

2016



30-DAYS OF PRAYING FOR OUR PASTOR

IN CELEBRATION OF YOUR BIRTHDAY

PASTOR URI D. COOPER

NOVEMBER 8, 2016

THE GREATER ANTIOCH FAMILY





30---Day Praying for Pastor Uri Cooper Challenge

Brothers, pray for us.
—1 Thessalonians 5:25

“Let the thought sink deep into the heart of every church, that their minister will be such a minister as their prayers make him. . . . How perilous is the condition of that minister . . . whose heart is not encouraged, whose hands are not strengthened, and who is not upheld by the prayers of his people! . . .

“It is at a fearful expense that ministers are ever allowed to enter the pulpit without being preceded, accompanied, and followed by the earnest prayers of the churches. It is no marvel that the pulpit is so powerless, and ministers so often disheartened when there are so few to hold up their hands. . . . When the churches cease to pray for ministers, ministers will no longer be a blessing to the churches.”

Gardiner Spring (1785–1873)

There is no greater gift you can give your pastor and the spiritual leaders of your church than to pray for them.

Pastors cannot win the battle alone; they need committed intercessors to lift them up in fervent, specific prayer. Imagine how the power of God might be released in our churches if we were to pray faithfully for our pastors.

Pastors are human—they face the same challenges that their people do, with some additional ones! They grow tired in ministry, are tempted to sin, and may find it difficult to balance their many roles and responsibilities. They need the encouragement and support of those they lead.

Prayer for your pastor is crucial to the spiritual health of your pastor, his family, and your church. God will reward your efforts to cover him in prayer.

If you want to encourage your spiritual leaders (and their wives!), let them know you are praying for them. Ask them periodically for any specific prayer requests, and assure them you will pray accordingly. Use the following prayer guide with accompanying scriptures that suggest practical ways to pray for those who provide spiritual leadership for the flock.

Day One: The Greatest Commandment

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 6:33

“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”
—Deuteronomy 6:5

Pray that your pastor will love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. Pray that God’s Spirit will work in his heart in power and that he will value and follow biblical priorities.

Day Two: Strong Character and Integrity

Scripture Reading: 1 Timothy 1:5, 3:7; Ephesians 6:10–12

“The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”
—1 Timothy 1:5

Pray that your pastor will cultivate strong character and uncompromising integrity. Pray that his testimony will be genuine and that he will never do anything that he would need to hide from others.

Day Three: Pursuing Jesus

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:35; 2 Timothy 2:15–16

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” — 2 Timothy 2:15

Pray for his personal walk with God—that his soul and spirit will be nourished and strengthened in his quiet time with God, beyond his sermon preparation. Pray that he will spend more time in the Word of God than reading Christian books and articles.

Day Four: Growing in Discernment

Scripture Reading: Malachi 2:7; James 1:5–6; John 17:15

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” —James 1:5

Pray that your pastor will counsel and teach with discernment through the wise use of Scripture and faith in God’s power to work. Pray that he will be protected from the effects of sinful or negative attitudes that he encounters as he counsels.

Day Five: A Strong Marriage

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:23–33

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” — Ephesians 5:25

Ask God to protect your pastor’s marriage and keep it strong as a model of Christ’s relationship with the Church. Pray that your pastor will tenderly cherish and lead his wife and that she will respect and encourage her husband, submitting to his leadership. (If your pastor is not married, pray for his relationships with loved ones and those who are close to him.)

Day Six: Healing and Joy Scripture

Reading: Isaiah 61:3

“To grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit.” —Isaiah 61:3

Ask God to heal any hurts that your pastor has suffered in the ministry. Pray that he will serve the Lord with gladness and encourage the congregation to worship God with a joyful, surrendered spirit.

Day Seven: A Strong Family

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:20–21

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” —Ephesians 6:4

Pray for your pastor’s children and especially that the pressures of the ministry will not discourage or embitter them. Pray that your pastor will provide godly leadership in the home, not based on fear of what others will think, but according to scriptural truth. (If your pastor does not have children, pray that God will give him many “spiritual children” as he shares the gospel.)

Day Eight: Protection from Evil

Scripture Reading: John 17:15; Isaiah 54:17; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Peter 3:12; Psalm 9:9–10, 91:9–11

“Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge—no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.” —Psalm 91:9–10

Ask God to protect your pastor from the evil plots of Satan. Pray that he will not be corrupted as he rubs shoulders with the world in the course of ministry.

Day Nine: Tending the Prayer Hedges

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 22:30; 2 Corinthians 10:4–5; Matthew 19:6

“So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”
—Matthew 19:6

Pray that God will build a hedge of protection around your pastor’s marriage and that he and his wife will be aware of the potential for any improper relationships. Pray that their family time will be protected. (If your pastor is not married, pray for his relationships with loved ones and those who are close to him.)

Day Ten: A Guarded Heart

Scripture Reading: Romans 13:14; 1 Peter 1:16; Ephesians 6:10–18; 2 Corinthians 10:4

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.” —Ephesians 6:10–11

Pray that your pastor will use discernment in use of email, the Internet, and other media. Ask God to guard his heart concerning the use of free time. Pray that he will be morally pure and that he will wear the armor of God so that he will not fall into sexual temptation.

Day Eleven: Deep Friendships

Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:19–25

“But you know Timothy’s proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.”
—Philippians 2:22

Pray that God will bring godly friends and encouragers to your pastor and his family to strengthen them for the ministry and provide meaningful fellowship and times of rest.

