

# A HOUSE OF PRAYER

*for all nations*





The start of a year is somewhat of a new start. Here in Smyrna, starting the year in prayer is important to us. It is our deepest desire to follow our Lord's will together in all we do. That's why every now and then we need to calibrate our compass and decide the direction. That's why a period of seeking God in prayer is the best possible start, both for us as individuals and together as a church. We want to support you and your daily devotions during the prayer period with this booklet. We challenge you during this period to take an extra daily moment in prayer during this period. We also want to encourage you to participate in some of our corporate prayer gatherings (Monday-Friday 12.00 and 18.00, Sunday 10.00, 14.00,18.00).

Another tool that can help focus in prayer is fasting. Fasting is to decide for a period of time to withhold from something that actually is good (you should always withhold from bad things). A fast is a food-fast. It can be withholding from all food or just certain meals or types of food. Over the past few years we have recommended the Daniel Fast, which means eating vegetables or vegan depending on how strictly you interpret it. On Smyrna's website we will be posting some tips and recipes concerning this. Another type of fasting is withholding from something that otherwise is a natural part of your life. It can be for example social media, TV or something of special interest. Irrespective of what type of fasting you choose, fasting is having a certain focus for a period of time. It is a reminder for yourself and a way to show God that you are entering into a special time of prayer. Withholding from everyday things gives you more time for prayer as well.

This year's theme is: In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Doing something in somebody's name is all about doing something as a result of the person's will, spirit and authority. Our prayer is that 2019 will be the Father's and Son's and the Holy Spirit's will, spirit and authority!

/Johannes Magnusson



*The Bible texts are taken from the New International Version*



## KNEELING BEFORE THE FATHER

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

*Ephesians 3:14-19*

Many years ago I heard a man of my age talk about that he struggled so much with his life that he had to start each day with kneeling before God. "If I can bow down I won't have the strength to rise up". That was pretty much what he said. You can pray in a thousand different ways, but it is especially in kneeling, if that's physically possible, that we tell ourselves something important: that God is exalted and holy and we are His servants. It's all about daily using our bodies in order to maintain life's perspective. You don't bow down out of fear or submissiveness. But rather out of reverence, respect and trust for the Father. Apparently this way of thinking, kneeling before the Father, has something to do with the spiritual view. When Paul writes that he wants to bow before the Father then wonderful words flow from his pen; regarding the glorious wealth, regarding power and strength for our inner being, regarding height and width and depth in the spiritual realm. I think there is a connection here. Kneeling down is ancient and not any more unusual than doing push-ups. This is the soul's push-ups.  
/ Tomas Sjödin

### **PRAYER**

We pray for God's perspective on our lives, our church and our city.

## REDEEMER

*But you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.*

*Isaiah 63:16*

We don't often encounter God as father in the Old Testament. Many have a tough time with the image of God that is portrayed. The Old testament God can seem judgmental and cruel. Far distant compared with the image that comes so close in the Gospels.

Today's text is found in the middle of a difficult context of judgement. It is as though Isaiah understands that the difficulty of understanding war, punishment and judgmental words can form a one-sided image of God that shadows the Father. Maybe it is us that he sees when he interrupts himself and starts talking about the greater perspective.

Who lifted Moses out of the water? Who parted the Red Sea? Who followed you through the dark valley? Who has led you to the point you are at today?

*You Lord are our Father...*

God's love is eternal and constant.

Throughout lamentations and worship, war and peace, Chris's coming, the birth of the church and right up to Jesus second coming this has a foundational theme: Salvation is ongoing.

When our political systems, economical structures, managing the earth's resources and society collapses, when all hope seems lost,

When world history seems to have reached its darkest point, That's when Jesus places His feet on the Mount of Olives, grabs the earth out of the hands of sin and places it in the Fathers hands.

*Redeemer of old is Your name...*

*/Anne-Jorid Ahgnell*

### **PRAYER**

Thank you for your clear guidance regarding all that lies ahead of us during this new year.

We pray that many that struggle with their lives will say as Job; I know that my Redeemer lives.

Let the hope of the future sing aloud and clear in our hearts so that we may share courageously in a worrying and difficult time.

