prayer does not always remove the challenge before us, sometimes prayer gives us the courage and perspective to walk faithfully through the challenge. When God's people turn toward him together, fear does not have to have the final word.

1. What stands out to you about what the believers chose to pray for when they were facing opposition?
2. Why do you think they began their prayer by remembering who God is and what God had done? How might this challenge the way you pray?

VERSE OF THE WEEK

**“Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.”**

(Psalm 20:7)