

NOVEMBER 2017

## WAKEFULNESS AND PRAYER

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BY TIM KELLER

*Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ... Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.*

— Colossians 4:2, 12 ESV

In the last couple of years the term ‘woke’ has come to mean something like being ‘enlightened’ about the underlying problems of society. A little known book by Evald Lovestam, *Spiritual Wakefulness in the New Testament*, 1963, points out that being spiritually

awake is actually a crucial biblical theme. And the main means for becoming spiritually wakeful is prayer. In the last chapter of Colossians, written from prison to the young church in Colossae, Paul describes in striking terms the Christian practice of prayer.

First, prayer is something you simply must do—and work at doing it until you do it well. *Continue steadfastly* translates a word that means to persevere through difficulty until you prevail. One lexicon translates “to be obstinate”! This is not a talking about praying with intensity (though we should seek

to do that, too) but about praying habitually, no matter what. It means to always make time for it — to be pig-headed and obstinate in doing so.

We might object that Paul’s readers did not face all the distractions and the busyness of modern life. And yet the first century Colossians knew almost nothing of ‘leisure’ time or ‘work-life balance.’ For so many of them, life was filled with arduous, backbreaking work around the clock. But cultural situation is never an excuse. Christians *have* to pray just like we have to breathe and eat.

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## INSPIRE MERCY MONTH IS UNDERWAY

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We read in the epistles Paul’s vision of the body of Christ, that through our union with Christ, we find communion with each other by sharing in gifts and graces and bearing one another’s burdens. And we thank God for instilling this new identity in us. As a family of churches, we strive to live out this vision in a

very tangible way. It is this very vision that guides the work of the Redeemer Diaconate.

During the month of November, the Diaconate invites you to be inspired by God’s mercy and put your faith into action.

We invite you, our Redeemer church members, to identify those who are spiritually mature

and you believe would be suited for this expression of mercy within our church community and to nominate them. Please do so by November 30, 2017, after which we will follow up with all nominees. By nominating a prospective deek (our affectionate term for deacon and deaconess), you fulfill what

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# JOIN HFNY TO PROVIDE TOYS TO FAMILIES THIS CHRISTMAS

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It's almost that time of year again — time for gathering families, sharing meals, and giving gifts. And we at Hope for New York want to make sure that families across our city experience joy this Christmas.

That's why we started His Toy Store, our Christmas outreach to families across the city with limited financial resources. This December we're partnering with **11 churches** (including all Redeemer churches) and **21 affiliates** to host **12 pop-up shops** across the city where families can shop for new toys for their children.

Who shops at His Toy Store? Shoppers include families in low-income neighborhoods, parents who are formerly incarcerated and reconnecting with families, and moms and dads in residential recovery programs.

Moms like Debra. Debra struggled with a 20-year addiction to alcohol and 10-year addiction to heroin. She was

not allowed to have contact with her three children. But His Toy Store gave her a chance to reconnect with her family.

"His Toy Store holds a very special place in my heart because it was the vehicle that God used to begin the process of restoration with my children," Debra, who now works at HFNY affiliate Brooklyn Teen Challenge, said. "And it is my prayer each year that it would be used in the same manner for another to begin the restoration process with their children."

And that's just it. We see His Toy Store as more than just a one-time outreach. Families are invited by our affiliate organizations they are in relationship with beyond His Toy Store, which means even deeper, year-round support for the families who shop at these stores.

At Christmastime, we remember the extravagant love God has for His people, and

His Toy Store is one way we communicate that our God not only provides our daily bread, but also demonstrates extravagance and generosity toward us.

That's where you come in.

This year, we're hosting our biggest His Toy Store outreach yet. Our goal is to provide **4,040 toys for 1,940 families** — a 68 percent increase over last year! We rely 100 percent on donations to make sure our stores are stocked with toys like action figures, stuffed animals, baby dolls, and soccer balls.

Will you join us to see even more families across New York City experience joy this Christmas?

### ***How to Give:***

Giving to His Toy Store is completely online! Visit **[hfny.org/hts](https://hfny.org/hts)** to provide toys for a child, a family, neighbors, or an entire store! Donations must be received by **November 27!**

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## REDEEMER REPORT

Cregan Cooke, Kathy Keller  
Heather Klein

Hunter College Auditorium  
E. 69th St.  
(btw Park & Lexington)  
Services: 10:30 a.m.  
and 6 p.m.