# FATHER OF THE HEAVENLY LIGHTS

*Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

*James 1:17*

How many decisions do you make every day? "Not many" you may think. A moment later you decide to continue reading this text.

We make decisions all the time. Small and large ones. Sometimes we are stood in front of dizzying and potentially life-transforming decisions. Education, occupation and relationships. Choices that touch on faith and morality. We are a decision-making people. Not funny really, we have loads of choices to make and a lot in our lives is formed by our decisions. The blessing of choice in our day and age is also a curse. How do you know what is the right decision? What if I choose wrong? The storm of choices covers us with waves of stress and anxiety regarding decisions.

James first chapter gives us hope. God, who is as unchanging as the stars in the heavens, stands firm and offers you what will make your life complete. The most valuable thing in life is not a product of decision making, it is a gift from God.

Most things in this world change. What seemed so crystal clear one day is muddled the next. Life moves and right in the middle is where you sometimes stand and wonder what's going on. With God there is no change! God's promises stand firm through the ages.

There is a decision that glues your life to G's faithfulness. The decision to pray in Jesus name. With prayer, the focus of your potential is moved towards God's promises.  
/Christofer Öhrvall

## **PRAYER**

Thank-you that my life rests in Your hands and not in mine.

Help me to make right decisions according to Your will.

## THE COMPASSIONATE FATHER

*As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.*

*Psalms 103:13*

Just imagine waking up every morning and knowing that if I believe in Him then He wants to be my Father and that He loves me if I respect Him.

I often reflect on songs and when I read this text I immediately thought about the song:

“You are my Father, a good Father with great arms that stretch around the whole world. You are my Father and I am glad that I can belong to You as a child.”

This is a kid’s song that we, and maybe you, have sung for many years. But it is something for all to take in: That God is my Father, that I am loved, that I can rest in His arms, that I am ok as I am, that He is always full of grace. Just the two of us.

Just as we sometimes want to be alone with our father, so God wants sometimes that we just want to be in a relationship with Him, God our Father. He wants to “walk” with us, we can talk about everything, He is willing to listen. Sometimes He wants to talk with us, show us the amazing love that He has for you and me and just like a Father loves His children, God loves those that respect Him.

“Lord I can come to You exactly as I am. I can’t hide anything from You, You know my every thought. Despite seeing all my weaknesses and know that I am one of the least of Your children I can still come and know that I am loved by You.”

/Rosalie Zakrison

### **PRAYER**

Jesus let me not be too grown up so that I don’t fit into your arms.

Jesus open my inner eyes so that I can see You.

Thank you for allowing us to call us Your children.

## THE FATHER'S HEART

*"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.*

*Luke 15:21-22*

This is the Father's heart. To forgive all who come to him in repentance. The prayer of repentance and receiving of forgiveness is one prayer that God our Father will always answer immediately. We read in the text that when the son returned and repented the Father said to his servants "be quick..." He immediately restored his son to all his glory.

God forgives all who come to him in true repentance. You may be in a situation where you need forgiveness from God today; God the father is ready to forgive you. Why? God desires no one to perish but come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Some people think the best thing to do is to run away from God when we sin. No that is a lie from the devil. We do not run away from God, we run to God! Sinning is not the worst thing that can ever happen to you. The worst thing that can ever happen to you is not repenting and asking for forgiveness. God has his arms wide open to receive us back when we return to him. He is waiting for you and me to return to him like the prodigal son.

/Belton Mubiru

### **PRAYER**

Oh God I ask you to forgive me. I come back to you today. Help me to follow in your path. Help me to forgive others who have done me wrong. In Jesus Name. Amen.

## WORSHIP THE FATHER

*“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.”*

*John 4:23*

Jesus meets the Samaritan woman by a well outside the village of Sychar. The disciples are preparing a meal so Jesus and the woman are by themselves. They have a long, exciting conversation with each other and when the woman realizes that Jesus is a prophet she poses a what seems to be quite unusual question. “Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus’ answer probably shocked her when He said that there will come a time when the Father will be neither worshipped on the mountain in Samaria nor in Jerusalem.

