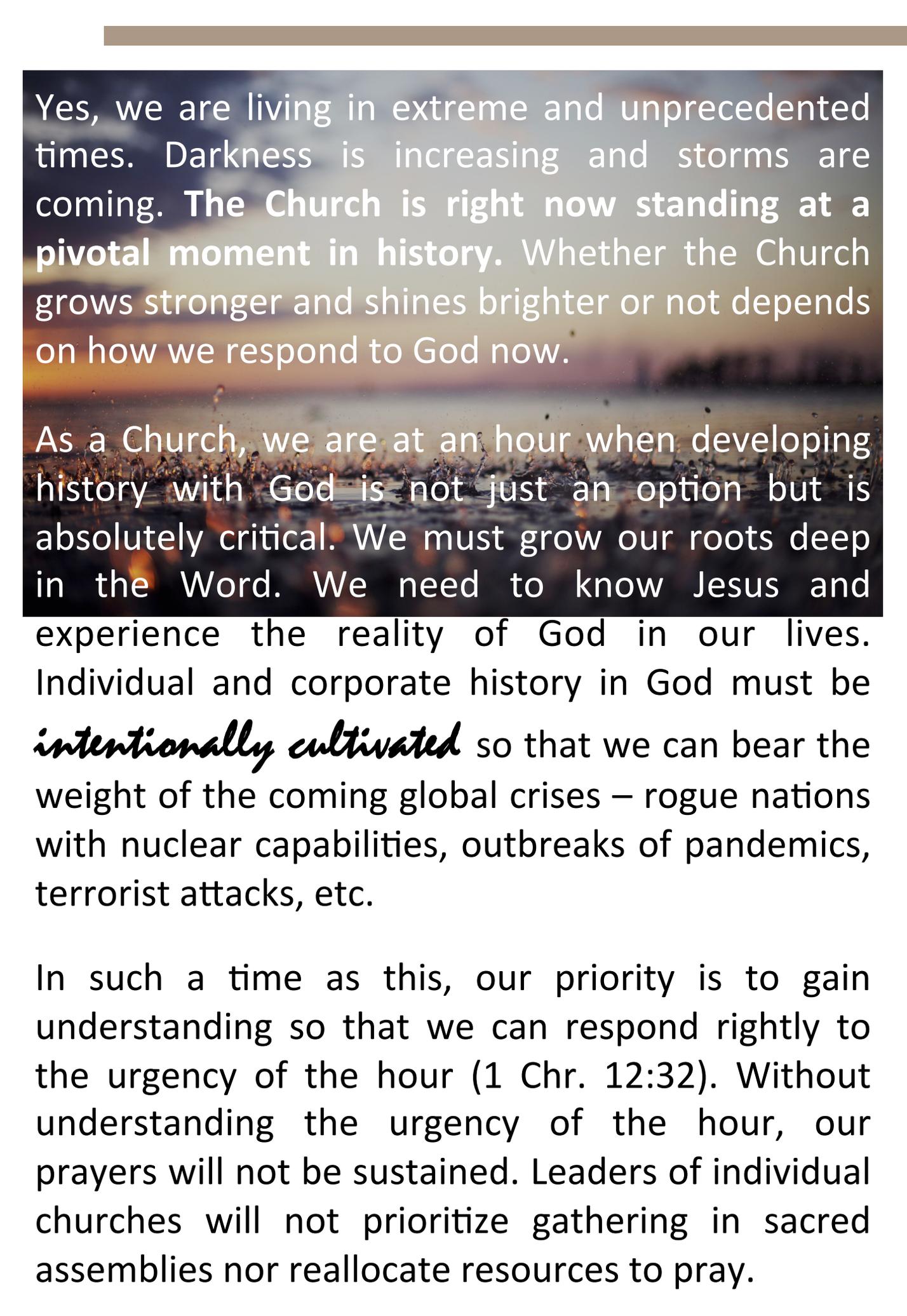




The Lifestyle  
God is  
Looking For

For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it? “Now therefore,” says the Lord, “**Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning...**”

Joel 2:11-12



Yes, we are living in extreme and unprecedented times. Darkness is increasing and storms are coming. The Church is right now standing at a pivotal moment in history. Whether the Church grows stronger and shines brighter or not depends on how we respond to God now.

