

PREPARING YOURSELF SPIRITUALLY

Praying Our Way to SC20, Preparing Our Hearts for God's Invitation By X. Nader Sahyouni, DMin, LPC

Welcome to SC20 in the realm of prayer. Prayer often first establishes in the unseen what will later come to pass that we can see with our natural eyes. As we prepare in prayer, let us pray for what God will do across each of the three areas of focus in the conference: Prepare for Revival, Renew Our Calling, and Thrive Together. Each week from now until SC20 (with a break for Christmas week), we will have suggestions for how to pray and prepare the way for the Lord in our hearts. Join us with joyful expectations of meeting God before, during, and after the conference in each of these areas.

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 17: STATE OF MY HEART

PREPARE FOR REVIVAL

This week, let us ask God to show us what we each need to know about our beliefs regarding revival. Journal specifically about these topics by asking yourself the following:

- *What are my beliefs about revival in general?*
- *About revival as part of the 2030 Calling?*
- *What are my own expectations for my own ministry?*

Don't worry about resolving any tensions around any of your beliefs and expectations yet.

RENEW OUR CALLING

Let us ask God to show each of us what he wants us to become aware of in our own feelings towards the 2030 Calling, and our own individual calling. Ask yourself the following:

- *What areas of agreement and tension exist between my own calling and the 2030 Calling? Journal specifically about each. Don't worry about addressing any of it yet.*

THRIVE TOGETHER

Let us pray for clarity around our feelings regarding thriving together. Ask yourself the following:

- *Where am I excited and looking forward with hope?*
- *Where am I holding back?*
- *Are there disappointments?*
- *Is there a history in my life of relational disappointments, within InterVarsity or without, that can impact my ability to thrive with others in community?*

Write down specifically what you feel the Holy Spirit showing you. Don't worry about fixing any of it yet.

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 24: REPENTANCE AND LAMENT

PREPARE FOR REVIVAL

This week, ask the Holy Spirit to help you answer the following questions:

- *Has there been unexpressed disappointment in my ministry? If so, bring it before God in lament.*
- *Has God shown me anything I need to repent of? If so, take the time to do it. If you have a spiritual director or prayer partner, it may be helpful to share that with them (James 5:16). Give thanks for the forgiveness received.*

Don't rush to fix anything or chart a new course just yet.

RENEW OUR CALLING

Continue by asking yourself the following questions:

- *Has God revealed anything about my feelings towards our calling that I need to repent of?*
- *Is my embrace of the calling ignoring deeper concerns I'm afraid to surface?*
- *When I acknowledge the tensions, is there anything I am blessed to repent of?*

Receive the call to repentance as a gift, not as condemnation. Repentance brings healing, freedom, and restoration, not judgement.

THRIVE TOGETHER

Lastly this week, ask yourself the following questions:

- *In my relational history, are there things God is showing me that are unresolved?*
- *Do I need to forgive anyone? If so, write down specifically what you need to forgive.*

Allow yourself to experience the loss and grieve it. Bring it before God in lament. Use the Psalms to help with the grieving process.

If you are aware of ways you are holding back forgiveness by ignoring someone, being cold towards them, and so on, ask God for the grace to forgive.

If there's a fear of being hurt again, forgiveness does not mean not having boundaries. Pray for wisdom in how to forgive and have healthy boundaries.

WEEK OF DECEMBER 1: SUPPLICATION AND GRATITUDE

PREPARE FOR REVIVAL

This week, ask the Holy Spirit to help you answer the following question:

- *What am I aware of in my faith for revival that I can be grateful for?* Be specific. Spend time in gratitude for all the fruit in ministry you've seen to date, and for the fruit you will bear in the future.

Spend time praying for revival and for God to raise up the workers needed for revival. Give him thanks in advance for all that he will do, according to his surpassing wisdom.

RENEW OUR CALLING

Let us continue this week by offering up to God the areas of challenge we each have around our role in the larger calling.

Ask him for what you need:

- Is it maturity?
- More gifting?
- More faith?
- More resources?
- Specific obstacles to overcome?

Thank him in advance for however he chooses to answer.

THRIVE TOGETHER

Finally this week, let us take the time to give thanks for the seasons of life-giving community each of us has experienced in our journey.

Pray for the details of what you think you need personally in order to be a healthy member of a thriving community. Be specific. Ask God to send you those who can help you in your areas of challenge. Give thanks in advance for what God will provide.

WEEK OF DECEMBER 8: INVITATION

PREPARE FOR REVIVAL

This week, ask the Holy Spirit to help you answer the following questions:

- *Is there something particularly life-giving for me that God is inviting me into in this season?*
- *Is there a specific role he wants me to play in preparing for revival? In being part of it? Journal your impressions.*

RENEW OUR CALLING

Continue asking God to help you answer the following:

- *What do I sense God inviting me to specifically around the 2030 Calling?*
- *What do I sense his desire is for me? If you are having difficulty with that, imagine your best self, you at your best, how would your "best self" answer this? Pray for God to confirm it throughout the week.*

THRIVE TOGETHER

As this week comes to an end, pray for God to give you the kind of thriving community he would like you to have. Pray that he would teach you what you need to know to build those kinds of communities.

- Do you sense any specific invitations?
- Are you called to have better boundaries? More vulnerability?
- What do you sense from God?

WEEK OF DECEMBER 15: GRACE

PREPARE FOR REVIVAL

This week, focus on grace. Grace is any and all of God's gifts to us that we did not earn. That goes beyond salvation. We need gifts of strength and transformation from God.

What grace do you need from God for what he has been showing you about revival?

Do you need:

- Clarity?
- Vision?
- Wisdom?
- Discernment?
- Questions answered?

Begin to incorporate your needs for grace into your daily prayer as you feel led.

RENEW OUR CALLING

What grace do you feel you need in order to do all that God has for you to accomplish?

Do you need:

- Faith?
- Healing from past disappointments?
- Willingness?
- Desire?

- A change of heart around a particular issue?

Be specific in asking God for it. Include it in your prayer habits for the future.

THRIVE TOGETHER

Where do you personally need a gift from God in the area of community?

Do you need:

- To trust again?
- To grow in trust?
- Do you need grace to take risks in vulnerability?

What about for the thriving communities you will be building, what help do you need from God there?

- Do you need his help to model being in community?
- Do you need his help to inspire and help others build thriving communities?
- How specifically would you like him to help you?

WEEK OF DECEMBER 22: OFF WEEK

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

WEEK OF DECEMBER 29: FASTING

This week, as a final preparation, you are invited to choose something to fast from. It could be not partaking in a meal or limiting an enjoyable food or activity. Make sure not to affect your health in any negative way.

PREPARE FOR REVIVAL

As you fast, pray for God's power to be released in your life to make you into the person God will use in revival.

RENEW OUR CALLING

Pray for God's anointing in our calling together, as well as his anointing in your calling specifically.

THRIVE TOGETHER

Pray for the community God wants you to have, as well as the communities he wants you to build. Finally, pray that he enables you to teach others to build thriving communities.