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W83rd Ministry Center  
150 W. 83rd St.  
(btw Columbus & Amsterdam)  
Services: 9:30 & 11:30 a.m.  
and 5 & 7 p.m.

*West Side Church Plant:*  
NY Society for Ethical Culture  
2 W. 64th St.  
(at Central Park West)  
Service: 10:30 a.m.

Salvation Army Auditorium  
120 W. 14th St.  
(btw 6th & 7th Aves.)  
Services: 9:30 a.m.  
and 5 p.m.

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# REDEEMER CITY TO CITY INTERNATIONAL INTENSIVE: *EQUIPPING CHURCH PLANTERS FROM 2007 TO 2017*

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BY SUSAN THORSON

Every fall church planters from around the world gather at the Redeemer City to City (CTC) offices for a multi-week training called the International Intensive. While they're here, Redeemer celebrates CTC Sunday where the churches hear briefly from a few of these church planters and collect a special offering.

The year was 2007. Church planters were asking for help. The requests were coming from around the world. One from Barcelona. Another from London. But there wasn't enough critical mass in any one city to offer local training. No curriculum existed, and there was simply no easy way to get the training out into the field. So Al Barth, Vice President Global Catalyst, had the idea to bring the global church planters to NYC. CTC would give them key ideas to help equip them to plant and sustain urban churches.

Mark Reynolds, V.P. of Leadership Programs remembers, "We created articles and training sessions on growing as a leader, contextualization and the gospel. Tim Keller's *Center Church* wasn't published until 2012. These concepts existed only in white papers. This was the first time these leaders were exposed to this material."

The Intensive consists of both off-site learning elements and classroom sessions led by Tim Keller, CTC staff and various New York City church planters. Mark says, "The Intensive is something we've continued to prioritize because of the impact it has had in the lives of these church planters — both on a personal level and in the kinds of churches they are planting."

There were only six participants back in 2007. This year, there were 24:

- Marwan Aboul-Zelof  
planting in Beirut, Lebanon
- Giuliano Coccaro  
planting in São Paulo, Brazil
- Eduardo Antonia De Fario  
planting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

- Lawson and Marella Hannaford  
planting in Adelaide, Australia
- Aaron Herrera  
planting in Monterrey, Mexico
- Brian and Minah Koela  
planting in Cape Town, South Africa
- Hugo Leme  
planting in Americana, Brazil
- Warren and Wendy Leung  
trainer from Los Angeles, CA\*
- Harrison Macharia  
already planted in Nairobi, Kenya
- George Markey  
trainer from Kiev, Ukraine\*
- Enriqu  Melendez  
trainer from Los Angeles, CA\*
- Musa Ntinga  
planting in Johannesburg, South Africa
- Emerson Patriota  
planting in Londrina, Brazil
- Denna  Pierre  
trainer from Phoenix, AZ\*
- Luiz Santos  
planting in Rome, Italy
- Derrick and Rae Sekamalira  
planting in Kampala, Uganda
- Ali Sewell  
planting in Haddington, Scotland
- Marek Tyl and Cori Tylova  
replanting in Prague, Czech Republic
- Sihle Xulu  
replanting in Durban, South Africa

\* The four trainers will be using this material to train church planters in their cities through a CTC training program called Incubator.

Musa Ntinga, a participant this year from Soweto, South Africa had this to say about the Intensive training. "You can be a church planter — busy telling people about Christ — and you can easily lose sight of your own spirituality. People see you running around and people assume

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# SHORT TERM MISSION TRIPS OF 2018

Redeemer's Short Term Missions ministry serves the purpose of connecting our mission team participants with international church planters who have partnered with Re-



deemer City to City. This past summer Redeemer commissioned trips to partner churches in Madagascar, South Africa, Guatemala, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over 100 Redeemerites fulfilled the great commission by coming alongside these international churches to engage with them, encourage them,



and offer practical and financial support.

The teams developed and presented programs and events both varied and unique. For example, after teaching classes on entrepreneurship skills in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ten teammates treated the hosting church's staff and congregants to a church-wide weekend retreat in nearby Rwanda.

Our July medical team traveled to Madagascar to teach the latest healthcare practices to local healthcare workers, and then modeled these skills as they worked in a temporary clinic.

