



AUDACIOUS

Faith

SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

JANUARY 2024

SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

JANUARY 2024

JAN-FEB

LOVE FEARLESSLY

MAR-APR

LIVE UNCOMMONLY

MAY-JUN

PRAY AUDACIOUSLY

JUL-AUG

OBEY RADICALLY

SEP-OCT

SERVE SELFLESSLY

NOV-DEC

GIVE RECKLESSLY

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Foreword: Audacious Faith—His Mandate, My Mission

Luke 11:8 NIV

*I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, **YET BECAUSE OF YOUR SHAMELESS AUDACITY HE WILL SURELY GET UP AND GIVE YOU AS MUCH AS YOU NEED.***

Romans 4:18–21 NIV

*Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations ... **HE DID NOT WAVER THROUGH UNBELIEF regarding the promise of God, but was STRENGTHENED IN HIS FAITH and gave glory to God, BEING FULLY PERSUADED THAT GOD HAD POWER TO DO WHAT HE HAD PROMISED.***

The Urgency to Have Audacious Faith, Making His Mandate My Mission

Church Strong was the theme the Holy Spirit gave us for 2023. This year, it is ***Audacious Faith—His Mandate, My Mission***. We live in a time when our faith must increase and be steadfast, and our obedience to God is unshakeable. For this reason, we must be Church Strong and have an audacious faith, making God's mandate our mission. The mission of this hour is urgent, and the Church must awake, arise, and do the will of God and finish His work on earth. We can accomplish this by living and serving in audacious faith to obey God's every command successfully. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we can prevail to the end that we too can declare as Jesus did with His last breath on the cross, "It is finished!"

This is not the time for casual, moderate, or self-centered Christianity. It is time for audacious Christianity that consists of an audacious life of reckless, unrestrained, radical, and revolutionary faith in God, love for Him, and obedience to Him. We are the end-time Church. Spiritual warfare from satanic forces may be unparalleled. However, the Church still triumphs over all through audacious faith in Jesus Christ because of the surpassing work and the power of the Holy Spirit. We urgently need audacious faith to obey God's every mandate for these reasons:

- The urgency of time as the end is near.
- The devil knows his time is near and is relentlessly at work.
- The Church must fulfill the will of God and finish His work.

The time is now to be Church Strong, to live and walk in audacious faith, and to make God's mandate our mission.

Defining Audacious and Mandate

The dictionary defines *audacious* as extremely bold or daring; recklessly brave; fearless; extremely original; without restriction to prior ideas; highly inventive; recklessly bold in defiance of convention or the like; lively; unrestrained; or uninhibited. Merriam-Webster's definition of audacious includes intrepidly daring, adventurous, recklessly bold, and marked by originality and verve (the spirit and enthusiasm animating artistic composition or performance; vivacity, energy, or vitality).

Everything about Jesus was audacious. His love was fearless, His obedience was radical, His prayers were bold, His serving was exceptional, and His giving was generous. Even His last Great Commission to His disciples was audaciously bold and daring, extremely visionary, original, brave, fearless, and defiant of the conventions of Jewish traditions, laws, and orthodoxy. **For His disciples to make His mandate their mission, they needed an unusual boldness, unrestrained passion, and uninhibited faith to be Christ's witnesses in Jerusalem and beyond.** On the Day of Pentecost, they were all filled with a fearless love that led them to live uncommon lives, pray audaciously bold prayers, and empower them to radically obey the Great Commission to go into all the world as exceptional servants and generous givers.

According to Webster's Dictionary, a mandate is an official order or commission to do something, or the authority granted to someone to perform a particular action or fulfill a specific role. Those who receive a mandate are expected to carry out the task or duty outlined in the mandate and are often held accountable for its successful completion. God's mandates can take many forms, including written documents, verbal communication, or prophetic visions. Those who receive a mandate are expected to fully obey and complete the commission.

The biblical definition of mandate emphasizes the importance of following God's guidance and fulfilling His purpose for our lives. **God's mandate is His divine instruction and guidance that directs and governs our lives. It serves as His commandment and the guiding principle by which we are to live and make decisions.** Through His mandate, God reveals His will and purpose and provides us with the necessary guidance and direction to fulfill our calling and achieve our full potential in Him. The Bible is full of examples of God giving specific mandates to individuals and groups of people. These commands often involved specific tasks or responsibilities, such as building an ark (Noah), leading the Israelites out of Egypt (Moses), or rebuilding the temple (Ezra). The Great Commission in Mark 16:15 and

Matthew 28:19–20 is considered Jesus' mandate to the Church: **“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”** This command is a call to evangelism and discipleship and is considered one of the most critical responsibilities of Christians. **JESUS' MANDATE IS NOT A SUGGESTION BUT A COMMAND TO PREACH THE GOSPEL AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS; HIS MANDATE IS OUR MISSION!**

I believe it's time for the Church to rise with audacious faith in making His mandate our mission. It is our God-given mission to:

- **LOVE FEARLESSLY**
- **LIVE UNCOMMONLY**
- **PRAY AUDACIOUSLY**
- **OBEY RADICALLY**
- **SERVE SELFLESSLY**
- **GIVE RECKLESSLY**

In recent years, the government has mandated numerous health, social, and environmental regulations. Some of these mandates violate our conscience and, more importantly, the Word of God. Examples include mandates related to masks, gatherings, vaccines, gender fluidity, gender affirming and transitioning, and religious rights. Those who embrace certain mandates often seek to impose them on others. I used to be an environmental activist on a mission to save whales and trees. **NOW, I AM A GOSPEL ACTIVIST ON A MISSION TO SEEK AND SAVE SOULS AND MAKE DISCIPLES.**

Understanding Audacious Faith

We can only make God's mandate our mission through audacious faith. Human strength and capabilities are limited, and they cannot accomplish the works of God. Audacious faith has an utmost trust in God alone regardless of any other factor, circumstance, or person. **It is built solely, solidly, and securely on a relationship with Jesus Christ (the Eternal Rock) and His Word, and independent of anyone or anything else.** This faith is unshakeable and immovably steadfast because of Whom it is built on. **It is persistent, reckless, and tenacious in pressing into God and will not give up until His intended end is obtained.**

To have audacious faith is to be filled with the Holy Spirit to do what is recklessly brave, extremely fearless, and in complete defiance of anything that opposes God's will, ways, and purpose; be it culture, convention, or any other thing.

- Job defied the death of all his children, the destruction of all his possessions, and even his own decaying and dying body to trust in God. He audaciously worshipped God, believed in God, and stood firm that he would see God with his own eyes while his body was dying. His audacious faith caused him to declare that even if God should slay him, he would still trust God.
- Moses, a shepherd, confronted Pharaoh, ruler of Egypt, to let God's people go. Moses obeyed God for the deliverance of Israel, defying an evil and idolatrous authority.
- Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead after he was buried for four days. Jesus obeyed His Father, defied death and the laws of nature, and resurrected Lazarus.
- The Early Church preached the gospel, defying evil religious edicts, persecution, and threats. They obeyed God and defied every opposition against the gospel regardless of imprisonment and beatings.

All these lived and served God with audacious faith, obeying all God's mandates.

Audacious faith has a holy defiance that wars against all that stands in the way of God's will and Word. It is unyielding in obeying God by demolishing any stronghold, argument, or pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. It is relentless in taking captive every thought and making it obedient to Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-6). **IT IS A FAITH THAT PLEASES GOD!**

In Luke 11:1-10, Jesus taught His disciples about prayer. He shared a story about a person in the middle of the night who pled with his neighbor and pounded on his door for some loaves of bread to feed his house guest. It was a rude and unacceptable thing to do. In verse 7 NIV, the friend answered, **"DON'T BOTHER ME. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I CAN'T GET UP AND GIVE YOU ANYTHING."** This response did not discourage or stop the man from persistently asking and pounding on the door. He shamelessly continued because he had one thing in mind, to get bread. Jesus said in verse 8 NIV, **"I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, YET BECAUSE OF YOUR SHAMELESS AUDACITY HE WILL SURELY GET UP AND GIVE YOU AS MUCH AS YOU NEED."** Holy audacity has a holy desperation to receive from God all that He purposes, just as this man's shameless audacity was motivated by a desperation to feed his visitor. He had no means on his own, but he knew where to go and ask audaciously. This holy desperation is not a sense of hopelessness but rather an intense, deep, and profound

belief that God is trustworthy.

Jesus taught His disciples that **GOD WILL ANSWER THE PRAYERS OF BOLD, FEARLESS, DARING, DESPERATE, AND SHAMELESS PEOPLE WHO TRUST IN HIM**. He taught that a key ingredient to prayer being answered is “**shameless audacity**” (Luke 11). Various Bible translations use different phrases. The NLT uses the phrase “**shameless persistence**,” the NASB uses the word “**shamelessness**,” the CEB uses “**brashness**,” and the HCSB uses “**persistence**.”

For the Church to have the conviction and courageous commitment to make God’s every mandate our mission, we must have audacious faith. Jesus had audacious faith, and He obeyed all of God’s commands to the very end to be the Savior for all humanity. **God is moved not only by audacious faith but also by an audacious life, such as the life Jesus lived: A LIFE THAT IS NOT AFRAID TO LOVE FEARLESSLY, LIVE UNCOMMONLY, PRAY AUDACIOUSLY, OBEY RADICALLY, SERVE SELFLESSLY, AND GIVE RECKLESSLY**. There was nothing timid or reserved about the way Jesus lived and believed. Everything about Jesus was audacious. His love was fearless, His obedience was radical, His prayers were bold, His serving was exceptional, and His giving was boundless.

Audacious Faith at Work Making God’s Mandate Our Mission in All Situations

AUDACIOUS FAITH BELIEVES THAT GOD’S CHARACTER, NATURE AND WORD ARE ETERNALLY INCONTESTABLE. It does not know fear, moves in courage, and endures with unchanging confidence in God. It is not discouraged but grows stronger when challenged and under siege by demonic attacks. It does not give up but presses forward in hope when there seems to be no hope. Audacious faith will always see the end that God intends. Hebrews 11 speaks of the audacious faith of many who were fearless in obeying God in impossible situations, and through whom God brought forth audacious miracles.

- By faith Enoch was taken up to heaven without dying because God took him.
- By faith Noah warned about things to come and built an ark to save his family.
- By faith Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children.
- By faith Abraham, when tested by God, offered Isaac as a sacrifice,

believing that God could raise Isaac from the dead.

- By faith Moses' parents hid him after he was born, and they did not fear the Pharaoh's edict.
- By faith Moses kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer would not touch the firstborn of Israel.
- By faith the Israelites passed through the Red Sea on dry land, while the Egyptians drowned.
- By faith the Israelites marched around Jericho for seven days, and the walls came crashing down.
- By faith Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight.
- By faith women received their loved ones back from death. Others were tortured, refusing to turn from God in order to be set free; they placed their hope in a better life after the resurrection.
- By faith some were jeered at, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in prisons. Some died by stoning, some were sawed in half, and others were killed with the sword. Some went about wearing the skins of sheep and goats, destitute and oppressed and mistreated; by faith they were too good for this world, wandering over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground.

Faith is not just believing what was said, but believing who said it. When we live in audacious faith, we are not doing it on our own. The Holy Spirit is totally and intimately involved in helping, leading, encouraging, and enabling us to believe. God is searching for men and women who will exhibit audacious faith and obey His every mandate to the utmost and until the end.

Klayton Ko

Senior Pastor of First Assembly of God, Hawaii

District Superintendent of Hawaii Assemblies of God

Called to Solemn Assembly: January 2024

Week 1 – Personal Preparation (December 31, 2023 – January 6, 2024)

Week 2 – Corporate Prayer And Fasting (January 7–14)

Regional and Corporate Prayer Schedule (January 8–12)

Morning Prayer	6:00–7:00am	Mon–Fri	Red Hill Central Oahu Metro East Honolulu
	6:00–7:00am	Mon, Wed, Fri	Leeward
	6:00–7:00am	online only	Windward
Corporate Noon Prayer	12:00–1:00pm	Mon–Fri	Red Hill
Corporate Evening Prayer	6:00–8:00pm	Mon–Fri	Red Hill
Personal and Family Prayer	Anytime	Sat	
Leaders Training (John Harke)	9:00am–1:00pm	Sat	Red Hill
Thanksgiving and Exhortation	6:00–8:00pm	Sun	Red Hill

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL CONCERNING PRAYER TIME

Please do not fellowship during times of prayer. Let us honor the presence of God and guard the spiritual sobriety and sanctity of the occasion. Be encouraged to wait on God and hear Him. Take notes of what you hear.

Evening Prayer Schedule:	6:00–6:30pm	Personal Prayer
	6:30–7:30pm	Corporate Prayer
	7:30–8:00pm	Personal Prayer

DAILY PRAYER FOCUS FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 7–14, 2024

Day 1 (Sunday)	Ministry of the Word (AM and PM services)
Day 2 (Monday)	Consecrated Heart—Making His Mandate My Mission
Day 3 (Tuesday)	Love Fearlessly
Day 4 (Wednesday)	Live Uncommonly
Day 5 (Thursday)	Pray Audaciously
Day 6 (Friday)	The Holy Spirit's Anointing
Day 7 (Saturday)	Leaders Training (John Harke)
Day 8 (Sunday)	Thanksgiving and Exhortation

SOLEMN ASSEMBLY PART I: WEEK OF PERSONAL PREPARATION
December 31, 2023 – January 6, 2024 (Sunday to Saturday)

Six Steps To Preparation For Solemn Assembly

Sunday, December 31, 2023 to Saturday, January 6, 2024 is a week of personal preparation before the Solemn Assembly. Like the Levitical priests who carefully prepared themselves before they entered the Tabernacle to minister to God, it is important that we take time to prayerfully prepare ourselves to enter Solemn Assembly in the spirit and posture of heart that is pleasing to God. Record all that God will be speaking to you throughout this season of prayer and fasting on the pages provided in this booklet.