When Jesus died on the cross it says that the curtain in the Temple was torn in two which is a picture that we now have access to God. But it is also an illustration that God’s presence here on earth, God’s Spirit moved out from the temple. God no longer allows Himself to be confined to a limited place, a certain mountain. Paul explains it later as that God’s Spirit leaves the temple and that our bodies instead become a temple for the Holy Spirit.

Worshipping in spirit and in truth is therefore receiving Jesus into your life and worshipping Him through the life we live. God doesn’t let Himself be confined to a certain place, He is not only found in churches on Sundays between 11.00 and 13.00. He resides in you and me and He works in and through you and me. At your school, at your work-place, amongst your neighbours. Your and my life can be worship and praise to our heavenly Father. That is what true spiritual worship is to be.

/Amadeus Ringbäck

### **PRAYER**

That we as a church would live out our christian faith in life even more.

-That the Gospel be spread to new places and amongst new groups in society.

## ABBA! FATHER!

*The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

*Romans 8:15,16*

An incredible love exists towards you from the Lord. A love that casts out all fear. Many times we think we must clean ourselves up and be good enough for the Lord. We look at our state and think that God can't love us or accept us. But God loved you from the beginning and sent Jesus into the world to die for you. God chose you to be His beloved child. He does not want you to exist in fear but wants you to understand who you are in Christ. That's why God sent the Holy Spirit to testify to the fact that He loves you. It has nothing to do with what you have done, but everything to do with who He is and what He has done. He gave you His righteousness and made you a part of His family. The only thing we need to do is respond to this love. Many of us are wrapped up in our fears, but God does not want you to live in fear or shame. He wants you to get a revelation and let the Holy Spirit remind us daily of His love. We will then experience the confidence that comes with sonship. He longs for you to approach Him in confidence. He assures us that our sins are forgotten. If He doesn't remember them, then we shouldn't either. Today I pray that you understand this love and remove any fear that keeps you from experiencing this love and grace. May you approach God in full confidence and find rest at His feet.

/Mark Beckenham

### **PRAYER**

Let me understand that God is with me and is mighty to save.

Eventhough I can't forget, help me to put all memories at Your feet Lord Jesus.

## OUR NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST

*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

*Matthew 3:16-17*

This short text is fundamental in the Gospels story and has various depths. I see that it of course describes something totally unique regarding Jesus, an initiation into His special act of redemption. But at the same time, I see a wonderful illustration of the life He came to invite us all to share.

When we, just as Jesus, initiate ourselves to follow God's path and allow ourselves to be baptized, then heaven opens over our lives.

The Holy Spirit lowers Himself over us and God's Word starts to speak into our lives.

The Spirit and the Word say the same thing. That we are God's beloved children and that we are chosen to serve Him. This describes our new identity in Christ. We should grow in it and not out of it. We are primarily God's children and secondarily His servants.

As if this wasn't enough, the voice from heaven says that we are His beloved children. Note that this occurs prior to Jesus starting His mission. The Father's love is not conditional and connected to us first having to deserve it. Never forget this.

/Urban Ringbäck

### **PRAYER**

Let us thank God every day that we are allowed to be His beloved children.

Let us pray for a greater intimacy in our relationship to God both as individuals and as a church.

Let us pray that many more find their new identity in Jesus.



## FAITH IN THE SON

-Believe in yourself, your abilities and what you can accomplish!

-Discover your potential, the strength that is hidden deep inside of you!

-Find strategies that give you a boost of confidence and trust in your capacity!

Do you recognize this train of thoughts? Tips that are given with the purpose of leading people towards self-fulfillment and security. The common factor is: Believe in yourself!

You have the strength that is required for the challenges of life. Within you, you find the direction and the goals you need for your life. For many people life rolls on in this train of mind and pattern. It is so freeing to more and more discover what life in Christ involves.

*"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."*

*Galatians 2:20*

Reminding yourself that its not about my ability, my strength, my potential, my possibilities but about Jesus. What He has done for me and the life he has given me to live.

That I can believe in and have access to His ability, His strength, His potential, His safety, His strategies, His capacity and His love.

Your and my faith in Jesus, our capitulation to Him as the centre and Lord in our lives shows people that there is a life to live beyond demands and self-fixation.

