



Our Power and Hope

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. —Acts 1:12-14

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. —Acts 2:42-43

But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. —Acts 6:4

Prayer is the common thread in these verses from the birth of the Church. The first thing the apostles did when they returned from watching Jesus ascend into heaven was to devote themselves to prayer. Their first “order of service” on the Day of Pentecost when the Church was born included prayer. Their priority, from which they refused to swerve when conflicts arose, was prayer and the ministry of the Word.

The Church is a miracle, and prayer is the pursuit of God to receive the miraculous power to be the Church. Church work is never something we do. It is God's work. We are His Creation. While God uses His people to in accomplishing His work, making disciples is something the Lord Himself does. He is the One who convicts sinners of sin. He is the One who redeems lost souls. God works through His Word to transform lives. He leads and empowers our ministry.

A prayerless church is a powerless church, and prayer is the missing ingredient in the church today—in our church today. This fact is convicting, but it also gives direction. Northpoint is devoted to the Word of God and sound doctrine. We cannot praise God enough for this focus. We recognize that the whole counsel of Scripture points to Jesus Christ. Hallelujah! Flesh and blood did not reveal to us the central fact of Scripture. God did that. And that's the point.

God's people will never outgrow our need for God, but the pattern of history is that we let ourselves take His place. Years of devotion to the Word of God somehow morph into neglecting the God of the Word. We slip into a prayerless diligence in our study and proclamation of the very One who created and empowers us. We need to pray.

After ten days of prayer in the upper room, God descended on His band of 120 followers, and the Church was born. Peter proclaimed Jesus' resurrection from the dead, as foretold in Scripture, then conviction of sin and belief in Christ followed. When the newborn Church began its infant diet of *the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*, the result was that *awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles* (Acts 2:42-43).

Prayer pursues the power of God in proclaiming the Word of God. God alone enables us to grasp the meaning of God's Word, believe the truth of His Word, live according to His Word, and proclaim its message with life-changing power. We His people receive His enabling through prayer.

Shortly after the Church was born, a worrisome conflict threatened to distract the Apostles from their true calling. Tempted as they were to exaggerate the problem's importance, they refused to take the bait. Acts 6:1-7 describes their response. *It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables ... But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word* (6:2b, 4).

The apostles kept prayer and the ministry of the Word as their priority, and *the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith* (6:7). God's Word turned enemies of the cross into believers in Christ. And the Church grew.

Prayer for Northpoint

God has used Northpoint to call many people to Himself and to produce growth and spiritual maturity. That's what Church is for. We love Northpoint, because it leads us to Christ, so we can get to know Him and become like Him. We receive power to grow by cultivating a regular habit of prayer and trusting God to bring it about.

Pursue God in your own personal life. Seek the God, from whom all blessings flow, through daily prayer and the reading His Word. And pray for Northpoint to receive the same life-transforming power, by cultivating a culture of prayer.

Great challenges face the American Church, and we are powerless to confront them in our own strength. But our God is an awesome God. Jesus said abide in me, because *apart from me, you can do nothing* (John 15:5). But Paul reminds us, *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me* (Philippians 4:13).

Pray in faith believing and *to the praise of His glory*.

Pray for ...

- Prayer and the teaching of God's Word to be the mark of who we are and how we function as a church,
- Power in living and proclaiming God's Word,
- God's direction in reaching the lost and building up believers,
- Restored relationships to be evident among us as a body of believers,
- God's work in your life to be ongoing and evident to you and to others.

And for ...

- **Our Pastors and Directors:** Brent Whitefield, Scott Williams, Terilyn Brown, Geoff Grant, Taylor Mendoza, Tamene Menna, and Marty Wiegman;
- **Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Mike Russell, and Vinoj Zechariah;
- **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Andria Brucks, Jacob Williams, Carolee Jefferson, Josh Figureoa, Amber McEwen, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn
- **Our Church Body:** Northpoint is not a gathering of individuals and families. We are the Body of Christ. A united People, a coordinated, corporate, and called community, where Christ dwells and works for our good and His glory.
- God's grace and guidance for **John Sloan and his family**, as well as **Brent Whitefield and his family**. Ask God to continue to bless and guide them in His service and His will.

Prayer Record

Record specific prayers you have below. Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

–Mark 11:24