STEP 1: Plan your week's schedule to include times for corporate and personal prayer.

STEP 2: Personal preparation (Psalm 51:1–19 NKJV)

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.”

1. Prepare your heart to come before God in humility and contrition.
2. Allow the Holy Spirit to do a deep searching of your heart and life. Bring everything to light and let nothing be hidden.
3. Pray through Psalm 51. Repent and ask God to forgive you, cleanse your heart, and renew a right spirit within you.

4. Ask God to open the eyes of your understanding; remove all unbelief, hardness, pride and resistance to His Holy Spirit. Ask God to put truth and wisdom in your inward parts.
5. Make relationships right with God and with others.

STEP 3: Prepare as a family (Joshua 24:14–15; Psalm 133 NKJV)

“Now, therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! ... But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

1. Heads of families: help prepare your family and share the personal application of Solemn Assembly to every person in your household.
2. Minister unity and oneness; bring healing and reconciliation to all relationships in your family, repent of sins committed against each other, and minister love and forgiveness towards one another.
3. Married couples: read 1 Peter 3:1–7 and Colossians 3:18–19.
4. Parents and children: read Colossians 3:20–21.
5. Have a family communion time to seal the oneness of spirit, love and peace; pray Psalm 133 and Colossians 3 into your family.

STEP 4: Spiritual house-cleansing (2 Chronicles 34:3–27 NKJV)

“For in the eighth year of his (Josiah’s) reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images...in the eighteenth year of his reign...he sent Shaphan...to repair the house of the LORD... because your heart was tender...and you humbled yourself before Me...I also have heard you, says the LORD.”

1. Do spiritual house-cleansing (2 Chronicles 34:1–33); if there is any item in your possession that contains spiritually defiling material and is not pleasing to God, get rid of it.
2. These things defile us and our homes, and become gateways for the enemy to infiltrate.
3. Repair your personal and family altar (daily devotions, prayer and the Word).

STEP 5: Prepare all ministries (Colossians 3:12–15 NKJV)

“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another; and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

1. Heads of ministries: prepare all helpers and others under your care, and ensure that everyone is informed concerning the purpose and times of prayer.
2. Exhort all to participate in the blessing of Solemn Assembly.
3. Minister unity, reconciliation and oneness; if there is any rift in ministerial relationships, prayerfully bring reconciliation and oneness.
4. Renew commitments to God and each other; pray Psalm 133 and Colossians 3 into your ministry.

STEP 6: Ask God to infuse great faith in us (Hebrews 11:6 NKJV)

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

1. Seek God diligently and believe in Him for great things.
2. Step into the week of Solemn Assembly with a contrite heart and great faith.

WHAT IS SOLEMN ASSEMBLY?**The Call To Humbly Seek God In Prayer And Fasting**

Joel 1:14 NKJV—“Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God and cry out to the LORD.”

Solemn Assembly is a corporate and personal call to humbly separate ourselves unto God for a time of Consecration, Prayer and Fasting to seek His face for a specific purpose. It is humbling ourselves before God in

repentance and consecration. It is a time to:

- “Break up the fallow ground” of our hearts before God.
- Repent of all sins and return to God wholeheartedly.
- Totally consecrate ourselves to God as His redeemed people.
- Wait on God to hear from Him and take heed.
- Resolve to obey and please Him alone.

What Is Fasting And Prayer?

Fasting and prayer are spiritual ministries that God responds to. In fasting, abstinence from food (and other things) is an outward demonstration of an inward heart of contrition and repentance towards God. It is a spiritual act of humbling and emptying ourselves before God in submission to His Lordship. Fasting crucifies our flesh and self, enthrones God, and brings us into total submission to Him. We deny all that is of ourselves—our will, needs, appetites, desires, priorities, and motives—to embrace all that is His. There are different ways to fast. Let the Lord lead you at all times. We fast on:

- Food (depending on God's direction)
- Time (setting aside time to pray and wait on God)
- Priorities (denying personal agendas to make seeking Him our first priority)
- Pleasures (abstaining from things we enjoy to devote that time and energy to God)

How Do We Fast?

We are to fast as the Holy Spirit leads us. Let God show you what He is dealing with in your life. All fasting must be accompanied with prayer. There are three different ways we can fast:

- Partial fast—abstain from certain meals or reduce normal portion sizes (no snacking to make up for meals).
- Total fast—abstain from solid foods and consume only liquids (if you have a health condition, consult with your doctor first).
- Daniel fast—abstain from specific types of foods, beverages and/or pleasures (e.g. internet, social media, television, entertainment, sports, recreation, shopping, etc.).

Sunday, January 7: Ministry of the Word

LUKE 11:8 NIV

*I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, **YET BECAUSE OF YOUR SHAMELESS AUDACITY, HE WILL SURELY GET UP AND GIVE YOU AS MUCH AS YOU NEED.***

JOHN 4:34 NKJV

*Jesus said to them, **“MY FOOD IS TO DO THE WILL OF HIM WHO SENT ME, AND TO FINISH HIS WORK.”***

HEBREWS 12:2-3 NIV

FIXING OUR EYES ON JESUS, THE PIONEER AND PERFECTER OF FAITH. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

MATTHEW 21:21-22 NIV

*Jesus replied, **“TRULY I TELL YOU, IF YOU HAVE FAITH AND DO NOT DOUBT, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also YOU CAN SAY TO THIS MOUNTAIN, ‘GO, THROW YOURSELF INTO THE SEA,’ AND IT WILL BE DONE. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”***

ROMANS 4:18-21 NIV

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations ... HE DID NOT WAVER THROUGH UNBELIEF** regarding the promise of God, but was **STRENGTHENED IN HIS FAITH** and gave glory to God, **BEING FULLY PERSUADED THAT GOD HAD POWER TO DO WHAT HE HAD PROMISED.

DEUTERONOMY 7:6 NKJV

***FOR YOU ARE A HOLY PEOPLE TO THE LORD YOUR GOD; the Lord your God has CHOSEN YOU TO BE A PEOPLE FOR HIMSELF, A SPECIAL TREASURE** above all the peoples on the face of the earth.*

MATTHEW 28:18-20 NKJV

*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”** Amen.*

Monday, January 8: Consecrated Heart—Making His Mandate My Mission

PROVERBS 27:19 NLT

*As a face is reflected in water, **SO THE HEART REFLECTS THE REAL PERSON.***

DEUTERONOMY 8:2-3 ESV

*And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that He might humble you, **TESTING YOU TO KNOW WHAT WAS IN YOUR HEART, WHETHER YOU WOULD KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS OR NOT.** And He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, **BUT MAN LIVES BY EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD.***

DEUTERONOMY 5:29 NKJV

*Oh, that they had such **A HEART** in them that **THEY WOULD FEAR ME** and **ALWAYS KEEP ALL MY COMMANDMENTS**, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!*

MATTHEW 6:21 NKJV

*For where your **TREASURE** is, there your **HEART** will be also.*

LUKE 6:45 NKJV

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

ACTS 13:22-23 NIV

***“I HAVE FOUND DAVID SON OF JESSE, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART; HE WILL DO EVERYTHING I WANT HIM TO DO.”** From this man’s descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as He promised.*

1 SAMUEL 16:4-13 NKJV

*So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” And he said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. **Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.**” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice. So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is before Him!” But the LORD said to Samuel,*

“DO NOT LOOK at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I HAVE REFUSED HIM. For the LORD does not see as man sees; FOR MAN LOOKS AT THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE, BUT THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART.” So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” **Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, “THE LORD HAS NOT CHOSEN THESE.”** And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all the young men here?” Then he said, “There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here.” So he sent and brought him in... **And the LORD said, “ARISE, ANOINT HIM; FOR THIS IS THE ONE!”** Then Samuel took the horn of oil and **ANOINTED HIM in the midst of his brothers; and THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD CAME UPON DAVID FROM THAT DAY FORWARD.**

DEUTERONOMY 10:12–21 NKJV

What does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?... Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer... You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. HE IS YOUR PRAISE, AND HE IS YOUR GOD.

PSALM 19:14 ESV

Let the words of my mouth and the MEDITATION OF MY HEART BE ACCEPTABLE IN YOUR SIGHT, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

PSALM 51:1–17 NKJV

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. FOR I ACKNOWLEDGE MY TRANSGRESSIONS, and my sin is always before me. AGAINST YOU, YOU ONLY, HAVE I SINNED, AND DONE THIS EVIL IN YOUR SIGHT—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. **BEHOLD, YOU DESIRE TRUTH IN THE INWARD PARTS, AND IN THE HIDDEN PART YOU WILL MAKE ME TO KNOW WISDOM.** Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. **CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART, O GOD, AND RENEW A STEADFAST SPIRIT WITHIN ME.** Do not cast

me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. **FOR YOU DO NOT DESIRE SACRIFICE, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. THE SACRIFICES OF GOD ARE A BROKEN SPIRIT, A BROKEN AND A CONTRITE HEART—THESE, O GOD, YOU WILL NOT DESPISE.**

ISAIAH 57:15 ESV

I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.

Exhortation: Consecrated Heart—Making His Mandate My Mission

Our Heart Matters Foremost to God

In any relationship, the heart is of foremost importance, so it is in our relationship with God. **To live in audacious faith that His mandate is our mission, we must have a heart completely consecrated to Him.** Consecration is a heart matter. Jim George wrote in his book *A Man After God's Own Heart*, **“The heart is the place where our life gets its direction.”** Throughout the Bible, the Lord speaks of His passion for the hearts of His people to love, serve, and obey Him. He seeks the complete devotion of our hearts that He is our first love, priority, passion, and pursuit. In Acts 13:22–23 NIV, Paul spoke of David being such a man:

After removing Saul, He made David their king. God testified concerning him: **“I HAVE FOUND DAVID SON OF JESSE, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART; HE WILL DO EVERYTHING I WANT HIM TO DO.”** From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as He promised.

The Holy Spirit is constantly working on our hearts that we become people after God's own heart like David and will do everything He wants us to do. When God was leading the children of Israel out of Egypt to the promised land, He tested their hearts with trials and hardships to reveal their hearts and to train them to obey all His commandments. Deuteronomy 8:2–3 ESV speaks of this:

And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your **God** has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that He might humble you, **TESTING YOU TO KNOW WHAT WAS IN YOUR HEART, WHETHER YOU WOULD KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS OR NOT.** And He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but **MAN LIVES BY EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD.**

Consecration is a Heart Matter

Proverbs 27:19 NLT says, “As a face is reflected in water, so **THE HEART REFLECTS THE REAL PERSON.**” Consecration does not begin with outward acts of reverence but with the **INWARD WORK OF THE HEART** in setting it apart as holy unto God and for His purpose. Consecration of the heart is the consecration of the whole person.

Man’s heart has always been God’s priority in His relationship with His people. God has not changed. He is still seeking out a man or woman whose heart is wholly consecrated—set apart unto Him—to do His will, making His mandate their mission. David was such a person, and God testified of him as a man after His own heart, one who would do everything God wanted of him. Acts 13:22 NKJV says that when God removed Saul as king, “He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ‘**I HAVE FOUND DAVID, son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART, WHO WILL DO ALL MY WILL.**’”

David’s heart was consecrated to make God’s mandate his mission. When Israel clamored for a king, God chose Saul as their first king. Saul’s heart began well but became corrupted by self-will and rebellion. He began doing his own desires rather than God’s. The Lord was grieved and rejected and removed Saul as king. In 1 Samuel 13:13–14 NKJV, the prophet Samuel strongly rebuked Saul, saying,

You have NOT KEPT the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. **THE LORD HAS SOUGHT FOR HIMSELF A MAN AFTER HIS OWN HEART,** and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, **BECAUSE YOU HAVE NOT KEPT WHAT THE LORD COMMANDED YOU.**

When the heart is radically consecrated to God, we become radical people who are not afraid to obey God to the extreme. By the power of His Holy Spirit, we begin to have audacious faith, live in extreme obedience, and believe that we can do outrageous, impossible, and inconceivable things as His obedient followers. William Booth once said, “God loves with a great love the man whose heart is bursting with a passion for the impossible.”

Consecrated and Chosen to Make God’s Mandate My Mission

The Lord looks at consecrated and holy hearts when choosing people to use for His purposes. He seeks those with audacious faith to make His mandate their mission. When Samuel was instructed to go to Jesse’s house to anoint one of Jesse’s sons to be the next king, God rejected all the seven sons Jesse brought before Samuel. In fact, when Eliab, the first son, was brought forward, Samuel looked at Eliab and said, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is before Him!” However, the LORD said to Samuel, **“DO NOT LOOK at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I HAVE REFUSED HIM. FOR THE LORD DOES NOT SEE AS MAN SEES; for man looks at the outward appearance, BUT THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART”** 1 Samuel 16:7 NKJV. When Jesse presented his seven sons before Samuel, each time it was recorded that “the Lord had refused him,” “the Lord has not chosen this one,” or “the Lord has not chosen them” because they all had heart issues that disqualified them in God’s eyes.

