

NORTH  HEIGHTS

# PRAY FIRST

21 Days of Prayer & Fasting

**A Devotional Book  
by Pastor Jordan Gehlhar**

If there is one thing that I have learned in my walk with Jesus, it is this: the importance of praying first. If I am honest, it is still something I am working on, but the truth of it remains. “Pray first” is the single greatest thing that we as believers can do. We all too often seek to figure things out on our own or seek the answers we can readily find from alternative sources – instead of the Source Himself.

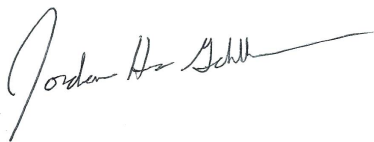
For the next 21 days, would you join me and your North Heights family on a journey of praying first? For the next 21 days, we will set aside intentional time to pray first. In addition to that intentional time of prayer, I am encouraging you to step out and fast. Something happens when we fast with our praying. It will not be easy, but it will be worth it. Maybe you are going to fast from food or caffeine. Maybe it's from social media or screens. Maybe it will be in the form of a Daniel fast. Whatever it is, for the next 21 days, choose to abstain from something to draw you closer to Jesus as you pray first. Let each time you feel the pang of hunger, or the inclination towards the thing you are fasting from, be a driving force and reminder to pray first!

Each day, you will have a theme, scripture, and short devotional to guide you in your prayers. The focus is prayer, so take time to pray. Long prayers or short prayers, take time to pray. The most important thing is that you are in conversation with God. I want to encourage you to find a specific place that you will pray first every day, but don't let the prayer stop when you leave that place. Pray throughout the day, pray in your car, pray with your family, your spouse, or a friend.

It is my prayer that this time of 21 days will develop a new habit within you and spark a newfound intimacy with God. I am confident that the power of prayer is going to transform you in ways that will profoundly impact your life.

**Let's Go, Church! Let's Pray First!**

**In Christ,**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jordan Gehlhar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Pastor Jordan Gehlhar**

# WEEK 1:

## All About Jesus

### Day 1: Monday – Dependence on Him

*Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty.*  
– Zechariah 4:6

As you begin this journey, take time to seek and rely on God's Spirit. Each day, we are bombarded with all sorts of things that are seeking our attention. We are tempted to figure them all out in our own strength. But God tells us, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit." Today as you pray, lay things before God, and choose to be dependent on Him. Instead of living independently, live in dependence on God.

### Day 2: Tuesday – Surrender to Him

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, so offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.* – Romans 12:1

Surrender is not often something that is on our minds. Today, as your hunger or the thoughts of whatever you are fasting come to the forefront of your mind, surrender to Jesus. Offer yourself as a sacrifice, as an offering to God. Let Him produce something in you to draw you closer - to transform you more and more into the image of Christ.

### Day 3: Wednesday – Worshiping Him

*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

Today, take time to worship God for who He is. In the midst of trial, pain, and frustration, there is no better place to be than in the presence of God. He is worthy of all praise, and our lives are designed to worship Him. Worship in Spirit - let your spirit rise as you worship - and worship in truth. Let the truth of God's word dwell in your heart as you read His word.

## **Day 4: Thursday – Broken Before Him**

*My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.* – Psalm 51:17

We spend so much time trying to look good for those around us. Praying first means that we are real before God. Lay before Jesus your sin and shortcoming. Experience His grace and forgiveness in your life. He offers it to you. He wants to hear from you; He desires that you would be broken before Him. Jesus never leaves you in that place of brokenness. He will always build you up in His strength, His love, and His grace.

## **Day 5: Friday – Listening to Him**

*When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.* – John 10:4

Have you ever had that thought pop in your head of “I should really call this person or talk to that person”? What did you do with it? Did you dismiss it? Too often, we dismiss the promptings of the Holy Spirit as our own internal self-talk. Today, take time to listen to God.

## **Day 6: Saturday – Casting your Cares**

*Commit everything you do to the LORD, Trust him, and he will help you.* – Psalm 37:5

Worry, the weight of the day, and anxieties all manifest in different ways. Today, take a moment to cast your cares on God, whatever they may be. Everything that you do today matters, so commit it to the Lord. Trust Him, for He is faithful. In your prayer time today, cast your cares on Jesus, and commit whatever it is to God.

## **Day 7 Sunday – The Lord’s Day**

*Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.* – Exodus 20:8

In a life of busyness, it is hard to take a break. Today, slow down, rest, and know that He is God.

# WEEK 2:

## God's Work In Me

### Day 1: Monday – My Freedom

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. - Galatians 5:1*

Over and over again, we submit ourselves to things that do not bring life. We spend our lives in front of a screen, working or watching. It is a yoke of slavery, but that is not who we are called to be. What is it that you have submitted yourself to? It is time for freedom: freedom that Jesus offers. You can have a life of freedom today; take some time, and ask Jesus for the freedom you have been longing for.