Our August Cape Town team taught modeling, singing, and acting classes to neighborhood children and teens. Over 100 members of the community attended the culminating show at the end of the week!

One of the two Johannesburg trips presented Faith & Work career workshops for three different churches, which were attended by almost 300 people. Another Johannesburg team spent meaningful time with sixty children from an orphanage and took the kids on several field trips. Field trip destinations included a local children's show and an observatory called the Top of Africa.

Our Guatemala team included an optometrist—who

BY CHRISTINA STANTON

brought over 800 glasses for the local community. One local woman who received glasses said it was the first time she had seen clearly in nine years!

As a result of our teams' sacrificial service, relationships with our international hosts were strengthened and our work in their communities resulted in more awareness of the local church. As Pastor Peter Makapela of Christ Church Strand stated, "We thank God for the team that has come to



serve our church and community here in Zola. The church has benefited a lot from the presence of these wonderful servants whom you have sent to us this year. We trust that the seed of the gospel that was planted in the hearts of many through the ministry of this team will one day germinate and produce a lot of fruit."

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## SHORT TERM MISSION ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 4)

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But we're not finished with missions! In October and November, three additional teams will be commissioned and travel to Tokyo, various cities in Europe, and the Philippines. Teammates on these fall trips will be conducting a Faith & Fashion conference, participating in an Arts Festival, presenting concerts of Broadway music and performance workshops, and offering children's programs for these church's community outreach efforts.

Be on the lookout for a full report of what God accomplished through our missions teams in our December 2017 newsletter. You can find that report and more at [redeemer.com/missions](http://redeemer.com/missions).

Intrigued? Find out more about our 2018 trips during Missions Month in January. We hope you'll join us!



## INSPIRE MERCY MONTH ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

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we read in Acts 6:3, when the twelve disciples gathered everyone and asked them to choose leaders who were known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom and tasked them with the responsibility of caring for those with need. It is remarkable how empowering and encouraging a nomination can be for someone who is gifted in care and mercy but has not considered themselves fit for such a position.

In addition to your nominations, we need your prayers. The responsibility of electing church leaders is a significant

one, but we know that the Lord provides, and that He delights in answering the prayers of His people. We ask that you would pray for and with the Diaconate, that God would raise up leaders from among us to serve as deacons, and that those individuals would respond eagerly and faithfully to His call.

Finally, we see mercy extended and restoration initiated through the selfless acts of the early believers in Acts 4:32, "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared ev-

erything they had." Please consider sharing your resources by giving a financial gift to our Mercy Fund. The Mercy Fund is set up specifically for the purpose of meeting the needs of the most vulnerable individuals and families in our churches, and we need your partnership in enabling the Diaconate to meet those needs through your generosity.

Inspire Mercy Month is underway, and you can make a difference by being a conduit of God's mercy, bringing about restoration for those in your church family!

If you don't do it, you will spiritually wither up and blow away. *Continue steadfastly in prayer.*

Second, we are to be *watchful in it*. This is not just an admonition to be attentive rather than lethargic in prayer (though we should.) Rather, this is talking about an important theme in the New Testament — spiritual 'wakefulness.' The word means to be awake and alert enough to see things as they are, and especially to see danger coming. Jesus told his disciples to "be wakeful and pray" (Mark 14:38) or temptation and sin would overtake them before they knew it.

In Romans 13:11-14, the verses that converted St Augustine, Paul calls people to 'wake from sleep' — the sleep of the darkness of this world — and live in the light. So what does it mean to be 'spiritually wakeful' in and through prayer? It means that you will never see your own heart, and especially your worst faults, clearly except through prayer — you will live in denial. You will not see the realities of life clearly enough to make wise decisions. You will have too high or too low or too simplistic a view of things, based on what you *want* to believe about things.

Unless God, his holiness, and his love are intensely real

to you in prayer, you will put too much stock in your heroes, or political agendas, or philosophies, or your own goals and accomplishments. That will distort your view of things and cause you to be too trustful or too mistrustful and so you will make missteps. But prayer is the way to spiritual wakefulness, for seeing what really matters — God and salvation and the coming kingdom.