Finally, when Samuel asked if these were all the sons, Jesse admitted that the youngest son was keeping the sheep. Samuel instructed for David to be brought before him. In 1 Samuel 16:12–13 NKJV, when David appeared, the Lord declared to Samuel, **“ARISE, ANOINT HIM; FOR THIS IS THE ONE!”** **Then Samuel took the horn of oil and ANOINTED HIM in the midst of his brothers; and THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD CAME UPON DAVID FROM THAT DAY FORWARD.** What was it about David’s heart that so drew the approval, trust, and pleasure of God that God pointed David out to Samuel, saying that he was the one? God commanded Samuel to arise and anoint David, for he was the Lord’s chosen. God testified that David was a man after His own heart, and He had chosen him to be the anointed king. The Holy Spirit’s power and grace came upon David, filling him with audacious faith to make God’s mandate his mission as king over Israel. It was through David’s lineage that Jesus came as the Son of God to be the Savior of Israel and the whole world.

The Church must return to the understanding that God does not see as man sees concerning His call, vision and ministry. Passion, giftings, training,

skills, knowledge, and experiences are all important in the kingdom of God as we serve Him, **but God still prioritizes searching out our hearts to see if He could declare over us, “Anoint him, for he is the one!”** Are we like Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah, and the rest of Jesse’s seven sons whom God refused, rejected, and did not choose because of the condition of their hearts? Are we like David, whose heart was consecrated wholly to love, honor, and serve God in everything God says?

When we bring a sacrifice before God, He is not looking at the sacrifice in our hands. He is looking at what is in our hearts. In the world of Christendom today, many things have been made priorities that are not God’s priorities, although with the great intention of serving God and bringing in the harvest. May we, as followers of God, purpose to know God and His heart by seeking Him, praying, and living His Word with total dependency on the Holy Spirit. **We must strive to make God’s priority our priority in our relationship with Him. HE IS SEEKING FOR PEOPLE AFTER HIS OWN HEART.** May our aspirations and excellent efforts for church growth, advancement, programs, and methods be birthed from being people after God’s own heart to do all that He tells us according to His ways. We thank God for the many great books, programs, and ministries that are of tremendous help to the body of Christ. Yet, these are not substitutes for personally seeking God, dwelling in deep intimacy with Him, hearing Him, learning from Him, and being directed by Him. The five-fold ministries are essential to the Church, but we must not forget the Greatest of All, Jesus Christ. He is the One we must seek to know and love in intimacy to the utmost. All ministries and services rendered to God must reveal and glorify Jesus Christ as Lord overall.

Repentance is a Heart Matter

Just as consecration is a heart matter, so is repentance. **In repentance, OUR HEART IS TOTALLY UNDONE, broken and contrite, because of being CONFRONTED by Truth and CONVICTED by the Holy Spirit concerning our sins.** In God’s mercy, He confronts us and exposes our sins in the light of a revelation of Himself that He is holy. In Isaiah 6:3 NKJV, the prophet saw the Lord Almighty seated on His throne, high and lifted up in the temple. The seraphim surrounding Him worshipped and cried, **“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”** Isaiah saw his own undone state and spiritual ruin in the brilliant presence of the holy God. In verse 5, he earnestly called out to God, **“WOE IS ME, FOR I AM UNDONE! BECAUSE I AM A MAN OF UNCLEAR LIPS, and I dwell in the**

midst of a people of unclean lips; FOR MY EYES HAVE SEEN THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS.”

In Psalm 51, David also demonstrated true repentance for his sins against God. His heart was shattered by the revelation that he had profoundly offended and grieved God, the Lord of hosts. He, too, cried out for God’s mercy in Psalm 51:3–4 NKJV:

For I ACKNOWLEDGE MY TRANSGRESSIONS, and my sin is always before me. AGAINST YOU, YOU ONLY, HAVE I SINNED, and DONE THIS EVIL IN YOUR SIGHT—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.

In deep remorse and godly sorrow, he repented before God with a broken spirit and contrite heart for all the sins he had committed against God concerning his adultery with Bathsheba. He was deeply cut as he understood that all sins were ultimately sins against God—committing personal evil against the Lord Himself. He pled for God’s mercy that in His lovingkindness, He would forgive him and blot out all his heinous offenses against the person of God—His holiness, righteousness, and ways. David had willfully trespassed who God was. **He willfully traded his priceless relationship with the holy God for the profane indulgence of evil.** In his repentance, David was a broken man filled with godly sorrow, weeping and seeking forgiveness and the restoration of his relationship with God. He sought the Lord to create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within himself. He was exposed, convicted, and wrecked by the Truth. Gripped by a desperation for God’s forgiveness, cleansing and restoration, he begged that he be purged with hyssop so that he would be clean, washed and made whiter than snow.

He cried out to be restored to holiness, righteousness, and a right relationship with God. **He returned to the knowledge of God and yearned for the restoration of God’s Truth and intimacy, praying in Psalm 51 NKJV, “BEHOLD, YOU DESIRE TRUTH IN THE INWARD PARTS, AND IN THE HIDDEN PART YOU WILL MAKE ME TO KNOW WISDOM.”** His heart burned again with a fire to be one with God as he sought the Lord: **“DO NOT CAST ME AWAY FROM YOUR PRESENCE, AND DO NOT TAKE YOUR HOLY SPIRIT FROM ME.** Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.” He pursued God crying out, **“CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART, OH GOD, AND RENEW A STEADFAST SPIRIT WITHIN ME.”**

Ultimately, his understanding of the heart of God concerning His people was restored to him as he prayed in verses 16–17,

FOR YOU DO NOT DESIRE SACRIFICE, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. THE SACRIFICES OF GOD ARE A BROKEN SPIRIT, A BROKEN AND A CONTRITE HEART—THESE, O GOD, YOU WILL NOT DESPISE.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians 7:8–11 NLT, wrote in his letter to the Corinthian church concerning repentance with godly sorrow,

I am not sorry that I sent that severe letter to you, though I was sorry at first, for I know it was painful to you for a little while. **Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways. IT WAS THE KIND OF SORROW GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO HAVE,** so you were not harmed by us in any way. **FOR THE KIND OF SORROW GOD WANTS US TO EXPERIENCE LEADS US AWAY FROM SIN AND RESULTS IN SALVATION.** There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death. **JUST SEE WHAT THIS GODLY SORROW PRODUCED IN YOU!** Such earnestness, such concern to clear yourselves, such indignation, such alarm, such longing to see me, such zeal, and such a readiness to punish wrong. You showed that you have done everything necessary to make things right.

For the Church to live with a holy and consecrated heart, we must know repentance as David did. We strive for holiness, but we still stumble. We are being perfected in Christ but not perfect yet. How do we view our trespasses against God? Do we understand that every sin we commit is a sin against God personally? Has repentance been marginalized in today's Christianity? Is repentance, as some say, only a "change of the mind?" Is it truly just a change of the mind? Where is the godly sorrow, brokenness of spirit, and contrition of heart as the Holy Spirit convicts of sins, of which the Bible speaks of? Are we undone like Isaiah and David? Have we, in trying to contextualize the Bible in today's culture, unwittingly been guilty of distorting the eternal truths of the Word of God? Have we been guilty of trying to conform the Word of God to the audiences' worldviews and value systems to make our preaching and teaching palatable and acceptable to them? Has genuine repentance through the work of the Holy Spirit been marginalized and reduced in importance in the Christian faith? Has the humanistic desire to "heal and help" by making people feel good caused the Church to compromise on repentance? Have we veered from speaking the Truth in love to speaking soothing words to cater to the flesh? Would we

rather offend God than man where repentance from sin is concerned? Have we reduced God's love to be inclusive of practices of sin that God hates? **The Church is not called to be hardliners on personal interpretations of God's Word, but we are called to know the Truth, live the Truth, and teach the Truth. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life!** We cannot put personalities, charisma, giftings, and popularity over the priority of having a consecrated heart that God approves and accepts.

In repentance, it is necessary to ask the Holy Spirit to search our hearts and reveal all hidden matters so that we can see our hearts through His eyes and know our hearts as He knows. In Psalm 139:23–24 ESV, David cried out to God, **“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”**

We must repent in the spirit of repentance of Psalm 51 with the brokenness of spirit and contrition in heart, crying out to God for His tender mercies and His forgiveness, for we have offended His Person. We must repent of the inward contaminations of the heart, not just the outward deeds of sins. These inward contaminations we have allowed to sneak into our hearts and corrupt us with thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and decisions are offensive to God. Mere confessions of the lips without true heart repentance do not guarantee the cleansing of the defilement of the heart. The power of true repentance is that it leads us to be wholly separated unto God in holiness. Let us live in the holy consecration and fear of God and give no room for compromise, making His mandate our mission.

Prayer Focus

A. Turn Your Heart Towards God in Humility and Repentance.

1. Humbly seek the Lord that He will deeply search your heart.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the condition of your heart.
3. Ask the Holy Spirit for a contrite heart and a broken spirit to repent.
4. Acknowledge and repent from all sins, compromises, and defilement.
5. Acknowledge and repent of any area that lacks holy consecration to God.

B. Pray and Examine Your Relationship with God.

1. Repent from sins of presumptuousness.
2. Repent from sins of grieving His Holy Spirit by not honoring Him.

- a. Failure to treat Him with godly reverence and fear.
 - b. Ignoring Him and not taking heed to His leading and direction.
 - c. Choosing not to submit to Him and disobeying Him.
 - d. Defiling the temple of the Holy Spirit, your body.
 - e. Failure to discern the holy from the unholy.
3. Repent from all sins of stubbornness, disobedience, and idolatry.

C. Consecrate Your Heart to Love What God Loves and to Hate What God Hates.

1. Cry out for a heart that loves consecration, holiness, and righteousness.
2. Cry out for a heart that hates all sins, defilement, and anything unclean.
3. Purpose in your heart to be set apart for God and be separated from anything is displeasing to Him.

D. Lay Hold of God Until You Are Wholly Consecrated to Him.

1. Consecrate your life to understand, pursue, and obey the heart of God—His priority, passion, and purpose.
2. Pray earnestly for a heart to always love, honor, fear, and obey God first.
3. Consecrate your heart to never be lukewarm but always on fire for God.
4. Seek God that you will be a person after God's own heart who will do whatever He commands you to do.
5. Pray for an audacious faith to live for Him.
6. Pray that you will always make His mandate your mission.

Notes:

Tuesday, January 9: Love Fearlessly

MATTHEW 22:37-40 NKJV

Jesus said to him, “**You shall LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.**” This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: “**You shall LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**” On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

1 JOHN 4:15-20 NKJV

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. **And we have KNOWN and BELIEVED the LOVE that God has for us. GOD IS LOVE, and HE WHO ABIDES IN LOVE ABIDES IN GOD, AND GOD IN HIM.** Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. **THERE IS NO FEAR IN LOVE; BUT PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR, BECAUSE FEAR INVOLVES TORMENT.** But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. **WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.** If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

JOHN 3:16 NIV

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

ROMANS 5:8 NLT

GOD SHOWED HIS GREAT LOVE FOR US BY SENDING CHRIST TO DIE FOR US WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS.

ISAIAH 53:1-12 NLT

Who has believed our message? To whom has the LORD revealed His powerful arm? My servant grew up in the LORD’s presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about His appearance, nothing to attract us to Him. **He was despised and rejected—A MAN OF SORROWS, ACQUAINTED WITH DEEPEST GRIEF.** We turned our backs on Him and looked the other way. **He was despised, and we did not care.** Yet it was our weaknesses He carried; it was our sorrows that weighed Him down. And we thought His troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for His own sins! **But He was PIERCED for our rebellion, CRUSHED for our sins. He was BEATEN so we could be whole. He was WHIPPED so we could be healed.** All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. **Yet the LORD LAID ON HIM THE SINS OF US ALL. He was OPPRESSED and TREATED HARSHLY, yet He never said a word.**

He was LED LIKE A LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, He did not open His mouth. **UNJUSTLY CONDEMNED, He was led away. NO ONE CARED that He died without descendants, that HIS LIFE WAS CUT SHORT in midstream. But He was STRUCK DOWN for the rebellion of My people. HE HAD DONE NOWRONG AND HAD NEVER DECEIVED ANYONE. BUT HE WAS BURIED LIKE A CRIMINAL;** He was put in a rich man's grave. But it was the LORD's good plan to crush Him and cause Him grief. Yet when His life is made an offering for sin, He will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD's good plan will prosper in His hands. When He sees all that is accomplished by His anguish, He will be satisfied. **And because of His experience, My righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for He will bear all their sins.** I will give Him the honors of a victorious soldier, because He exposed Himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.