A life of faith in Jesus, a life with a real goal that stands all the way to eternity. A life wherein our lives can have meaning in regard to other people, where we with the correct motives and source of strength can do what God has called us to.

/Maria Larsson Tibell

### **PRAYER**

Lord, help us to believe in all you have placed in our lives and dare to use it.

Help us and remind us to always trust and rely on Your power and strength.

## THE SON OFFERS TRUE SALVATION

*For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

*John 3:17*

Everything that is to be told requires a language. Words have meaning that our day and age sometimes have the tendency to dilute- or at the worst, kidnap the meaning of. I, as a total sport-freak, know that a player can save his or her team from losing and by some be called savior. The last word gives us direct association to the Christian faith. I believe that most, even those that don't live in a Christian fellowship, would agree. On the contrary, a saver can be connected to a number of various heroic deeds.

When we modernize the meaning of saviour, we risk losing a little bit of it's full effect. The words mean the same. To save is to save. But the one is so much deeper in its fullest meaning.

There is only one true Saviour. The meaning being that God's Son came to earth to save the world speaks of depth regarding God's intervention. Speaking of Jesus as Saviour is the strongest expression that God's love isn't empty talk, but action. It demands its own exclusive language.

James writes in his letter that the "tongue is a fire". This is also in regard to words of judgment in digital form. That kind of fire can be even tougher to extinguish. Today a verdict can be spread rapidly and easily with the help of a few quick finger-tips on a mobile screen. Hard words become a verdict where we rarely understand the judgmental force it creates.

God, as Judge, is also the One who has come with the perfect salvation. The world loves to judge. God loves to save. The world needs a Saviour who can free the person who is convicted. The name of Jesus can save. It's for real.

/Anders Svedstam

### **PRAYER**

That we can show that Jesus salvation is a reality.  
That 2019 will be a year when many in Gothenburg will meet Jesus in salvation.

## THE SON FEELS WITH US

*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

*Hebrews 4:14-16*

In this text we read of a God who feels with us in our weaknesses. A God who is here on earth with you and me. A God who is real in our everyday lives, feels with us, sees us, hears us where we are in all kinds of life circumstances. It is a forgiving God we have, but at the same time our text says that we are to approach the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and grace and the help we need.

The Bible text tells us also why God is capable of understanding us. Because He has been tried in all things but is without sin. This makes God even greater, more loving and understanding. He knows we have our weaknesses.

Therefore we can come before God without an fear when we face difficulties. Trusting that He in His goodness and grace forgives us and offers us the help we need at just the right time.

It's not just once in a lifetime we ask for forgiveness, we can do it daily. We can daily live in the Lord's Prayer: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

/Sture Kuhlin

### **PRAYER**

That we are honest before God and ourselves.

Thank you God for understanding me and for your forgiveness.

## ACKNOWLEDGE THE SON

*And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.*  
*1 John 4:14*

God is fellowship and we are created to live in His fellowship. God gave us His love through Jesus, His beloved Son. I am free to choose Him as Lord in my life. To acknowledge Jesus as Lord makes all the difference both here and also regarding eternity. What God desires of me is that I acknowledge Him as Lord. That I make Him Lord in my own way regarding how I live life. That I don't see myself as being more important than God. Jesus says: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no one can come to the Father except through Me.

It is in relationship with HIM that I understand myself and the meaning with my life. Jesus is my Salvation in this world so that I don't get lost. It is when I acknowledge Jesus as Lord and God's own Son when peace is made between me and God. He takes place in my life and I in His. I am filled with Love for God, for myself and my fellow beings. So, the encouragement today is that you acknowledge Jesus as Lord in your life. Say it out loud: Jesus, I acknowledge You as Lord of my life! You are Lord of my life! I need You so that others can see You! Thank you for living in me!

/Annelee Thorstensson

### **PRAYER**

Thank you, God for living in me.

Pray that God's love can break forth in your life.

Pray that you can be a part of leading people to Jesus.

Pray that God's enormous love can be transforming in the Church.

