40 Day Prayer Covenant

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“Jesus, be Lord of my life today in new ways, and change me any way you want!”

What a dangerous prayer! What a safe prayer! A bold and dangerous prayer places us into the safest place, God’s gracious loving care for us. This statement is the central phrase of the 40 Day Prayer Covenant ( <https://theprayercovenant.org/the-prayer-covenant>).

In 1967, a business man approached Dr. Jerry Kirk requesting that they join in a daily prayer covenant for each other. The prayer, at the time, was the very simple statement, “Jesus be Lord of our lives”.

Soon these verses became the scriptural basis for this prayer covenant. “They entered into a covenant to seek the Lord, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and soul” (2 Chronicles 15:12). “Then he said to them all: Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23).

Through the years, Dr. Kirk fostered and prayed the prayer covenant with many people, adding and changing the brief prayer statements. In recent years, the 40 Day Prayer Covenant has been published and translated into multiple languages.

As a prayer guide, the simple but profound statements, guide people into a deeper level of following Jesus together with each other. The essence of Christian discipleship and following Christ as Lord are captured in these statements.

The lines “wash me clean from every sin” and “change me any way you want” seem to capture our hearts most as we first use this prayer tool. For me, God used these statements to show me how often I fantasize about receiving glory rather than all glory be given to God. And so, I repented and continue to repent that my thoughts are tainted in this direction. God spoke to me as I repeatedly prayed these words and as others were praying the same for me.

Others have shared with me that certain lines seem to linger for long periods of time. The second line, “By your grace make being with you, loving and obeying you my highest priority”, is a great place to get stuck. That is a prayer that I never want to move far from.

The 40 Day Prayer Covenant uniquely combines a prayer tool and a discipleship guide. A friend of mine, Betty Davis (<http://www.bettydavisministries.org>), is used by God in crusades in multiple countries. Recently she has conducted crusades in Lahore, Pakistan, where more than 200,000 people attended the three-day crusades. Introduced to the Prayer Covenant, Betty had 500,000 copies prepared in Urdu and there were handed to the attendees of the crusades in successive years. God continues to use the prayer covenant as a means of discipleship for the thousands who committed to following Jesus as their Lord during these crusades.

An exciting development is the children’s edition of the covenant, “40 Day Prayer Covenant for Kids”. God used Candy Marballi to present the prayer tool in a simplified version for children. Now hundreds of thousands of children around the world are using this prayer guide in their native language to pray for themselves and each other. They are learning the joy of following Jesus together!

An unforeseen benefit occurred after I began using this prayer covenant. Desiring to have a committed time of prayer with others, I began weekly prayer covenants. We realized that three men on a phone call, limited to thirty minutes, has become a powerful addition to our spiritual lives. For more than three years, the three different covenant groups have shared weekly the concerns of our lives and then prayed for each other. Almost every week one of the prayer covenant lines will be mentioned in the prayer moments. We rejoice with each other and we mourn with each other! At this point, I cannot imagine my life without these enriching and strengthening relationships.

 The 40 Day Prayer Covenant is certainly not the only prayer that ought to be prayed. But it does provide a wonderful tool to lead us into a more intimate relationship with Jesus and creating Christ center covenant prayer partnerships.