..... ROMANS 8:31-39 NKJV

If God is for us, who can be against us? **HE WHO DID NOT SPARE HIS OWN SON, BUT DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL, HOW SHALL HE NOT WITH HIM ALSO FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS?** Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. **WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?** Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." **Yet in all these things WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US.** For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, NOR ANY OTHER CREATED THING, SHALL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

..... JOHN 13:34 NIV

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

..... 1 JOHN 3:16 NIV

This is how we know what love is: **Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.**

..... 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 NIV

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record

of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Exhortation: Love Fearlessly

God's Greatest Commandments Are To Love God and Others

God's two greatest commandments are to love Him with all our heart, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. **We must make these mandates our mission.** 1 John 4:16, 19 NKJV says, **"GOD IS LOVE, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him...WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US."** It is impossible to love God first in our natural flesh, but when we encounter His love, we can love Him. **OUR ABILITY TO LOVE IS ROOTED IN GOD'S LOVE FOR US, AND WE CAN ONLY TRULY LOVE OTHERS WHEN WE HAVE EXPERIENCED THE DEPTH OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US.**

We experience His love by abiding in His love. How do we abide in His love? **It is through a living, perpetual, genuine and intimate love relationship with Jesus.** It is not just a relationship we confess, but a relationship we live out through abiding in Him. As we abide, we become one with Him as He speaks to us and reveals Himself. Our eyes see, our minds apprehend, and our hearts are suffused with a revelation of Him; then, we know Him and His fearless love for us. **As we know how much He loves us, He gives us the grace, power, and passion to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. This intimacy with Him converts, transforms, and empowers us. We can love Him to the utmost.**

He is not only our Savior, Redeemer, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Healer, and Provider—He is everything to us. **He becomes the center of our life, the focus of our strength, and the priority of our pursuit.** There will never be another like Him in our hearts, and we will never have enough of Him. We will hunger for Him profoundly and be overwhelmed with the knowledge of our need for Him. **There is a passion for Him that cannot be put out, a pursuit that cannot be stopped, and a surrender that is complete.** Indeed, none can compare to Him nor replace Him in our hearts. We live for Him first, not for anyone or anything else. There is no comparison, replacement, or equal. He is our first affection, attention, and consideration. He takes the first place of love, honor, and worship in our hearts. **JESUS CHRIST IS OUR FIRST PASSION, PRIORITY, AND PURSUIT, AND HIS MANDATE IS OUR MISSION.**

The Audacious and Fearless Love of God

LOVE IS HUMANITY'S GREATEST NEED, AND THEREFORE, IT SHOULD BE OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY. Only one love can meet all needs—God's love. Lew Wallace, the author of *Ben Hur: A Tale of Christ* in 1880, wrote, "Riches take wings, comforts vanish, hope withers away, but **LOVE STAYS WITH US. LOVE IS GOD.**" His love is eternally absolute, matchless and faithfully constant. It is all-encompassing, transcending time and space, and unlimited by any condition, circumstance, or power. God's love never fails. It always endures and is invariably available regardless of our weaknesses or failures. **Although we are imperfect, He loves us perfectly; we are broken, but He loves us completely; we are faithless, but He loves us faithfully; and we are fearful, but He loves us fearlessly. IT IS A LOVE THAT TRANSFORMS US FROM THE INSIDE OUT, BRINGING JOY AND MEANING TO OUR LIVES. GOD IS LOVE.** As God is all-powerful, so is His love, which is mighty to save, deliver, heal, and overcome. Apostle Paul declared in Romans 8:35–39 NKJV.

WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." **Yet in all these things WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US.** For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, **NOR ANY OTHER CREATED THING, SHALL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.**

We cannot and do not earn His love, because **His love is inherent to His nature.** Oswald Chambers, the author of *My Utmost for His Highest*, said, "The love of God is not created—it is His nature." Jesus Christ already loved us while we were yet sinners. Romans 5:8 NLT says, "God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." Christian author Jerry Bridges wrote,

God's unflinching love for us is an objective fact affirmed over and over in the Scriptures. It is true whether we believe it or not. **Our doubts do not destroy God's love, nor does our faith create it. It originates in the very nature of God, who is love and flows to us through our union with His beloved Son.**

God loves us audaciously by wrapping weak, broken, and sinful humanity in the sacrificial and saving love of His flawless and holy Son, Jesus Christ, whom He prepared before the foundation of the world to be sacrificed as the Lamb slain, providing redemption for the whole world. This was God's greatest act of love, demonstrating to the entire world the depth and width of His boundless love for us. This is Christ's example for us, showing how we should love others. Indeed, our ability to love is rooted in God's love.

What is it to Love Fearlessly as God Loves?

God loves us fearlessly so that we can love Him and others fearlessly. Rick Warren says, **"GOD'S LOVE FREES YOU TO LOVE FEARLESSLY."** There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God. Jesus, the Son of Man, fearlessly loved His Father and humanity. In love, He gave Himself to His Father to obey and do all His Father desired. What love was this that would cause the Sovereign God to abase Himself in humility and subject Himself to untold suffering, shame, and abuse at the hands of His created beings to save them?

JESUS IS NOT ONLY LOVE; HE IS FEARLESS LOVE. He is the perfect love that is supernatural, and triumphant over all; He is the agape (unconditional and absolutely selfless) love of God in Person. Christ's love is so inconceivably audacious that it is beyond human understanding. It is a love so centered on God that one is not afraid to pay any price to obey Him in love. This reckless and brazen love of Jesus Christ held nothing back, not even His life, to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world to redeem us. He is Divine and Enduring Love. He is also Perfect Love. Isaiah 53:1-12 speaks of how He suffered on our behalf because of love:

- He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deep grief.
- He was oppressed and weighed down by carrying our weaknesses and sorrows.
- He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins, and whipped to make us whole. He was oppressed, treated harshly and led to the slaughter, yet He remained silent.
- The Lord laid all of man's sins upon Him. He bore all our iniquities and sorrows.
- He was sinless but accused, crucified and buried like a criminal on our behalf.

This is the fearless love of God. It is a love unafraid to love in any situation, undaunted by any demand, unlimited by the flesh, unshackled by fear, and undeterred by any cost to love. **We, who are born-again through Christ's blood sacrifice into His family, are also called to love God and people fearlessly, just as Jesus loves.**

Audacious Love—His Mandate My Mission

To love audaciously is to love fearlessly with **A FREEDOM TO LOVE SELFLESSLY**, without limits or conditions. **Love is not just a feeling but a choice to treat others the way God treats us: patiently, kindly and selflessly.** Fear is the enemy's device to prevent us from trusting and obeying God. With faith-filled confidence in God, we are to love Him and others fearlessly. The exhortation not to fear occurs many times in the Bible.

The first negative emotion experienced by mankind (Adam and Eve) because of sin was fear. **Fear was a product of disobeying God due to listening to and trusting the lies of satan.** The door for fear to intrude was wide open, and Adam and Eve were introduced to fear. Everyone born after that came into this world exposed to fear. **Fear caused Adam and Eve to hide from God rather than run to God.** Instead of trusting God, they feared Him. From knowing and living in God's perfect love, they began to flee, fearing God's judgment. God was no longer a friend they walked with but one from whom they ran. **To love audaciously, we have to deal with the problem of fear. WHERE FEAR EXISTS, THERE IS NO TRUST, CONFIDENCE, RELATIONSHIP, OR UNITY.** Fear will effectively shut down obedience to the first and second greatest commandments to love God and love others. May we trust in God, who is Perfect Love. He is for us, not against us. **Before satan can do one thing to us, Jesus Christ has already done everything for us when He laid down His life on the cross to enable us to live, triumph, be blessed, and love fearlessly.**

To love fearlessly is to love from the heart, in a way that is neither self-serving nor self-preserving, but unconditional, without prejudice or judgment, always seeking to serve and bless. It is also to share the good news of God's love with others so they too can experience the joy and peace that comes from knowing and experiencing God's love and salvation firsthand.

How to Practically Love Fearlessly

Matthew 22:37-40 NKJV

Jesus said to him, **"You shall LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD with all your**

heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: “**You shall LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**” On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

- **Loving God with All Your Heart—Unconditional Surrender**

Oswald Chambers wrote, “**THIS IS THE FIRST LOVE THAT WE MUST LIVE IN—UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER.**” To love God with all of our heart is to love Him completely, withholding nothing from Him. It is a love that is evidenced by a willing and unconditional surrender to Jesus Christ. **WE ARE NOT OUR OWN, WE ARE HIS. We live to love Him, and we love to live for Him.**

- **Love God with All Your Soul—Complete Obedience**

John 14:23 NKJV—“IF ANYONE LOVES ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORD; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

To love God with all of our soul is to love with complete obedience. Jesus says that if we love Him, we will obey Him and keep His word. To obey, we must wholly lay down our will and take on His will. **TRUE LOVE HAS A DESIRE TO OBEY AND A PASSION TO PLEASE THE ONE WE LOVE. OBEDIENCE TO GOD IS THE OUTFLOW OF FIRST LOVE FOR GOD.** Love is not without a cost, and neither is obedience. It cost Jesus everything to love and obey His Father. We must follow Christ’s footsteps to love God with all our souls in complete obedience.

- **Love God with All Your Strength—Physical Energy and Abilities**

To love God with all our strength includes loving and serving Him with all our physical energy and abilities. It is God who gives us both physical and spiritual life. Without Him, we do not exist. Every breath we take is because He is willing. There is nothing we can boast of in ourselves—strength, wisdom, achievements, or possessions. In loving God with all our strength, we consecrate all our energy, abilities, and talents to serve Him and others. **Loving God is practical.** Jesus loved His Father with all His strength by using His physical energy and abilities to serve Him and others. He began His life as a carpenter, He washed

His disciples' feet, fed the hungry crowds, and provided for His disciples. He agonized in prayer until sweat mingled with blood poured from His body. Are we also using all our strength to love God and others? Whatever we do not consecrate to God, including our strength, for His purpose, will eventually be given over to serve other things.

- **Love is Patient and Kind**

God's love is patient and kind; this is how we should love others. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13 that love is the greatest. He explains that we can have all the gifts and abilities to do great things, but if we do not love others, we are empty and no better than noisy gongs or clanging cymbals, having no true impact or significance in the kingdom of God. We must love not with the world's love but with the love of God, which is patient and kind. Our love must demonstrate the nature of God and the fruit of the Spirit. We are God's extended hand of grace and love to others. **IN LOVING THEM, WE ARE LOVING GOD.** Matthew 25:40 NLT says concerning this, "The King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these, My brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me!'"

How have we loved and treated others? Do we favor some and despise others? Is our love tainted by the world's standards, expectations, and values? The love of this fallen world is selfish and impure. It is defiled by ego, self, and wrong motives. God's love is pure, patient, and selfless. **We love because God first loves us; therefore, we love the deserving and the undeserving.** We love them with patience and kindness. In being patient, we keep no records of wrongs done to us. We are patient with them in moments of weakness or when they fail or even hurt us. Patience means never giving up or losing faith. It is always hopeful and enduring through every circumstance. Love is to be magnanimous in doing good for them and blessing them not because they have earned it, but because we love them. As God is patient and kind to us, we must be patient and kind to one another, especially in the house of God.

- **Love Is Humble and Not Self-seeking**

True love is not proud or self-serving. God's love is humble and selfless, as demonstrated by Jesus Christ, who humbled Himself by putting aside all His privileges as God to take on the form of man and

servant to die to save us. Christ's love is humble and always seeks the good of others. To love with His love, we must also be willing to humbly and selflessly seek the good of others—eager and ready to go hungry so that someone else may be fed. We put their welfare and needs before our own. Such love does not pay back evil for evil but good for evil. It blesses those who curse us and loves those who hate us. It will turn the other cheek when struck on one and give even the tunic when the cloak is demanded. It thinks of others before we think of ourselves. We will selflessly encourage, build up, and elevate others. We do not require our own ways, and we do not rejoice about injustice but rejoice whenever the truth wins.

- **Love is Hating (not delighting in) Evil.**

1 Corinthians 13:6 NIV says, “LOVE DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EVIL BUT REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH.”

Amos 5:14–15 NLT states, “Do what is good and run from evil so that you may live! Then the LORD God of Heaven’s Armies will be your helper, just as you have claimed. HATE EVIL AND LOVE WHAT IS GOOD; turn your courts into true halls of justice. Perhaps even the LORD God of Heaven’s Armies will have mercy on the remnant of His people.”

God loves all sinners, but He hates what is evil. It took the sacrifice of His only Son to destroy evil so that humanity no longer needs to live under its control. His love rescues and redeems from evil, but it never compromises nor tolerates it. He will forgive the repentant in His loving grace and mercy, but He will still judge all that is evil. We are to hate evil in any form, whether in what we see, hear, think, or engage. **BE HOLY AS GOD IS HOLY.**

In loving God and others, we must hate evil and not tolerate or revel in it. If we love God fearlessly, we must hate evil and delight in what pleases God’s heart. We will take joy only in what is good, pure, holy, and righteous.

- **Love Always Trusts, Hopes, and Perseveres**

1 Corinthians 13:7 NIV says, “It [love] always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

The journey of faith and love is challenging, never smooth or without trials. As we learn to love God and others audaciously, we will face many struggles, disappointments, and pain. **We must be convinced that obeying God's mandate to love and making it our mission is worth it all.** To know the joy of having continued in love by enduring in trust, hope, and perseverance is incomparable. Love does not give up on relationships but perseveres through difficulties and hardships because of faith in God that He is trustworthy. Just as God never gives up on us, we must not give up on others but always trust, hope and persevere as we love fearlessly.

Prayer Focus

- A. Pray for an Outpouring of God's Love Upon His Church.**
- B. Pray for a Revelation and Encounter with God's Fearless and Unconditional Love for You.**
 - 1. That you be healed, set free, and empowered to love fearlessly.
 - 2. That you be transformed by the power of His love.
 - 3. That you be delivered and set free from all fears to love.
- C. Earnestly Pray for God to Remove Your Old Heart and Give You a New Heart to Love Fearlessly.**
- D. Wholly Consecrate Your Heart to Obey God's Two Greatest Commandments.**
 - 1. To love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
 - 2. To love others as you love yourself.
- E. Prayerfully Search and Repent of Areas Where You Have Not Obeyed God's Greatest Commandments to Love.**
- F. Pray and Commit to Love God and Others Fearlessly.**
 - 1. Loving God with all of your heart and unconditional surrender.
 - 2. Loving God with all of your soul in complete obedience.

Wednesday, January 10: Live Uncommonly

..... ISAIAH 44:6-8 NASB 1995

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts. "I AM THE FIRST AND I AM THE LAST, AND THERE IS NO GOD BESIDES ME. WHO IS LIKE ME?...And you are My witnesses. IS THERE ANY GOD BESIDES ME, OR IS THERE ANY OTHER ROCK? I KNOW OF NONE."