Day Twelve: Growing in Humility

Scripture Reading: Micah 6:8; Galatians 6:14; John 7:17–18; 1 Corinthians 10:1–13

“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” —Micah 6:8.

Pray that your pastor will be humble and authentic in his faith, not given to pride or hypocrisy. Pray that he will have pure motives and give God glory for every gain or victory.

Day Thirteen: Keeping a Balanced Life

Scripture Reading: Romans 12:1–2; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20, 9:27

“But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. —1 Corinthians 9:27.

Pray that your pastor will make wise lifestyle choices in order to protect his health, especially in the areas of exercise, eating moderately, and getting sufficient rest. Pray for times of relaxation and renewal to balance the stress of ministry.

Day Fourteen: Fearing God

Scripture Reading: Acts 6:4, Proverbs 19:23; 2 Timothy 2:15, 4:1–2; Hebrews 11:6

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” —2 Timothy 2:15

Pray that your pastor will focus on the Word of God and walk in the fear of the Lord—rather than fear of man—as he prepares his messages. Pray that he will seek to please God rather than men and pursue holiness rather than the praise of men.

Day Fifteen: Leading as a Shepherd

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 3:9; 1 Peter 5:2; Romans 12:6–8; Jeremiah 3:15

“Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly.” —1 Peter 5:2

Praise God for your pastor’s leadership and pray that he will make godly decisions. Pray that he will lead with a shepherd’s heart and that he will always speak the truth in love.

Day Sixteen: Courageous Preaching

Scripture Reading: Colossians 1:28, 4:3; Ephesians 6:19

“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.” —Colossians 1:28)

Pray that your pastor will be courageous in the pulpit in proclaiming Christ and confident in his use of the Word of God. Ask God to help him preach with insight, transparency, and humility.

Day Seventeen: The Great Commission

Scripture Reading: Romans 10:15; Mathew 28:19–20; Luke 19:10

“And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’” —Romans 10:15

Pray that your pastor will be a “Great Commission man”—committed to personal evangelism and the equipping of the saints to seek the lost. Pray that he will have a heart to develop a thriving missions program in his church.

Day Eighteen: Prayer and Worship

Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Acts 1:14; Mark 1:35

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed”. —Mark 1:35

Pray that your pastor will be a man of prayer and worship and that he will lead by example—teaching the congregation how to walk in a close relationship with the Father.

Day Nineteen: Using Time Wisely

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:15–16; Colossians 4:5; Psalm 90:12; John 9:4

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.” —Ephesians 5:15–16

Pray that your pastor will use wise time management and that he will seek God’s perspective for his schedule, guarding his time against unnecessary interruptions.

Day Twenty: A Fresh Anointing

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:27; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 15:18–19

“For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me.” —Romans 15:18

Pray for a fresh divine anointing on your pastor’s ministry. Pray that God’s working will be powerfully evident both in his personal life and the spiritual life of the congregation.

Day Twenty-One: Trusting God in Conflict

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 2:23

“When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.” —1 Peter 2:23

Pray that your pastor will not give in to discouragement, but will deal with inevitable criticism and conflict by committing himself into the hands of God, who judges righteously.

Day Twenty-Two: A Servant’s Heart

Scripture Reading: Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 6:7; Mark 10:43–45; John 13:5–9; Philippians 2:3–4

“But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.” —Mark 10:43–44

Pray that your pastor will practice servant leadership, edifying the congregation with wisdom and serving with God’s *agape* love.

Day Twenty-Three: Ministry Team Unity

Scripture Reading: Romans 12:18; 14:19; 1 Corinthians 1:10–31

“So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.” —Romans 14:19

Pray for spiritual unity in the church staff and among the spiritual leadership of the church (elders, deacons, etc.). Pray that the enemy will not be allowed to create divisions, strife, or misunderstanding among the church leaders.

Day Twenty-Four: Clear, Biblical Vision

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 29:18; John 15:16, 17:17

“Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.” —Proverbs 29:18

Pray that God will give your pastor a clear, biblical vision of what your church can be and should be for His glory and that he will communicate that vision clearly and confidently to the church.

Day Twenty-Five: A Heart for Revival

Scripture Reading: 2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 69:32

“You who seek God, let your hearts revive.” —Psalm 69:32

Pray that your pastor will seek God for personal revival and revival in your church and community.

Day Twenty-Six: The Mind of Christ

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:16; Colossians 2:6–8; Ephesians 4:17

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” —Colossians 2:6–7

Pray that your pastor will think biblically, with the mind of Christ.

Day Twenty-Seven: Seeking God’s Will

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 10:3–5; Luke 9:23–24

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”
—Luke 9:23–24

Pray that he will earnestly seek God’s will and be committed to instant and complete obedience—ready for God to work powerfully in and through his ministry.

Day Twenty-Eight: Work Wholeheartedly

Scripture Reading: 2 Peter 1:3; Colossians 3:23–24

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward.” —Colossians 3:23–24

Pray that he will strive for personal excellence and will believe God for all He wants to do in the congregation.

Day Twenty-Nine: A Growing Faith

Scripture Reading: 1 John 4:18; Proverbs 3:5–6

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.” —Proverbs 3:5

Pray that your pastor will be a man of faith and have a passionate love for God, not giving in to worries, fears, or an uptight and anxious spirit.

Day Thirty: Financial Provision and Wisdom

Scripture Reading: Philippians 4:19; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:6–11; Psalm 37:25

“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”
—Philippians 4:19

Ask God to provide for the financial needs of your pastor and his family. Pray that he will be a wise steward of both personal finances and church funds.