## THE SERVING SON

*“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*  
Mark 10:45

If someone asked you to describe what you believe about Jesus in one sentence, what would you say? There’s so much to what we believe about Him and why He came and what He did. It’s really tough to put it in just one sentence! Our verse describes what we believe about the Gospel--the good news of Jesus--in one simple sentence. Notice two key parts to it: First, Jesus sets the example of being a servant. He was a servant to God--doing His will in everything. But then He was a servant to so many people (washing their feet; healing them; teaching them; being patient with them). And the key to being a good servant is HUMILITY.

A word that we don’t find in our culture much today, but is the key. It’s the key to approaching God and it’s the key to loving your neighbour. Secondly, Jesus paid the full price for you on the cross. We don’t understand it all, but God’s perfect justice demands some kind of payment for sin. For everyone’s sins. And Jesus came and paid that full price. The word for “ransom” was often used when a person bought freedom for a slave. The slave was now a free person because someone else paid the price to set them free. In the same way, Jesus has paid the price to set us free from the power of sin. It doesn’t mean that we are perfect, but it does mean that sin no longer defines us and no longer holds us in its grip. By the blood of Jesus on the cross for us, we are set free.

/Mark Beckenham

### **PRAYER**

Thank God for your freedom today in Christ.  
Pray that God’s love will flow through you to others.  
Pray that you will be able to forgive others and forgive yourself.

## HE MUST BE THE SON OF GOD

*And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"*

*Mark 4:19-20*

When Mark writes his Gospel he includes many occasions when Jesus is called God's Son. Right in the first verse of the first chapter he himself testifies: "The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God." Then follow some episodes regarding confessions of Jesus as God's Son, but it is always the spiritual dimension that does so. It is the evil spirits that confess Him in the encounter with the possessed or the Father Himself that talks of Jesus as His beloved Son on the mount of transfiguration in the sixth chapter. But it is not until Calvary that a person, only for the second time since Mark's confession, calls Him God's Son. And the words come from the man who was responsible for His execution when seeing Jesus draw His last breath of air. With the officer having the occupation he had, that he most likely had observed many take their last breath. And those that he had crucified prior to this had hung there and drawn their final breath in humiliation and mortification. This as a reminder for all that the true power was in the lord he served; emperor in Rome. But when Jesus gives up His spirit in humiliation the representative of the emperor cannot do anything else but confess the truth.: "This man must have been the Son of God." The final breath is a breath of life for all mankind, for the officer, for you and for me. Do you want to receive it today by confessing: "Jesus, You must be the Son of God."

/Lars Svensson

### **PRAYER**

Jesus, let Your life-giving breath fill me. I confess that You are the Son of God."



## RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

*Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."  
John 20:21-22*

The disciples had just gone through the crisis of their lives. Jesus, who they have followed, believed in and hoped for has been killed. Many of the expectations and illusions are crushed there at the cross of Calvary. But now He stands there in the midst of them! A whole new dimension is opened. Death has not won! There is a hope that is greater than what they initially could perceive!

He gives them three things. Peace. What an amazing gift right in the middle of all the chaos they are in. He gives them a mission. A mission that means that they are needed – they can make a difference! And then the Holy Spirit. Maybe the Spirit stands for the same thing as peace and a mission seem to. They receive a deep peace and joy on the inside and they get strength and a drive to take the message about Jesus in word and deed. The same goes for us as well! Let us pray for it!

/Johannes Magnusson

### **PRAYER**

Pray that you will receive the Holy Spirit for the first time or in a new way. Pray for God's peace for yourself, those around you and for our entire world. Pray that you'll be sent to someone.

## THE SPIRIT GIVES GIFTS

*What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.*

*1 Corinthians 2:12*

Paul starts this context with the thought that our faith should not rest in worldly wisdom but rather in God's power. That it should not be about being well-spoken but rather what God does. In this we find a challenge to make ourselves more dependent on God. Dare to let go of our control.

After the introduction he encourages his readers to spiritual consciousness because it will help them understand what God wants. *"the things God has prepared for those who love him these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit."* 12:9-10.