..... 1 CORINTHIANS 8:6 NASB 1995

THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, THE FATHER, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and ONE LORD, JESUS CHRIST, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

..... JOHN 17:14-19 NKJV

I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because THEY ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, JUST AS I AM NOT OF THE WORLD. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. THEY ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, JUST AS I AM NOT OF THE WORLD. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

..... DEUTERONOMY 7:6 NKJV

FOR YOU ARE A HOLY PEOPLE TO THE LORD YOUR GOD; the Lord your God has CHOSEN YOU TO BE A PEOPLE FOR HIMSELF, A SPECIAL TREASURE above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

..... 1 PETER 2:9-12 NKJV

But you are a CHOSEN GENERATION, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a HOLY NATION, His own SPECIAL PEOPLE, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who CALLED YOU OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT; who once were not a people but are NOW THE PEOPLE OF GOD, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the gentiles, that WHEN THEY SPEAK AGAINST YOU AS EVILDOERS, THEY MAY, BY YOUR GOOD WORKS WHICH THEY OBSERVE, GLORIFY GOD IN THE DAY OF VISITATION.

..... 1 PETER 1:17-19 NIV

Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, LIVE OUT YOUR TIME AS FOREIGNERS HERE IN REVERENT FEAR. For you know that it was

not with perishable things such as silver or gold that YOU WERE REDEEMED from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, BUT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH OR DEFECT.

..... TITUS 2:11-14 KJV

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; WHO GAVE HIMSELF FOR US, THAT HE MIGHT REDEEM US FROM ALL INIQUITY, AND PURIFY UNTO HIMSELF A PECULIAR PEOPLE, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS.

..... 2 CORINTHIANS 6:17 NKJV

THEREFORE "COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE," SAYS THE LORD. "DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU."

Exhortation: Live Uncommonly

One God—He Alone is Incomparable, Uncommon and Unequaled

In the Bible, God irrefutably states that for all eternity, He alone is God, and there are no other gods besides Him. Deuteronomy 6:4 NKJV declares, **"THE LORD IS OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE!"** He stands alone as the one God who is incomparable, uncommon and unequalled. When used in reference to God, the word uncommon does not mean rare or a few and is not limited to being exceptional and outstanding. **Instead, IT MEANS ONE AND ONLY—THERE IS NO OTHER.** In 1 Timothy 6:15-16, God says that **HE ALONE IS THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. HE ALONE HAS IMMORTALITY,** and He dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see.

- **God says in Isaiah 44:6-8 NASB 1995, "I AM THE FIRST AND I AM THE LAST, and there is no god besides Me. Who is like me?...IS THERE ANY GOD BESIDES ME, OR IS THERE ANY OTHER ROCK? I KNOW OF NONE."**
- **God says in 1 Corinthians 8:6 NASB 1995, "THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, THE FATHER, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and ONE LORD, JESUS CHRIST, BY WHOM ARE ALL THINGS, AND WE EXIST THROUGH HIM."**

The Holiness of the Uncommon God

GOD IS UNCOMMON, FOR HE IS HOLY. Holiness is inherent to His nature. Exodus 15:11 NKJV declares, “Who is like You, O Lord among the gods? WHO IS LIKE YOU, GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS, FEARFUL IN PRAISES, DOING WONDERS?” The word “holiness” is *qōdeš* in Hebrew, meaning the apartness, holiness, sacredness of God, set-apartness, and separateness. He alone is God, and He is distinct from all His creations. Because God is holy, His people too must distinguish the holy from the common and the clean from the unclean.

In Ezekiel 44:23 NIV, God spoke concerning the priests, “**They are to teach My people the difference between the holy and the common and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean.**” The most significant Hebrew word translated as “common” is *hol*, which means profaneness, commonness, and unholy. While “holiness” means set-apartness, apartness, or separateness, “common” means profane and unholy. The word “common” does not refer to just being ordinary or unexceptional. When we treat God as common, failing to discern Him and His holiness and not distinguishing Him as set apart from others, we profane God and violate His holiness.

The uncommonness of God is that He is glorious in His holiness and fearful in praises. God will judge any infringement on His holiness unless there is repentance. In Leviticus 10, Nadab and Abihu, Aaron’s sons, violated the holiness of God by offering up a profane fire, which was contrary to God’s command. They treated God as common and His judgment was swift and severe upon this infringement as fire came down and struck them dead. In verse 3 (NKJV), God spoke immediately after that judgment, “**BY THOSE WHO COME NEAR ME I MUST BE REGARDED AS HOLY [not common]; AND BEFORE ALL THE PEOPLE I MUST BE GLORIFIED.**”

We Are God’s Uncommon People Through Christ’s Uncommon Sacrifice

We are God’s uncommon people because He has redeemed us by the uncommon sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. We were not bought with gold, silver, or anything created. We were bought with the precious and matchless blood of Jesus Christ, who came in the flesh to die for us. The Son of Man was uncommon, for there was no other in the flesh that was God. Through His uncommon sacrifice, all who believe in Him are made sons and daughters of God. 1 Peter 1:17–19 NIV says,

Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, **LIVE OUT YOUR TIME AS FOREIGNERS HERE IN REVERENT FEAR.** For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that **YOU WERE REDEEMED** from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, **BUT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH OR DEFECT.**

We are uncommon because we are God's **chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, and His special possession to declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light** (1 Peter 2:9 NIV). We are distinguished from the world because of our faith in Jesus Christ. The old, earthly, sinful, and common have completely passed away. Therefore, we must distinguish between holy and common to live uncommonly unto God. Hebrews 10:29 NLT warns us,

Just think how much worse the punishment will be for those who have trampled on the Son of God, and have treated the blood of the covenant, which made us holy, as if it were common and unholy, and have insulted and disdained the Holy Spirit who brings God's mercy to us.

God Commands Us to LIVE UNCOMMONLY—Set Apart and Holy

To live a holy and uncommon (unusual, exceptional, singular) life is one of the primary commands that the Bible gives to believers. We are called to live differently from the world around us so that we **REFLECT THE CHARACTER OF GOD IN ALL WE DO. It is not easy, but IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR BELIEVERS WHO WANT TO HONOR GOD WITH THEIR LIVES.** By following the commands of the Bible and seeking the help of the Holy Spirit, we can live a life that reflects the character of God and makes a positive impact on the world around us. 2 Corinthians 6:17 NLT instructs us, "'Therefore, come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them,' says the Lord. 'Don't touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you.'"

As Jesus Christ is not of this world, we are not of this world, so strive to live as Christ lived. THE BIBLE SAYS THAT HE WAS TEMPTED AT ALL POINTS, AND YET HE DID NOT SIN (Hebrews 4:15). We cannot call ourselves God's chosen children and yet compromise on God's Word, our faith, biblical doctrines and lifestyle because of being influenced or pressured by the powers of darkness controlling this world. We cannot cave in fear under the aggression of the devil who is seeking to destroy our faith in Jesus Christ.

THE CHURCH, THE UNCOMMON PEOPLE OF GOD, IS THE STANDARD BEARER OF GOD'S TRUTH, BEARING WITNESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. We must keep our eyes on Jesus Christ, stand firm in living holy, and set ourselves apart unto God. Be like Daniel, who purposed in His heart that he would not defile himself with the delicacies from the king's table. Have we nibbled and sipped at the table of this world, polluting ourselves with what the world is offering? Have we persuaded ourselves that it is harmless and to abstain is to be legalistic? Have we deceived ourselves into thinking that we are doing this to be relevant to the world and to reach them in love? Are we saying what the world is telling us to say concerning Jesus Christ and biblical truth for fear of being labeled as unkind, unloving, and bigoted? Is the Bible no longer absolute to us but only selectively relevant according to the mind of the world, or when it does not offend the carnal mind? Are we preaching a warped gospel that syncretizes the Bible with the world's ideologies, standards, and teachings? Have we mixed the holy with the profane and called it Truth? Who is our Divine Authority on the Truth, Way, and Life?

God Commands Us NOT TO BE CONFORMED to the Common—Be Transformed by the Renewing of the Mind

We are called to live uncommonly unto God. We cannot be of Christ in name but live like the world. I Peter 1:15–16 NIV says, **“Just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”** We must strive to live a life that is separated from the sin and corruption of the world and pursue righteousness and godliness in all our actions and thoughts. Concerning the world, we are strangers, aliens, and pilgrims—not citizens—and yet Jesus Christ's bondslaves of love. We are also His royal priesthood called to show forth His praises, not to blend in with the world. In Romans 12:1–2 NIV Paul instructs us:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.**

To live uncommonly, we must not conform to this fallen world's patterns. Romans 12:1–2 emphasizes the importance of **being transformed by**

renewing our minds through the study of God's word and the power of the Holy Spirit. As God transforms us from the inside out, we will think and act differently from the world. We will have Christ's uncommon perspective, offering ourselves as a living sacrifice to God in true and proper worship.

We are spiritual foreigners living among those who have yet to know and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Therefore, we must stand firm and faithful to God and His Word, withstanding all pressures to compromise. Then, the Church will shine brightly in this strange land, demonstrating that Jesus Christ is the true God. As Christ's bondslaves live uncommonly, so the world may see and know that Jesus Christ is Lord and He seeks to save them because He loves. **This uncommon lifestyle is the Church's testimony of Christ that the world needs to see and hear.**

We must not sell our uncommon identity as God's children for any price. Living uncommonly for Christ may not be easy as we may suffer or be persecuted. **Living uncommonly for Him is a priceless privilege, blessing and honor for the called and the chosen of God.**

God Commands Us to Demonstrate Uncommon Love

To live uncommonly, we have to demonstrate uncommon love to others. Jesus commands us to love in John 15:9–14 NKJV:

As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. **"THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT, THAT YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. **YOU ARE MY FRIENDS IF YOU DO WHATEVER I COMMAND YOU."**

Christ's love is uncommon. He died so that we can live; He was whipped so that we can be healed; and He was buried and rose again so that we can have His resurrection and eternal life. **This sacrifice is Christ's uncommon love for us, and He commands us to ABIDE IN HIS LOVE and to LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS HE LOVES US.** When we abide in His love, we can love others with His love, uncommonly.

God Commands Us to Serve One Another with Uncommon Sacrifice

Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice to save us in His uncommon love

for us. In like spirit and manner, we are to love and serve others selflessly and sacrificially. It is love beyond the natural love of man. Just as Jesus gave so that others could have, He sacrificed so that others could live, and He suffered so that others could be healed. We are to love the same way—uncommonly and selflessly. When He was reviled, He did not revile in return. 1 Peter 2:21–24 NKJV reveals how Jesus loved uncommonly:

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth”; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to God who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

How To Serve With Uncommon Sacrifice

❖ Serve With An Uncommon Humility

John 13:3–17 NLT

Jesus knew that the Father had given Him authority over everything and that He had come from God and would return to God. **So He got up from the table, took off His robe, wrapped a towel around His waist, and poured water into a basin. Then HE BEGAN TO WASH THE DISCIPLES’ FEET, DRYING THEM WITH THE TOWEL HE HAD AROUND HIM...**After washing their feet, He put on His robe again and sat down and asked, **“Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right because that’s what I am. And since I, YOUR LORD AND TEACHER, HAVE WASHED YOUR FEET, YOU OUGHT TO WASH EACH OTHER’S FEET. I have given you an example to follow. DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU...God will bless you for doing them.”**

To serve with uncommon sacrifice involves serving with sacrificial love and humility, just as Jesus served His twelve disciples although He is God Eternal. In John 13, Jesus humbled Himself to wash and dry the disciples’ feet. Foot washing was a traditional practice of the Jews where travelers coming to visit would have their feet washed, usually by a slave of the house. In Jesus’ day, roads were dusty and dirty, and because people wore sandals, their feet would be covered with dirt and sweat. Foot washing was considered a demeaning and menial task that was usually designated to

slaves. Certain rabbis considered the task so lowly that it was unacceptable for a Jew to do it, even if that Jew was a slave.

To serve with uncommon humility, Jesus abased Himself to the lowest to wash His disciples' feet. When a slave did not wash Jesus' feet, neither did His disciples since they knew the custom of hospitality. Jesus was not offended; rather, He abased Himself to serve them with uncommon love and humility, teaching them to follow His example. In verses 14 and 15, he said, "Since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. **I have given you an example to follow. DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU.**"

- Galatians 5:13 NIV—"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love."
- Philippians 2:3 NIV—"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."

❖ **Speak With An Uncommon Grace**

The most powerful words spoken with uncommon grace are the Words of God—words of life, love, redemption, grace, forgiveness, and all we need to live. As followers of Jesus, we must speak as He spoke, with uncommon love and grace, always seeking the well-being of the other person. When we speak, we purpose to bring life, love, hope, encouragement, and healing, regardless of how we have been treated. In 1 Peter 2:23 NKJV, Jesus, when "He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously." He did not retaliate but gave uncommon grace.

We must guard our hearts in order to speak with uncommon grace, for what is in our hearts will be emitted from our lips. **It is not just the words spoken that matter; it is the intent and attitude of the heart that God examines.** We are not to speak out of pride, flesh, and hidden motives but let there be truth in our inward parts (Psalm 51:6). Let our hearts always be filled with compassion, kindness, and humility so that we respond with gracious words even when we are reviled. **We speak to bring life, encouragement, and healing.**

- Isaiah 50:4 NKJV—"The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary."