Third, we are to be *thankful* in it. It's too easy to miss the importance of this. The word Paul uses for *prayer* in verse 2 generally means to petition, to ask God for things, but we should never do that without accompanying every request with thanksgiving. In Philippians 4:6, Paul also says that the solution to anxiety is to petition God for everything on your heart — but always with thanksgiving. Why, we might ask, are we to thank God *before* we know whether he will grant our request? The answer is that, on the basis of Romans 8:28 and other texts, we know that he will give us either what we asked or something better — he will give us what we would have sought if we could see the entire picture of history and life and knew all he knows.

To petition with thanksgiving is to drill gratitude into

our hearts even as we spread our needs before God. To the degree we can do that, as Paul says in Philippians 4, we deal a deathblow to anxiety.

Fourth, in the person of Epaphras (verse 12), we learn that this kind of steadfast, wakeful, and thankful prayer is difficult. Epaphras is *struggling on your behalf*. The term Paul uses is for strenuous wrestling with an opponent. Why would prayer be like that? Prayer is opposed by our physical bodies — it is hard to keep our attention focused. It is also opposed to our hearts. It is hard to petition with thanksgiving — we don't really *want* to thank God before we learn if he has given us exactly what we want or not.

Real prayer is work, often hard work. Yet it ultimately is the way to wakefulness, inner peace, and liberation. When in Mark 14 Jesus told this disciples to 'stay awake and pray,' they failed. Yet he did not. He made heartfelt prayer to the Father, asking him, if possible, to let the "cup" of wrath and death pass from him. His prayer was not answered. Yet because he was faithful and went to the cross, we can know that God always hears us, despite our sin (1 John 5:14). So be wakeful, and pray.

# CFW'S SOULFUL WORK LUNCH SERIES

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If the gospel is making all things new, how does this grace change the way we view and experience our work? As we are being formed daily by the gospel, our work increasingly becomes the expression of this new identity. We should hope that our work bears the soulful qualities of this profound transformation. As the gospel begins to grow in our lives, we begin to realize that our problem is not that we expect too much from our work but too little.

As part of this year's Formation initiative at Redeemer, CFW will explore the ways God is expanding our vision for the calling of work. The *Soulful Work Lunch Series* will feature Christians who are pursuing their work and calling in inspiring ways to serve New York City. Each month CFW will host dialogues with professionals from various industries to explore the inherent goodness of work, its instrumental impact, and innovative outcomes. These gatherings will provide glimpses into common struggles and will seek to foster the hope that emerges when we come to expect more from God within our work. The series will provide concrete examples of how formative work is to our calling as disciples of Christ. Lunch and a time of Q&A with the guest will be included.

Upcoming Events include:

- Nov 10 A Conversation with NewYorker.com editor Michael Luo
- Dec 1 Soulful Filmmaking with award-winning filmmaker Ben Stamper
- Jan 31 Soulful Law with Partner at Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP Kyoko Takahashi Lin
- Feb Soulful Investing with CEO and co-founder of the Investors Exchange Brad Katsuyama
- Feb Soulful Entrepreneurship with Founder and President of Tufenkian Import/Export Ventures, Inc., James Tufenkian
- Mar Soulful Healthcare with CEO of Beacon Christian Community Health Center, Dr. David Kim
- Apr Soulful Performing Arts with Tony-Nominated actress Elizabeth Davis
- May Soulful Artistry with world-renowned artist Mako Fujimura
- June Soulful Education with teacher, educator and administrator Dr. Lisa Hertzog

To register for these events, visit [faithandwork.com/soulfulwork](http://faithandwork.com/soulfulwork)

## EQUIPPING CHURCH PLANTERS ... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 3)

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you are very spiritual — but you can be very dry and dying inside. We can replace God with our work of church planting. God desires you and he wants you to delight in him. We've heard about the necessity of prayer and just sitting and spending time with God. That wasn't my expectation. I thought they would say do x, y,

z, but I was taken aback over the focus on my heart. I have enjoyed that. I'm grateful to God."

CTC staff are always so encouraged by spending time with these leaders and feel a little sad when they leave, but they will be walking shoulder to shoulder with these church planters for years to come. If you were unable to give on

CTC Sunday, you can still do so on the Redeemer app or at [redeemer.com/ctcoffering](http://redeemer.com/ctcoffering).

*In addition to the annual intensive in NYC, City to City Asia Pacific has held annual Intensives since 2012, and City to City Latin America will host its first Intensive in 2018.*



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