

A PRAYING PEOPLE

—WEEK 11—

“I can’t do it!” It was 2 AM on Christmas Eve and I was trying my best to put together a giant dollhouse. None of the screws would go all the way into their holes. Half the walls were turned around backward. And I somehow had 5 extra pieces that I had no clue where they belonged.

“I can’t do it!” This is what you say when you come to the end of trying. It’s what you say when you want to throw up your arms and give up. It’s what you cry out when you need someone to help you. It’s what you say when you come to the end of yourself.

It’s also what you say when you try to be a perfect Christian. At least it’s what I say when I try hard to keep this church covenant. At the end of the day or a week, I am often reminded just how much I come up short on obeying the “one another” passages of Scripture.

I try really hard and fail to love my brothers and sisters like God calls me to. I give it my best shot but I still can’t be perfectly holy in all my actions. I want the task of making disciples to be the great aim of my life but I get distracted by Netflix or NFL football.

Our Church Covenant ends like this: “May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.”

Our covenant ends with a prayer because none of us can keep this covenant on our own. We need Jesus. We need one another. We need God’s help. These are the truths that our covenant reminds us:

Our covenant reminds us that we need Jesus. Jesus is the only person who has ever fully and faithfully obeyed the Father. He kept the law perfectly when we failed miserably to keep it. He went to the cross to bear the punishment for our sin. Then he rose again to give us resurrection life to walk in.

Our covenant also reminds us that we need each other. We cannot live the Christian life alone. Our covenant reminds us that our brothers and sisters are here for us. They are here to love us, to care for us, to pray for us, to repent with us when we fail, and to spur us on to greater obedience.

Our covenant reminds us that we need to pray. The only way that we can ever obey this covenant is for us to admit that we need God's help. We must pray in desperation daily that God's Spirit would empower us to walk in obedience. We need the Lord's help and prayer is expressed helplessness.

The good news for Christ Fellowship Church is that the Lord cares more about his glory than we do. He cares more about us loving and caring for one another than we do. So when we pray for the Lord's help in keeping this covenant, we can be sure that this is a prayer that he joyfully loves to answer.

Meditate on God's Word

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." -2 Corinthians 13:14

"Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." - Hebrews 13:20-21

"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." - Jude 24-25

Questions for Application

1. How does the gospel deliver us from trying to fulfill this covenant on our own or from feeling like a failure because we can't do it?
2. Why do we constantly need prayer as God's people? What can we be praying for specifically?
3. What has changed about how you see the church or how you love the church because of the covenant study this semester? What will be different?

Close by praying that God would work in our church and through our church for his glory.