- **Colossians 4:6 MSG**—“Be gracious in your speech. **THE GOAL IS TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS IN A CONVERSATION**, not put them down, not cut them out.”
- **Ephesians 4:29 NASB 1995**—“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, **but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.**”

❖ Help The Hurting With Uncommon Compassion

2 Corinthians 1:3–5 NIV

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Father of compassion and THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT, WHO COMFORTS US IN ALL OUR TROUBLES, SO THAT WE CAN COMFORT THOSE IN ANY TROUBLE** with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

Matthew 14:14–16 NKJV

And when Jesus went out HE SAW A GREAT MULTITUDE; AND HE WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION FOR THEM, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food.” But Jesus said to them, **“THEY DO NOT NEED TO GO AWAY. YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT.”**

Matthew 25:34–46 NABRE

Come, you who are blessed by My father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. **For I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, a stranger and you welcomed Me, naked and you clothed Me, ill and you cared for Me, in prison and you visited Me...** Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of Mine, you did for Me... what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for Me. And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

Uncommon compassion is a tangible expression of God’s love. Sympathy feels with the suffering; compassion suffers and identifies with the suffering and moves to comfort, heal, and minister to alleviate the

need or solve the problem. Luke 6:35–36 NLT describes what uncommon compassion is and does:

Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for He is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. **YOU MUST BE COMPASSIONATE, JUST AS YOUR FATHER IS COMPASSIONATE.**

Compassion is rooted in God's sacrificial and unconditional love that compels us to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit those in prison. In Matthew 14:13–16 NKJV, the disciples were concerned for the hungry crowd and wanted to send them away so that they could buy food for themselves. Jesus, being moved by compassion for the crowd, said to the disciples, **"THEY DO NOT NEED TO GO AWAY. YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT."**

We must be willing to help the hurting by not sending them away but by giving them something to eat. Just as Jesus Christ showed us loving compassion by dying to save and heal while we were yet hopeless and condemned in our sins, we are to help the hurting, broken, poor, and in need with Christ's self-sacrificing and uncommon compassion. **IT IS COMPASSION THAT WILL SACRIFICE, GO BEYOND, AND PAY THE PRICE TO HELP THE HURTING.** We are Christ's salt and light in this world to do good so that the world will know that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, and He cares.

Prayer Focus

A. Pray for a Revelatory Encounter with God to Know Him in His Holiness and Glory.

1. Ask that your heart be enlightened with knowledge and understanding of God Almighty.
2. Ask that your heart to be filled with awe and wonder of God in His holiness and glory.
3. Ask that your heart grasps that God is holy, and He stands alone exalted over all.

4. Ask that your heart apprehends that God is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

B. Pray to Know God.

1. He is glorious in holiness.
2. He is fearful in praises.
3. He is doing uncommon and unimaginable wonders.

C. Pray to Know and Understand that Believers Are God's Uncommon People.

1. You have been redeemed with the uncommon sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
2. You are not your own; you are God's. God bought you with the blood of Jesus Christ.
3. You have been sanctified and consecrated unto God as His special child.
4. You are not of this world, so live as set apart from the world.

D. Live Uncommonly Unto God.

1. Live uncommonly by consecrating yourself to God and separating from all that is unclean.
2. Demonstrate the holiness of God in your living. Be holy, for He is holy.
3. Live as God's uncommon royal priesthood, holy nation, and special people declaring His praises and glory throughout the earth.
4. Live by not conforming to the world and all that is profane,
 - a. By being transformed through the renewing of your mind with God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. By having an uncommon perspective through the mind of Christ
5. Live to love God uncommonly and others according to His commandments.
 - a. Serve one another with an uncommon sacrifice.
 - b. Serve with uncommon humility.
 - c. Speak with uncommon grace.
6. Help the hurting with uncommon compassion.

Thursday, January 11: Pray Audaciously

LUKE 11:5-8 NIV

Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, **even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, YET BECAUSE OF YOUR SHAMELESS AUDACITY he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.**”

LUKE 18:1-5 NLT

One day, Jesus told His disciples a story to show that **THEY SHOULD ALWAYS PRAY AND NEVER GIVE UP.** “There was a judge in a certain city,” He said, “who neither feared God nor cared about people. **A widow of that city CAME TO HIM REPEATEDLY, saying, “Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.”** The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, “**I don’t fear God or care about people, but THIS WOMAN IS DRIVING ME CRAZY. I’M GOING TO SEE THAT SHE GETS JUSTICE, BECAUSE SHE IS WEARING ME OUT WITH HER CONSTANT REQUESTS!**”

1 JOHN 5:13-15 NKJV

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. **This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that IF WE ASK ANYTHING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, HE HEARS US. And IF WE KNOW THAT HE HEARS US—WHATEVER WE ASK—WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE WHAT WE ASKED OF HIM.**

MATTHEW 7:7-8 NLT

KEEP ON ASKING, and you will RECEIVE what you ask for. KEEP ON SEEKING, and you will FIND. KEEP ON KNOCKING, and the door will be OPENED to you. For everyone who ASKS, RECEIVES. Everyone who SEEKS, FINDS. And to everyone who KNOCKS, THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED.

JAMES 5:16-18 NLT

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. **THE EARNEST PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS PERSON HAS GREAT POWER AND PRODUCES WONDERFUL RESULTS. Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when HE PRAYED EARNESTLY that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! Then, when HE PRAYED AGAIN, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.**

..... JOSHUA 10:7-14 NLT

So Joshua and his entire army, including his best warriors, left Gilgal and set out for Gibeon. **“Do not be afraid of them,”** the LORD said to Joshua, **“for I have given you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up to you.”** Joshua traveled all night from Gilgal and took the Amorite armies by surprise...**On the day the LORD gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, JOSHUA PRAYED TO THE LORD in front of all the people of Israel. HE SAID, “Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon.” SO THE SUN STOOD STILL AND THE MOON STAYED IN PLACE UNTIL THE NATION OF ISRAEL HAD DEFEATED ITS ENEMIES.** Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jashar? The sun stayed in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day. **THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A DAY LIKE THIS ONE BEFORE OR SINCE, WHEN THE LORD ANSWERED SUCH A PRAYER. Surely the LORD fought for Israel that day!**

..... 1 CHRONICLES 4:9-10 NKJV

Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, **“Because I bore him in pain.” AND JABEZ CALLED ON THE GOD OF ISRAEL** saying, **“Oh, that You would BLESS ME indeed, and ENLARGE MY TERRITORY, that YOUR HAND WOULD BE WITH ME, and that YOU WOULD KEEP ME FROM EVIL, that I may not cause pain!” SO GOD GRANTED HIM WHAT HE REQUESTED.**

..... PHILIPPIANS 4:6 NIV

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

..... 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17 NKJV

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

..... 2 CHRONICLES 7:14 NKJV

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Exhortation: Pray Audaciously

Audacious Faith is Unashamed to Pray Audaciously

AUDACIOUS PRAYER FLOWS FROM HAVING AN AUDACIOUS FAITH IN THE ALMIGHTY GOD who alone is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient. Those who know their God dare to believe and ask Him for

the unattainable—things beyond their imagination—because they are fully persuaded that nothing is impossible with God. As believers they do great exploits for Him. **God delights in answering their bold and daring prayers because audacious faith pleases Him.** The Almighty consistently encourages His people to believe and trust Him and to pray audaciously so that He can show them great and mighty things:

- “I am the LORD, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for Me?” Jeremiah 32:27 NLT
- “Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV
- “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” Ephesians 3:20–21 NKJV

Mark Batterson, the lead pastor of National Community Church in Washington, D.C. said this about praying audaciously: **“It is absolutely imperative at the outset that you COME TO TERMS WITH THIS SIMPLE YET LIFE-CHANGING TRUTH: GOD IS FOR YOU. If you don’t believe that, then you’ll pray small timid prayers; IF YOU DO BELIEVE IT, THEN YOU’LL PRAY BIG AUDACIOUS PRAYERS.”**

God’s People Who Prayed Audaciously

There are those mentioned in the Bible who prayed audacious prayers, and God answered them; people such as Abraham, Daniel, Elijah, Joshua, the apostles, and the early Church. They all shared these common characteristics in their walk with God:

- **They BELIEVED IN GOD and prayed audaciously** because their eyes were on Him, and not on their limitations, impossible situations or needs.
- **They always PRAYED ACCORDING TO GOD’S WILL, never their own will.** God had revealed to them His will, and it had become their mission in life.
- **They KNEW GOD and were ABLE TO DO GREAT EXPLOITS for Him because they sought and loved God with all their hearts.**
- **GOD’S MANDATES were always THEIR MISSION IN LIFE; therefore, they prayed audaciously, believing in Him.** They obeyed Him in carrying out His mandates at all costs.

What is Audacious Prayer?

Audacious prayer is not just an inspired and emotion-filled prayer; **IT IS A PRAYER OF FAITH IN GOD. Therefore, it is bold, fearless, and unashamed to ask God for the supernatural. It is a faith that is convinced that with man, it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible.**

Audacity implies a boldness that may not always be appropriate but is always daring. The dictionary uses such phrases as “recklessly brave” and “recklessly bold in defiance of convention, propriety, law, or the like.” The Bible is full of audacious prayers of many who sought God in faith and desperation.

- “Then Moses said, **‘NOW SHOW ME YOUR GLORY.’**” Exodus 33:18 NIV
- Elijah said, **“...THERE WILL BE NO DEW OR RAIN DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS UNTIL I GIVE THE WORD!”** I Kings 17:1 NLT
- Jairus pleaded, **“My little daughter is dying. PLEASE COME AND PUT YOUR HANDS ON HER SO THAT SHE WILL BE HEALED AND LIVE.”** Mark 5:23 NIV

Audacious prayer is a deep, focused, and passion-filled petition to God. It is a persistent prayer that presses in until there is a breakthrough. Most answers to prayer are not instantaneous; they involve our persistence, patience, thankfulness, and faith. **THE AUDACITY OF FAITH IS THAT IT NEVER GIVES UP BUT PERSEVERES TO THE END.**

Audacious prayer is not just a way of aligning and communing with God; **IT IS ALSO A POWERFUL TOOL FOR CHANGING BOTH CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE PERSON WHO PRAYS.** Hannah, although barren, became fruitful and had children through audacious prayer. On his deathbed, Hezekiah received healing and a new lease on life for fifteen more years. The widow’s dead son came to life through Elijah’s prayer. **WHEN YOU PRAY WITH DEEP FERVOR, YOU TAP INTO A SOURCE OF DIVINE STRENGTH THAT CAN HELP OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLE, AND INTO A POWER THAT WORKS OTHERWISE IMPOSSIBLE MIRACLES.** These are mountain-moving prayers.

Audacious prayer is often coupled with fasting. Jesus often fasted and prayed. Fasting is the act of abstaining from food and drink or another type of sacrifice (many today refrain from social media, television, or other distractions) to devote time to earnest supplication.

Because it is a prayer of faith, we do not pray according to our capabilities, but according to God’s character. It is faith in who God is

and what He can and loves to do for those who trust and call on Him.

- **God is gracious, compassionate, filled with lovingkindness and faithful to hear the cries of those who look to Him, and He is quick to help.** Psalm 145:14–19 NLT
- **God loves audacious and persistent prayers of faith.** If an unjust judge would give justice and help to a persistent widow, God will most assuredly give justice and help to His people who cry out to Him day and night. Luke 18: 6–7 NLT
- **God will respond to all those who seek Him with shameless persistence at any hour.** Jesus spoke a parable in Luke 11:5–9 about a persistent person who sought help from a friend in the middle of the night for another in need. Although inconvenient, the friend got up and gave what was needed because of his audacious persistence. In verse 8 NLT, Jesus said, “I tell you this—though he [your friend] won’t do it for friendship’s sake, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence.”
- **God loves us far beyond all earthly fathers and surpasses them in blessing and meeting the needs of His children.** Luke 11:13

If a corrupt judge, a disgruntled friend, and a good (but sinful) father will give us what we need, how much more will our compassionate, generous, perfect Father in heaven—who loves us more than we can ever imagine, who has limitless resources at His disposal, and who delights in giving us good things—answer our audacious prayers?

Pray Audaciously as Jesus Prayed to Live as He Lived

The Father always answered Jesus’ prayers and gave Him what He asked because Jesus always asked according to His Father’s will. **Jesus lived for one thing—to do His Father’s will and finish His work.** He had no other priorities or passions besides loving, obeying, and glorifying His Father to the utmost.

This was the audacious faith of Jesus—He knew and believed that His Father would always answer His prayer. In John 11:40–44, when Jesus prayed for Lazarus to be resurrected, He said, “**FATHER, I THANK YOU THAT YOU HAVE HEARD ME. AND I KNOW THAT YOU ALWAYS HEAR ME.**” He never doubted for one second that the Father would raise Lazarus. He was not begging, but He commanded Lazarus to rise from the dead, and Lazarus came forth alive. Death was defeated.

Jesus was never afraid, or doubtful; instead, He was fearless in His petitions to God. In prayer, He boldly made claims on His Father's grace and favor. Impossible situations, insurmountable needs, and vicious demonic attacks did not move Him. He defied death by raising many from the dead. He walked on water, turned water into wine, fed the 5,000, healed the sick, cast out demons, opened blind eyes, preached the Good News in power, saved many, called a motley twelve to follow Him, and raised them as His disciples. He yielded Himself to be crucified as the Lamb slain for the salvation of the whole world, subjecting Himself to death but audaciously believing that the Father would raise Him up on the third day and seat Him by His right hand in heaven. Jesus was not afraid of anything or anyone. He loved fearlessly, lived uncommonly, prayed audaciously, obeyed radically, served selflessly, and gave recklessly.