As a Church, we are at an hour when developing history with God is not just an option but is absolutely critical. We must grow our roots deep in the Word. We need to know Jesus and experience the reality of God in our lives. Individual and corporate history in God must be *intentionally cultivated* so that we can bear the weight of the coming global crises – rogue nations with nuclear capabilities, outbreaks of pandemics, terrorist attacks, etc.

In such a time as this, our priority is to gain understanding so that we can respond rightly to the urgency of the hour (1 Chr. 12:32). Without understanding the urgency of the hour, our prayers will not be sustained. Leaders of individual churches will not prioritize gathering in sacred assemblies nor reallocate resources to pray.

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True understanding of the urgency of the hour will lead to a sustained culture and lifestyle of prayer.

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How Then  
Shall We  
LIVE?

When we use the phrase "*Joel 2 lifestyle*", we are referring to the lifestyle exemplified in the passage of Joel 2:12-17. This involves turning to God with all our hearts, fasting, praying, rending of our hearts and gathering in sacred assemblies to pray.

Joel 2:12 – 17 is probably the clearest passage in the Bible that describes what God wants us to do in times of crises. It tells us exactly what we are to do to receive His mercy and deliverance. In Joel's generation, God warned the Israelites of the coming Babylonian invasion and then gave them a way out through this passage.

*This is God's answer in  
times of crises. There is  
no other solution!*

God's answer is for all of us today. God is asking His people for a specific response. It is a clear "requirement" for the Body of Christ even as the global drama unfolds.

More than a short-lived response or a one-off prayer meeting, God is interested in a deep-seated lifestyle and culture of prayer to be formed in individual lives and in His Church.

Joel 2 lifestyle is more than just a gathering in stadiums for prayer, it is a lifestyle of wholeheartedness. This is expressed through seeking God's face, fasting, prayer and gathering in sacred assemblies. Through cultivating this lifestyle, we will grow to know and understand the Lord's heart. As we know His heart, we will then be able to pray in accordance to His desires and live out His will for our lives.

Joel 2:12-13

# Turning to God with Wholeheartedness



God requires that we turn to Him with wholeheartedness and to love Him with all of our heart (Matt. 22:37). God wants all of our heart. This in itself is so powerful! The fact that He desires our love more than anything else reveals His heart. It is in the place of giving our hearts to Him as an offering that we experience His deliverance.

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“Turning to Him with all our heart” involves turning to God in repentance, fasting and prayer. This is God’s definition of wholeheartedness. This is what He is looking for.

God is not legalistically demanding the outward form of doing things. He is looking for our love, our constant heart connect and agreement with Him. These can only be cultivated through living a lifestyle of fasting, prayer and seeking His face.



# Rend our Hearts

Joel 2:13

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Rending our hearts before God is not an option if we want to be wholehearted. To rend means to tear something violently or forcibly. When we “violently tear” our heart away from areas of sin, we are aligning ourselves with what God requires.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talks about a radical pursuit of righteousness that painfully tears the heart in the process (Matt. 5:29-30). Do not pursue wholeheartedness in a casual way that allows for sin or compromise.

*Do not pursue a wholeheartedness in a casual way that allows for sin and compromise. Instead, radically forsake all compromise*

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Some would rather not change their lifestyle in their quest for freedom. We want the Lord to cause our problems to evaporate without any cost or struggle. We do not mind fasting a few meals or giving a few hours to cry out in the prayer room. But we resist the pain of tearing our hearts. Yet the Lord will empower us in our efforts, as we cooperate with Him.

God wants us to tear our heart in our love for Him, just as He tears His heart in His pursuit of us. God wants all of our heart. He is looking for us to live a lifestyle that involves honesty in dealing with our hearts. He wants us to fast, pray and seek His face so that our hearts will be continually connected with His.



*Will We  
Say Yes?*

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A vintage typewriter is centered on a wooden surface. To its left is a dark green book, and to its right are several yellowed, aged papers. The entire scene is framed by a white border.

# Readings and Prayers for the Week

## **Readings for Week 3**

As we read through Joel 2:12-17, ask ourselves what is God looking for in our lives. Why does He require such a response from His people? How then should we respond?

Prayerfully seek out a sacred assembly where you can be a part of regularly. Link up with like-minded people who would like to develop this lifestyle, so that you can spur each other on to walk it out.

## **Prayer for Week 3**

Use Col 1:9-12 to pray for the Church, that we will know God's will for us in the time and season we are living in. Pray for grace for us to walk out the Joel 2 lifestyle, to develop a lifestyle of prayer, to rend our hearts and live wholeheartedly for Him.