For a while now Swedes curiosity regarding spirituality has grown. But in comparison, the Church has rather had a period where the spiritual has been held back. Amongst other things, this has led to all kinds of spiritual phenomena in our country. At the same time it has given the Church a lowered faith in that we have anything spiritual to offer.

1 Corinthians 12:2 is a powerful verse that assists our faith and our confidence. We haven't received the spirit if the world but rather God's Holy Spirit! Wow! There is nothing better, and one of His missions is to allow us to know what gifts we have received. From God! Just imagine that God wants to give us gifts. Gifts in plural. I believe that Paul catches all from Salvation that gives us the confidence in faith regarding eternal life, but also all the spiritual blessings He wants to give us in this life. As Jesus disciples, we are unique and have what all persons need. The Spirit reveals that.

/Daniel Ånskog

### **PRAYER**

Jesus, fill me with the Holy Spirit so that I can in a deeper and clearer way understand and appreciate what You have given us.

Help me to discern what is true and authentic and comes from You. Fill us with Your power and give us courage so that we in the midst of everyday waves share the good You have given us.

## THE SAME SPIRIT

*For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

*1 Corinthians 12:13*

God likes diversity. This is seen amongst other things in His creation and the variety of plants, animals and humans that are visible. Even though diversity is God's priority, He still desires unity amongst those that have chosen to love Him and receive His Son, Jesus Christ for the freedom and forgiveness of sin. The Church is the body of Christ and together we are called to reflect the glory of His Kingdom.

In order to prevent disunity in the Body, God chose to send the Helper, the third Person in the Trinity, to unite His Body here on earth. He realised that disunity could occur between the Jews and the non-Jews, the slaves and the free or other groups. He wanted to prevent this. He chose to allow the same Holy Spirit to live in all of us that have received Christ as Saviour, so that we have the possibility of recognising the Holy Spirit in each other.

God has said in His Word that salvation is for all people irrespective of religion, culture, background or status in society. His plan is that all people who have accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour should be a part of His Kingdom, the Church. That's why it is our mission to see and welcome one another even if we are diverse and think differently in various matters. We have to train ourselves to recognise the Holy Spirit who lives in all who have accepted Jesus.

/Agenta Kuhlin

### **PRAYER**

Help me to recognise the Holy Spirit and affirm my fellow wanderers even if we see things from different points of view. Make me sensitive so that I can perceive the Spirit's voice and be led daily by the Holy Spirit.

## FAN INTO FLAME THE GIFT OF GOD

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.*

*2 Timothy 1:6-7*

Have you ever been in one of those situations when you felt that right now I'm standing in exactly the place God wants me to. Where everything is obvious and what usually feels insecure suddenly feels extremely secure. For me this has happened when I have seen God, through normal people like me, touch another person with His power. The holy Spirit in me and on me.

Paul writes to Timothy to remind him to fan into flame the gift of God that he received when Paul laid his hands on him. Why does he write this? – I think it's all about amongst other things what I previously wrote about. You and I are called to a relationship with Jesus. To live close to His heart, but we are also sent to serve God by loving and meeting the people around us. I know life has it's ups and downs that affect us in different directions. Maybe, what you used to be so passionate about has ended up on a shelf where the duster can't reach and so is now covered in a layer of dust. Maybe you have been hurt along the path and that has led you to questioning or letting go of the divine that God Himself has placed in you.

Today is the time to make a decision to stretch up towards the shelf, shake off and start using the gift that God has placed in you and that you have received from the Holy Spirit. God wants to equip and use you.

/Jonathan Boström

### **PRAYER**

That God would awaken a new passion in your life for Jesus.

That God would blow into our lives so that gifts can bloom and become active again.

That we as God's church dare once again to step into service for Him.

## THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

*When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.*

*John 15:26*

What occurs when the Spirit comes? When the flapping of the Spirit's wings move over the earth? What happens when God's holy, true, spirit encounters your and my imperfect humanity?

The Spirit is a Person in the Trinity with clear characteristics and a reoccurring function.

The Spirit testifies about Jesus. Yes, that's what it says. "When the Helper comes...He will testify about Me." It is manifested on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit moves. The fruit is that the church grows dramatically when thousands start to follow Jesus. You can't separate the Spirit and Jesus. When the Spirit moves, Jesus becomes clearer.