Just as God wanted to fulfill His will and finish His work through Jesus Christ, He too wants to do the same through His Church. We must pray as Jesus prayed. The fulfillment of God's will on this earth cannot be hindered or delayed because the Church struggles in prayer, be it prayerlessness or weak and faithless prayer. Jesus said in John 14:12 NLT, **"I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in Me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father."**

HOW TO PRAY AUDACIOUSLY

❖ DARING prayers for MIRACLE BREAKTHROUGH

Mark 11:22-24 NKJV

So Jesus answered and said to them, **"Have faith in God.** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, **HE WILL HAVE WHATEVER HE SAYS. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them."**

Jesus was teaching His disciples to have bold faith in God and to pray with shameless audacity, believing whatever they asked in prayer would be done. What is audacious to us is nothing to God, who can do all things. God is eager to answer audacious prayer because it delights Him, and it is His will to do the supernatural and miraculous through us.

❖ **FERVENT prayers that AVAIL MUCH**

James 5:16–18 NKJV

THE EFFECTIVE, FERVENT PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILS MUCH. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

God responds to the fervent prayer of the righteous. Therefore, we must pray fervently and believe for the following:

- Churches to awaken, repent, return to first love for God, and obey all God's mandates.
- All sons and daughters to return to faith in God.
- Loved ones bound by strongholds and demon spirits to be freed.
- Supernatural provisions for missions and the work of God.
- Missionaries to be raised, trained and sent out to all nations.
- Power and ability to reach and see the younger generations saved and mentored to be mighty men and women of God.

❖ **PERSISTENT prayers—keep on praying and NOT GIVING UP**

Romans 12:12 NKJV

“Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, CONTINUING STEADFASTLY IN PRAYER.”

1 Samuel 1:15–17 NIV

Hannah replied, “I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; **I WAS POURING OUT MY SOUL TO THE LORD.** Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; **I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.**” Eli answered, “**Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of Him.**”

To pray audaciously, we must pray with persistence, never giving up no matter the challenges we may face. We must be patient in our prayers, remain faithful even in difficult times, and continue to petition with hope and trust in God's timing.

Hannah was the mother of the prophet Samuel, but the road to becoming a mother required great faith and persistent prayer because she was barren for

many years. She never gave up but agonized in deep, intense, and relentless prayer, and God heard her. The Lord remembered Hannah. He saw not only her pure intent and desire to be a mother but also her intent and desire to be a faithful servant to the Lord. It was because of the Lord's favor and Hannah's arduous prayer that Samuel was born. Samuel would become one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament, and not one of Samuel's words fell to the ground. He became the prophet who crowned not only the first king of Israel, Saul, but also the king after God's own heart, David.

❖ **POWER OF SECRET Prayers—REWARDED OPENLY**

Matthew 6:6 NIV

But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. **Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.**

❖ **Praying and NOT WAVERING at the PROMISES**

Romans 4:16–22 NIV

Therefore, **THE PROMISE COMES BY FAITH**, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham...He believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not. **AGAINST ALL HOPE, ABRAHAM IN HOPE BELIEVED and so became the father of many nations...**Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead...and that Sarah's womb was also dead. **YET HE DID NOT WAVER THROUGH UNBELIEF regarding the promise of God, BUT WAS STRENGTHENED IN HIS FAITH and gave glory to God, BEING FULLY PERSUADED THAT GOD HAD POWER TO DO WHAT HE HAD PROMISED.** This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."

Audacious prayer does not waver at the promises of God but believes and hopes even when situations seem utterly hopeless. Abraham, against all hope of being a father of many nations, never wavered in hope; he believed, and was fully persuaded, that God had the power to do what He had promised. His faith and prayer were audacious, and God fulfilled His promise. The audacious prayer of faith is not shaken by the hopelessness of the situation nor the humanly impossible enormity of the promise of God. Faith simply believes that God has the power to do all that He has promised.

❖ The Power of **FASTING** and Prayer**Matthew 17:19–21 NKJV**

Then, the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” So Jesus said to them, “**Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you. HOWEVER, THIS KIND DOES NOT GO OUT EXCEPT BY PRAYER AND FASTING.**”

Daniel 10:2–3 ESV

In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.

Daniel 10:10–14 ESV

And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, “**Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, YOUR WORDS HAVE BEEN HEARD, AND I HAVE COME BECAUSE OF YOUR WORDS.** The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

Daniel’s life of prayer and fasting gave him the courage and power to remain faithful to God amid severe persecution and entrapments by those who were jealous of him and wanted to kill him. Because of his life of consistent prayer and fasting, God gave him an excellent spirit, wisdom, and understanding above all others. On one occasion, he fasted and remained deep in prayer for twenty-one days. God had immediately sent the angel Gabriel with a message for Daniel when he began his fasting and prayer, but Gabriel was delayed because of the demonic spiritual forces withstanding him. Nevertheless, Gabriel came through with the help of Michael, as Daniel persisted in prayer and fasting. **God is not slow as some of us count slowness; instead, He knows the exact time and measures to be taken**

to answer prayer. God assures us that He will answer those who call upon Him in faith and boldness and give them what they ask.

Prayer Focus

A. Cry Out for a Desperate Hunger to Seek God and Pray Audaciously.

B. Pray that the Church will Arise with Fearless Faith to Pray Audaciously.

1. Always pray according to God's will.
2. Always believe that you will do great exploits for God through prayer.
3. Always make God's mandates your mission in life.

C. Pray for a Revelation of God that He Loves Audacious Faith and Prayer.

1. God seeks those who will pray audaciously by faith.
2. God has set Himself to hear and answer all petitions and prayers of faith.
3. God gives you audacious faith to fast and pray persistently and fearlessly.
4. God fills us with shameless audacity to fearlessly ask and expect the audacious from God.

D. Pray for the Holy Spirit to Confront, Convict, and Deal with Prayerlessness.

1. Repent of spiritual slumber, lukewarmness, apathy, and presumption.
2. Repent of hardness of heart where we have become calloused, casual, and careless with no passion and urgency to seek God.
3. Repent of lack of passion and burden for God's kingdom, priority, purpose, and will.

E. Pray for the Outpouring of Passion and Anointing to Pray Audaciously.

1. Ask for a soft and tender heart of repentance and submission to the Holy Spirit.

Friday, January 12: Holy Spirit's Anointing—His Mandate My Mission

ACTS 10:38 NKJV

God ANOINTED Jesus of Nazareth with the HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH POWER, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

LUKE 4:13–21 NKJV

Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. THEN JESUS RETURNED IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT TO GALILEE, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region...So He came to Nazareth...and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read... He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah...and He found the place where it was written: “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”...He began to say to them, “TODAY THIS SCRIPTURE IS FULFILLED IN YOUR HEARING.”

JOHN 7:37–39 TPT

Then on the most important day of the feast, the last day, Jesus stood and shouted out to the crowds—“All you thirsty ones, come to Me! Come to Me and drink! Believe in Me so that rivers of living water will burst out from within you, flowing from your innermost being, just like the Scripture says!” Jesus was prophesying about the Holy Spirit that believers were being prepared to receive. But the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out upon them, because Jesus had not yet been unveiled in His full splendor.

JOHN 14:15–18 NKJV

If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and HE WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER HELPER, THAT HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOREVER—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for HE DWELLS WITH YOU AND WILL BE IN YOU. I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU ORPHANS; I WILL COME TO YOU.

ACTS 1:4–8 NLT

Once when He was eating with them, He commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift He promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit...YOU

WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES UPON YOU. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

..... EXODUS 30:22–33 NLT

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Collect choice spices...**Like a skilled incense maker, blend these ingredients to make a holy anointing oil.** Use this sacred oil to anoint the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and all its accessories, the incense altar, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the washbasin with its stand. **CONSECRATE THEM TO MAKE THEM ABSOLUTELY HOLY. AFTER THIS, WHATEVER TOUCHES THEM WILL ALSO BECOME HOLY.** Anoint Aaron and his sons also, consecrating them to serve me as priests. And say to the people of Israel, ‘**This holy anointing oil is reserved for Me from generation to generation. It must never be used to anoint anyone else, and you must never make any blend like it for yourselves. IT IS HOLY, AND YOU MUST TREAT IT AS HOLY.** Anyone who makes a blend like it or anoints someone other than a priest will be cut off from the community.’”

..... 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19–20 NLT

Don't you realize that YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO LIVES IN YOU and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for GOD BOUGHT YOU WITH A HIGH PRICE. SO YOU MUST HONOR GOD WITH YOUR BODY.

..... ISAIAH 63:10 NKJV

But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; so He turned Himself against them an enemy and He fought against them.

..... MATTHEW 28:18–20 NKJV

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.**

Exhortation: Holy Spirit's Anointing—His Mandate My Mission Anointed to Live an Audacious Life

God is not only moved by audacious faith but also by an audacious life. It is a Holy Spirit-anointed life that is not afraid to love fearlessly, live

uncommonly, pray audaciously, obey radically, serve selflessly, and give recklessly. There are many biblical examples of individuals anointed by God and filled with bold faith to live an audacious life in obedience to God.

- Daniel was anointed with excellence of spirit, wisdom and understanding. He excelled above all others.
- David was anointed to take down Goliath and defeat the Philistine army.
- The apostles and the Early Church were anointed with power to preach, heal and set free those who were bound.

In Hebrews 11:33–34 NIV, by faith these people lived in the realm of the anointing and the supernatural,

Who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.

They defied the powers of darkness, persecution, ungodly world system and convention to obey God by making His mandate their mission. We are now living in the most evil, vicious, conscienceless, and demonic times just before Jesus comes again. **Amid this, the Church must be filled with faith and the Holy Spirit's anointing to stand and prevail over all challenges while obeying God's mandates.**

The anointing of the Holy Spirit transforms, empowers, and strengthens us to live in might and the supernatural, just as He did the apostles in the Book of Acts. The anointing of the Holy Spirit set Peter free from fear and guilt (he denied Jesus three times) and made him a fearless preacher of the gospel. The same Holy Spirit's anointing transformed Paul, a former persecutor of Christians, into one of the greatest missionaries and apostles of love. Stephen was another follower of Christ who was filled with the Holy Spirit but was stoned to death for his faith. His persecutors were so enraged with his preaching that they killed him, but Stephen had no fear. He did not shrink back but fell on his knees, looked up to heaven, and prayed that God would forgive his murderers. He saw Jesus standing up for him in heaven just before he died! We need the anointing of the Holy Spirit to fill us with audacious faith as these saints were, that we will follow God's mandate and carry out our mission to the end. **There is no turning back; we are running forward to finish the race with faith and fortitude because of**

the Holy Spirit's anointing. We live as those with nothing to lose and all to gain in Christ Jesus. We live as if we are already dead in Christ.

The Almighty Holy Spirit Who Anoints, Transforms and Empowers to Live Audaciously

The Holy Spirit is the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God. He is God eternal, unlimited, sovereign, and One of the three Persons in the Holy Trinity. **HE IS NOT JUST A POWER, FORCE, OR REPRESENTATIVE; HE IS GOD ALMIGHTY.** The Holy Spirit's anointing has the substance of His power, nature, and virtues. It reflects Him. Jesus was Spirit-conceived, Spirit-led, Spirit-filled, and Spirit-anointed to obey His Father to the uttermost. **Every mandate of His Father was Jesus' mission, and He lived in perfect obedience to His Father.** In the same manner, we need the anointing of the Holy Spirit to live, love, and serve God in complete obedience and accomplish all that He mandates.

One of the failures of the Church is not relating to the Holy Spirit as Jesus, the Son of Man, related to Him. The Holy Spirit is not our servant; we are His servants. Just as the Father and the Son are to be loved, praised, thanked, and glorified, so must the Holy Spirit because the Holy Trinity is One God. We must first seek the Holy Spirit, not just His power. He is personal to us. The Holy Spirit is as the Eternal Father is to us. We are not orphans or fatherless. The Holy Spirit loves us as God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son love us. **His heart is on fire for us with a passion.** He loves and helps us to be in deep fellowship and intimate communion with Him. He is not distant and impersonal. He is very near because He dwells in us and will abide with us forever.

We are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and He dwells within us when we are born again. He does not reside in us just as power, knowledge, and gifts; He is like a Father to us. He loves, comforts, speaks, teaches, leads, empowers, and does everything a loving Father does for His children. We are a priority to the Holy Spirit's heart, not only His passion. Just as Jesus called, chose, and drew His twelve disciples to Him, the Holy Spirit does the same with us.

Jesus Christ, Anointed—Making His Father's Mandate His Mission

Jesus Christ not only had audacious faith, He was anointed by the Holy Spirit to do all that the Father instructed Him to do. He lived, abided, and moved in the power of the Holy Spirit. He was undefeatable and

unstoppable no matter the attacks or strategies used by Satan. **JESUS ALWAYS OVERCAME IN POWER. HE LIVED AN AUDACIOUS LIFE PLEASING TO THE FATHER.** There was nothing timid or reserved about the way Jesus lived and believed. He was a powerful and fearless preacher, healer, and lover of God and souls. He would not allow Himself to be in bondage to dead religion nor bow in submission to fear of criticism, hostility, or persecution. **His Father gave Him an audacious vision of being the Savior of humanity through the sacrifice of Himself on the cross.** He was audaciously free, uninhibited, and lived in the power of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling the Father's call for Him to be the Savior of the whole world. Every weapon the devil formed and used against Jesus was powerless against His faith and anointing. Jesus said in John 14:30 NKJV, **"THE RULER OF THIS WORLD IS COMING, AND HE HAS NOTHING IN ME."**

Jesus Christ entirely depended on the Holy Spirit to make His Father's mandates His mission. Without the Holy Spirit's anointing, He would be like any other person in the flesh, with limited ability and power, unable to accomplish all He did. He was perpetually strong and victorious regardless of challenges, persecution, and spiritual warfare. **HE SUFFERED MANY THINGS, AND SOMETIMES HE AGONIZED, BUT HE WAS NEVER DEFEATED, DEPRESSED, OR DISOBEDIENT.** Jesus was audaciously bold and courageous in obeying God in defiance of the enemy's hostility, temptations, and attacks. Therefore, at His crucifixion with His last breath, He triumphantly declared, **"IT IS FINISHED"** John 19:30 NKJV.