### Day 2: Tuesday – My Relationships

*Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes. – Nehemiah 4:14*

Our relationships are incredibly important; today, take time to bring before God your family, friends, and coworkers. Fight for them! It is time to stand in the gap for the relationships in your life. The Lord is great and awesome, and He is able to do above and beyond anything we can ask or imagine. Pray big prayers today for the relationships in your life.

### Day 3: Wednesday – My Growth

*Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. – Ephesians 4:15*

You are called to grow. We cannot expect to grow on our own; we need God's help to do it. Ask God today to help you grow more and more into the image of Jesus. Grow in your faith, grow in your purpose, grow in your significance, and let the Holy Spirit lead you. Today, ask God for growth, ask Him to show you areas where you need to grow, and ask Him to give you opportunities to step into. Growth is active and intentional; it doesn't just happen. Step into growth through action, and surrender to God in all areas of your life.

## **Day 4: Thursday – My Calling**

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. – 1 Peter 2:9*

You were created on purpose for a purpose. God chose you to be here at this time for this season in our world. Your calling is important to the Kingdom. Step today into the calling God has for you. Ask Him for greater clarity in what your next steps are to live into your calling. Then, take those next steps!

## **Day 5: Friday – My Healing**

*He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. – 1 Peter 2:24*

What is it in your life that you have been dealing with? Maybe it is a pain, an illness, a diagnosis? Whatever it is, today bring it before God. He is a God of healing. He is the same God who cleansed the lepers, healed the blind, opened the ears of the deaf, and raised the dead. Jesus is still in the business of healing. Bring your request before Him today.

## **Day 6: Saturday – My Blessing**

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. – Ephesians 1:3*

Every spiritual blessing is yours! Hopefully in the midst of fasting, you have found that in the lack, God is abundant. Sometimes we don't even realize the blessings before us. Maybe it is a struggle you are experiencing that God is using to produce even greater spiritual blessings. Take time to thank God for what He has given to you and for what is about to come.

## **Day 7: Sunday – The Lord's Day**

*Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. – Exodus 20:8*

There is no better place to be than in the presence of God. Take time today once again to slow down and rest. Experience the power of sabbath in your life by resting and worshiping today.



# WEEK 3:

## Intercession

### Day 1: Monday – Our Leaders

*I urge, then first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. – 1 Timothy 2:1-2*

Our leaders need our prayers. Today, make an intentional effort to pray for your leaders. Leaders within our government, churches, corporations, civil servants, any others that come to mind. We live in a world where we need leaders who are led by the Holy Spirit. Take time today to ask God to anoint and fill our leaders with wisdom and truth. Every time you feel the pang of whatever you are fasting, remember to “Pray First” for our leaders.

### Day 2: Tuesday – Our Missions

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

Missionaries serve all over the world, seeking to spread the Gospel to all people. We are called to join with them in many different ways. Today, commit to praying for those serving around the world and sharing the Gospel of Jesus. Pray for their protection, provision, and a bountiful harvest. If you know missionaries by name, pray for them. If you are wondering who are the missionaries that we support as a church, go online to [www.northheights.church/outreach](http://www.northheights.church/outreach), and view our mission partners to pray for them specifically.

## **Day 3: Wednesday – Our Church**

*And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. – Matthew 16:18*

Jesus chose the Church to accomplish His mission here on earth. Today in the midst of your prayers, lift up your church! Pray for God's provision and anointing for North Heights to accomplish all that God has put before us. Pray first for the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit. Pray first for the staff, leaders, and members. Pray how you can get more involved in the life of the church Jesus has brought you to!

## **Day 4: Thursday – Our Children**

*Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him. Psalm 127:3*

The future of the Church and the Christian faith is found in the heritage of kids. Today, pray for North Heights Preschool, North Heights Academy, North Heights Karate, and Celebrate Dance Academy. Each of these ministries is an integral part of investing in the lives of the next generation. "Pray First" for our kids, that the ceiling of what we experience God do would be the floor of what they experience.

## **Day 5: Friday – The Lost**

*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. – 2 Peter 3:9*

Today, we pray for those who don't know Jesus. Each of us in our lives knows someone who does not know Jesus. Throughout the day, pray for them by name to come to know Jesus. More than that, ask Jesus to open doors for you to share what God has done in your life. Pray for boldness to share, and pray for receptive hearts.

## **Day 6: Saturday – Our Victory**

*But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ – 1 Corinthians 15:57*

You have a victory in every aspect of your life. You may not see it yet, but we stand on the truth of the victory of Jesus. Stand firm in that victory, and proclaim it over every area of your life. Proclaim victory over your family, your workplace, your neighborhood, and your struggles.

## **Day 7: Sunday – The Lord’s Day**

*Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. – Exodus 20:8*

Pray First! Pray first today to experience the rest of God! He is good and faithful; rest today knowing that your investment into prayer time is not done in vain but is at work in the heavenly realms.

As we finish our time of Pray First, let the habit of praying first continue in your daily life. Don’t forget, keep pressing in, and Pray First!

# NORTH HEIGHTS

**Find faith. Discover purpose. Live eternal significance.**

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