The whole deal with truth is hard. What happens when the full truth about you meets God's holiness? Sure, there is a lot in our lives that is good, but all that have some level of self-insight know that there is a whole lot of stuff that wouldn't handle a closer inspection by a holy and perfectly pure God.

When the Spirit of truth meets you, then the Spirit does what He always does. The Spirit testifies of Jesus! When truth regarding your imperfection meets Jesus holiness, then love always wins. You can be true and honest with God. Both you and God can handle it. God handles your honesty because He is God and you can meet God's holiness because Jesus bears your brokenness.

The Spirit is unstoppable. God's answer for a world that shouted for salvation was a church movement driven by the Spirit. The Spirit of truth that testifies about Jesus. That movement went from being a little local happening in the Middle east in the first century to becoming a world transforming power 2019.

/Christofer Öhrvall

### **PRAYER**

Thank-you God for Your grace. Thank-you that the truth about me is transformed in meeting with Jesus.

Thank-you for the church and calling to witness about You. In the power and fellowship of the Spirit.

## PRAY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

*But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

*Jude 20 B*

Jude's letter is written in a context that is pretty stormy, the church is threatened both from the outside but also within. The persecution from the outside is tough and groups within the church's walls want to split and divide the assembly. The first Christians really suffered for their faith and were exposed to many trials. Right in the midst of this tough time they receive this message from Jude, Jacobs brother, where his exhortation is to build your life on faith in Jesus and live in prayer in the Holy Spirit. The preposition "in" is quite interesting. The New Testament pattern for prayer is that we pray to the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. So, we pray to God but at the same time in God.

In difficult times, when trials and challenges replace each other, Jesus can many times seem so distant. We shout to God as if we don't think He can hear otherwise! Jude says we are to pray in the Holy Spirit, in! As Christians we are already surrounded and imbedded in God's presence. God is already with us and in us through the Holy Spirit. In our struggles, in the middle of our battles God is already present.

Jude's next exhortation is that we stay in God's love. Jesus expresses it similarly when He in John 15 says: "Remain in me, as I also remain in you." What fantastic words! We can live our lives in Jesus at the same time as He says that He is in us. In other words, He surrounds us both from the inside and the outside. You can hardly get closer to God than that.

/Amadeus Ringbäck

### **PRAYER**

Pray for those that are persecuted for their faith.

-Pray for those that feel like God is far away.

## A NEW TIME

*And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.  
Joel 2:28 “*

We say that time comes and goes. Sometimes it passes quickly, sometimes slowly. It just plods on in its own time. “A time for everything” the author of Ecclesiastes says in its beautiful but somewhat sad description of life. But suddenly something happens. Something that forces itself into the situation like a whirlwind of life from heaven.

There is a special day in the calendar of history, a day that marks the beginning of a new time.

The New Testaments own historian, Luke, writes: “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven.”

The heavens open over men and women, young and old and God’s Spirit fills them. It is as though time initially is not painted as a lifeline, rising to a peak and then declining towards an end. The old start dreaming futuristic dreams, the young see futuristic pictures and women of all ages speak prophetic words. It charged the near-coming future with new contents when a new fellowship was formed that would change both people’s lives and the surrounding society.

Nothing was what it had been. A new time had come. A time of hope and belief in the future, sometimes in the midst of suffering and struggle.

Since then we live in this time. In the age of the Spirit. God’s Spirit is poured out and available to fill us with power to meet the present and future with hope and expectation.

/Urban Ringbäck

### **PRAYER**

Let us pray that we be a fellowship that births present hope and hope for the future.

Let us pray that we may live in a continual dependency on the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray that many more would be filled with the Spirit and receive the gifts of the Spirit.

## Corporate prayer meetings in Smyrna

Mondays at 12 & 18

Tuesdays at 12 & 18

Wednesdays at 12 (communion) & 18

Thursdays at 12 & 18

Fridays kl 12 & kl 18

Sundays at 10, 14 & 18

Smyrnakyrkan, Haga Kyrkogata 2, Göteborg  
[www.smyrna.se](http://www.smyrna.se)