After His baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for forty days and nights of prayer and fasting and to be tempted by the devil. This was before He began His ministry in Galilee. He was hungry, and the devil came to tempt Him to sin. Through prayer and fasting, Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, resisted the devil, victoriously defeated the evil one, and overcame all his temptations. Luke 4:14 says that **JESUS RETURNED IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT TO GALILEE**, and news of Him went out throughout the surrounding region.

Jesus went to Nazareth, entered the synagogue as His custom, and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. According to Luke 4:18–19 NKJV, He opened the book and read from where it was written,

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.

After He finished reading, as He closed the book and sat down, all eyes in the synagogue were on Him, and He said to them, **“TODAY THIS SCRIPTURE IS FULFILLED IN YOUR HEARING”** Luke 4:21 NKJV. Thereafter, Jesus began His ministry preaching, healing, working many wonders and miracles, and touching many lives under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He was also persecuted. Jesus Christ was anointed to obey His Father, making His Father’s mandate His mission. The resurrected Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the same Holy Spirit to baptize and anoint them. It is still the same Holy Spirit and anointing God wants to pour on His Church in an unprecedented way that His Church will arise, be Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, and Spirit-empowered to make His mandates our mission. We are to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit as Jesus did.

The anointed Church is alive, on fire for God, and cannot help but go out to preach the gospel, heal the sick, cast out demons, break the power of darkness, raise the dead, make disciples of believers, and send out others to do the same. The anointing cannot be contained in-house; it is meant to flow out to the highways and byways to save, heal, and set free. We must learn to seek the Holy Spirit, love and trust Him, and yield all to Him that He may fill us to overflowing. **His presence dwelling in us and His anointing will enable us to make God’s mandate our mission.**

Honor the Holy Spirit and Steward His Holy Anointing With Great Reverence

As the Spirit of God is holy, so is His anointing. We must relate to the Holy Spirit and treat His anointing with complete reverence and godly fear. **WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US HIS ANOINTING, HE IS DRAWING FROM WHO HE IS TO IMPART TO US.** We must never treat the Holy Spirit and His anointing as common—lightly, carelessly, and callously. None of us own the anointing, but the Holy Spirit graciously pours His anointing upon us to serve God and His purpose. In 1 Samuel 2:30 NLT, the Lord says, **“I will honor those who honor Me, and I will despise those who think lightly of Me.”**

In the Old Testament, God instructed Moses to make the anointing oil to anoint Aaron, his sons, and the utensils in the Tabernacle of God. This oil was to consecrate them to God for ministry unto Him. This anointing oil foreshadowed the Holy Spirit’s anointing to be poured out on Christ’s followers, His Church, which Jesus commanded His disciples to wait for in Acts 1 and 2. This was the same Holy Spirit’s oil poured out on Jesus Christ, anointing Him to do all that God told Him to do. The anointing of

the Holy Spirit is holy, just as the anointing oil used for consecration in the Old Testament was holy.

In Exodus 30, God gave Moses precise instructions for the making of the holy anointing oil to be used for the consecration of both priests and articles in the Tabernacle for ministry unto God. In Exodus 30:23–33 NKJV, God instructed Moses,

Also take for yourself quality spices ... and you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be a holy anointing oil. With it you shall anoint the Tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony; the table and all its utensils...**You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them must be holy** and you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister to Me as priests. “And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: **‘THIS SHALL BE A HOLY ANOINTING OIL TO ME THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS.** It shall not be poured on man’s flesh; nor shall you make any other like it, according to its composition. **IT IS HOLY, AND IT SHALL BE HOLY TO YOU.** Whoever compounds any like it, or whoever puts any of it on an outsider, shall be cut off from his people.”

We must honor the Holy Spirit and steward His anointing with great reverence. Nadab and Abihu, Aaron’s sons, had no reverence for God and the anointing oil of their consecration. They callously and defiantly offered God a strange fire not authorized by God. God’s wrath broke out against them as He judged and struck them dead. God then told Aaron, through Moses, not to mourn, not to touch his dead sons, and not to leave the tent because the holy anointing oil of God was on him. In Leviticus 10:3–11 NKJV, Moses told Aaron what the Lord said,

BY THOSE WHO COME NEAR ME I MUST BE REGARDED AS HOLY, AND BEFORE ALL THE PEOPLE I MUST BE GLORIFIED...You shall not go out from the door of the Tabernacle of meeting, lest you die, FOR THE ANOINTING OIL OF THE LORD IS UPON YOU...Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the Tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, that YOU MAY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN HOLY AND UNHOLY, AND BETWEEN UNCLEAN AND CLEAN, AND THAT YOU MAY TEACH THE CHILDREN.

We must honor the Holy Spirit and steward His holy anointing with reverence and godly fear. **The failure to do so is the sin of not distinguishing between the holy and unholy and the consecrated and unconsecrated.** The Church must not compromise by tolerating the mixing of the sacred with the profane in our ministry unto God. We cannot operate by mixing the holy anointing with the flesh or what is of the Holy Spirit with the carnal self. **We must operate in complete humility and reverence for the Holy Spirit, discerning that He is holy as we function in the power of His anointing.** We do not touch the glory of God by taking credit for ourselves. The vessel cannot take the honor belonging to God for himself, as the holy oil is from God, who has graciously poured His anointing into the vessel to be used for God's purpose. **The power, honor, and glory belong to God! We are the temple of the Holy Spirit, not the Holy Spirit Himself. Without Him dwelling in us with His anointing, power, and grace, we are nothing but empty shells.** We must love the Holy Spirit and relate to Him with utmost devotion and respect, for He is God. He is not to be dishonored, disobeyed, or grieved. We must also steward His anointing with great honor and care, for His anointing is holy, not common.

The mandates of God cannot be accomplished by any power except that of the Holy Spirit and His anointing. We see this in the anointing of David to be king in 1 Samuel 16:13 NLT, which says, **“Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David from that day on.”** David already had faith, courage, and anointing from God as a shepherd caring for his father's sheep. With his hands, he killed a bear and a lion to protect the sheep, but he did not have the anointing yet to be king. **The power and ability to be king over Israel came upon him mightily the moment Samuel anointed him.** In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon certain individuals, empowering them to do great things. Also, men like Moses, prophets, or priests would anoint God's chosen for specific ministry with oil from a flask; but in the New Testament, not men, but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Anointer, poured out His Holy Spirit without measure on His apostles, and disciples, and now His Church, to empower us to be His witnesses to the ends of the world to make His mandate our mission.

We are not to grieve the Holy Spirit. The Bible warns us not to defile our bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 NKJV says, **“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”** God was so angry with the children of Israel that He turned from being the One who had

liberated, blessed, protected, and provided for them to being their enemy because they had disrespected and grieved His Holy Spirit (Isaiah 63:10).

The Vessel of Honor—Consecrated and Prepared for the Holy Spirit's Anointing and Fit for the Master's Use

The vessel to be anointed matters. In the world, people are chosen and applauded for their talents, skills, abilities, education, looks, or wealth. In God's kingdom, the Holy Spirit seeks people after God's heart—loving God first, consecrated, faithful, and committed wholly to obeying and pleasing Him. In 1 Samuel 2:31–35 NLT, after God rebuked Eli, the backslidden priest, and rejected his household and him, God said,

The time is coming when I will put an end to your family, so it will no longer serve as My priests... **THEN I WILL RAISE UP A FAITHFUL PRIEST WHO WILL SERVE ME AND DO WHAT I DESIRE. I will establish his family, and they will be priests to my anointed kings forever.**

How do we honor the Holy Spirit and His anointing? We must live consecrated, set apart, and holy unto God. **THE VESSELS MATTER TO GOD. HE WORKS IN US AND DISCIPLINES US SO THAT WE CAN BE PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLY NATURE, NOT JUST HIS ANOINTING.** God's grace does not exempt, excuse, or tolerate our compromise, sin, or failure to distinguish between holy and unholy. He forgives those who repent but will never compromise on who He is. Do not live like the world lives. Do not touch the unclean. Come out of the world and be separated unto God. As God's royal priesthood, what do we have in common with any ungodly culture, system, ideologies, or way of life? Psalm 1:1–6 NKJV says,

BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO WALKS NOT IN THE COUNSEL OF THE UNGODLY, NOR STANDS IN THE PATH OF SINNERS, NOR SITS IN THE SEAT OF THE SCORNFUL; BUT HIS DELIGHT IS IN THE LAW OF THE LORD, AND IN HIS LAW HE MEDITATES DAY AND NIGHT. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. The ungodly are not so but are like the chaff which the wind drives away. **Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.**

Consecration, submission, and obedience to the Holy Spirit and His Word are imperative for us to live and walk in Him. Without consecration, the flesh is alive, strong, and often in control. **Human passion without consecration is dangerous and deeply deceiving. It is intense, full of zeal, and aggressive, but the originator is not the Holy Spirit; it is the flesh.** Such a person has failed to consecrate himself by identifying with Christ in His suffering, death, burial, and resurrection. The Holy Spirit is the One who births in us His holy passion. Carnal passion is a fruit of the flesh with self on the throne of our hearts rather than God. Like the religious leaders of Jesus' time, they were zealots for religion but not for God and His kingdom. They had the speech and quotes of the Torah but not the character, conduct, and walk of the Holy Spirit. Without holy consecration, because of pride, one will touch God's glory in ministry like Saul, who eventually built a monument to himself.

THE DEEPER THE CONSECRATION, THE GREATER THE ANOINTING. GOD HAS TO BE ABLE TO TRUST US WITH HIS HOLY SPIRIT AND ANOINTING. Those anointed but destroyed for lack of consecration included Solomon, Demas, Judas and Saul. There have been many examples of world-renowned ministers with global impact who fell profoundly and devastatingly. They all had been called and chosen by God and given great anointing to fulfill their calling. They started well, but when success came, many got careless and progressively lost their consecration. **THE MORE THEY LOST THEIR CONSECRATION, THE MORE THEY LOST THE FEAR OF GOD AND FELL INTO DEEPER AND DEEPER SIN.** Without consecration, the heart is very hardened, and the conscience becomes seared with a hot iron (1 Timothy 4:2). Consecration helps us flow in the anointing and serve God powerfully and reverently. Having a mega-stage, world-renowned fame, widespread accolades, acknowledgments, and the approval of man is of no value without holy consecration to God. When one is consecrated, these things are of no significance to us because we are totally caught up in loving, obeying, serving, and glorifying God and God alone. Consecration protects us from the devil's temptation of walking in the flesh rather than in the Spirit.

Through the Holy Spirit's anointing, we will live in holy audacity like Jesus—loving unconditionally, living uncommonly, praying audaciously, obeying radically, serving selflessly, and giving recklessly.

Prayer Focus

A. Search Your Heart to See if There is Any Sin or Offense Against the Holy Spirit and His Anointing.

1. Failing to give the Holy Spirit His rightful place in your life:
 - a. His place of honor and reverence
 - b. His place of awe and holy fear
 - c. Taking our place of submission and obedience
2. Being presumptuous and taking the Holy Spirit and His anointing for granted.
3. Having areas of stubbornness and rebellion against the Holy Spirit.
4. Defiling of the temple of the Holy Spirit through your conduct, speech, and lifestyle.
5. Grieving the Holy Spirit by ignoring and resisting Him.
6. Failing to honor the Spirit's holy anointing by treating it lightly and as common.

B. Seek the Holy Spirit Audaciously with Hunger and Thirst.

C. Seek the Holy Spirit Audaciously to Know, Love, and Serve Him.

D. Pray for the Holy Spirit's Anointing to Make God's Mandate Your Mission.

E. Seek the Holy Spirit in Humility and Submission.

1. Crying out to be in oneness of intimacy with Him.
2. Praying to have audacious faith in Him.
3. Praying that He will reveal the Father, His will, and His ways.
4. Praying for grace and enablement to always obey Him.

F. Hunger For and Seek the Holy Spirit's Uncommon Anointing.

1. To have the power to love, live, and serve God audaciously.
2. To have audacious faith to believe in God that:
 - a. Nothing is impossible with God, who can do all things
 - b. Your audacious prayers will be answered

PRAY FOR OUR DISTRICT OFFICIALS

EXECUTIVE PRESBYTERS

Klayton Ko – District Superintendent
James Texeira – Assistant Superintendent
Janelle Marocco – District Secretary
John Opeta – District Treasurer

SECTIONAL PRESBYTERS

Terry Wong – Oahu Metro / Windward Sectional Presbyter
Ronaldo Pascua – Oahu Central / Leeward Sectional Presbyter
Evan Carmichael – Big Island Presbyter
James Marocco – Maui Presbyter
Darryl Kua – Kauai Presbyter

MINISTRY / DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

Daniel Preciado – World Missions
Kevin Brown – Christian Education
Dion Maeda – Youth Ministry
Sam Cockett – Men's Ministry
Donna Bartolome – Women's Ministry
Nathan Lasconia – Royal Rangers
Renee Lo – Girls' Ministries
Jeremy Anderson – Chi Alpha
Keith Jackson - Teen Challenge

...BECAUSE OF YOUR SHAMELESS AUDACITY HE WILL
SURELY GET UP AND GIVE YOU AS MUCH AS YOU NEED...

LUKE 11:8 (NIV)

