

I. Introduction:

- A.** There more I take time to prayerfully reflect on 2020, and process everything that transpired, the more I have come to see it as something akin to a dividing line. From the complex racial and civil unrest that erupted related to the death of George Floyd, to the heightened toxicity of a presidential transition in the age of unprecedented mainstream and social media bias, to the lethal COVID-19 pandemic that swept over the world—there has been a lot to process.
- B.** What I want to do tonight is challenge us all to think more clearly and biblically about where we are heading as disciples of Jesus in light of what has transpired during the previous calendar year. It seems that in the sovereignty of God, Jesus has afforded His church a dividing line in the form of 2020. I'm going to ask some questions to help you understand where you are at with respect to this dividing line so you can see where you stand with Him. We should consider it a gift when God allows circumstances to expose us and reveal who we really are.

II. Four important areas of reflection from 2020:**1. The issue of race.** Has your heart been tenderized toward our black brothers and sisters?

- George Floyd's death led to national and international protests and demonstrations. The images and videos from the incident swept over the world. In fact, Derek Chauvin, the officer who knelt on Floyd's neck, is on trial right now for murder. They are currently selecting jurors for the trial. Please pray for this situation.
- I believe that George Floyd's death, and the subsequent protesting and demonstrating, was a time to pay attention, especially to black Americans. It was not a time to snap back with "White Lives Matter," or "All Lives Matter" or a time to post snarky political memes on social media. Listening is the beginning of loving, and in a time when many white people and white Christians were to take a listening (open, teachable and receptive) posture, many missed the memo. What did you do? I'm not talking about did we agree or disagree on the looting or violence. I'm talking about, in the past year, did you learn anything? Did your heart tenderize toward the people of color you worship with at church, or work with, or live near? Which side of the dividing line are you on here? Are you on the one side of the line that is believers growing in love for and understanding of one another, or are you on the other side stuck getting harder and more argumentative with regard to race? Have you asked God to give you a deeper understanding and a greater appreciation for people of color? Have you repented of overt racism or unperceived racial biases? Are you growing to love all people, tribes tongues and languages (as each Christian should be)? The beauty of God is revealed in the diversity of the races and skin colors He created! (See John 13:34-35.)

2. The issue of the Great Commission. Have you become more energized about discipleship, or more entrenched in partisanship?

- Most of 2020 was inundated with political campaigning regarding the presidential election. As the year went on, the rhetoric inside and outside of the church became more and more toxic. The period of time specifically between the general election and President Biden being sworn in will go down in history for its infamy. Which side of the dividing line are you on here? Have the events of the last year moved you to disciple more, or become more partisan? Are you thinking of and taking about investing in others so they can know and walk with Jesus, or are you more fully committed to a political party? Think honestly about what has dominated your thoughts and speech in the last year. Who are you becoming? (See Matthew 28:18-20.)

3. The issue of compassion. Have you grown in empathy toward those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, or have you grown insensitive due to the perceived infringement on your rights?

- Perhaps the trademark of Jesus' ministry was His compassion (Mark 1:41, Luke 4:18). Time after time we see His care for the sick, the dying, the hungry, etc. Which side of the dividing line are you on here? Has your heart grown more genuinely compassionate, or have you become insensitive about the pain of others? 500,000+ fatalities in the U.S. due to COVID-19 should deeply grieve us.

4. The issue of truth. Have you grown to more deeply love the biblical truth of God's word, or have you become ensnared in the culture that spawns sensationalized lies ranging from subtle misinformation to overt disinformation?

- Which side of the dividing line are you on here? Have you received a deeper love for the truth throughout 2020? Did you get swept up in all the false presidential predictions, false prophecies, COVID-19 conspiracies, etc.? (See 2 Thessalonians 2:10.)

5. Honorable mentions: 5) Financial stewardship; 6) marriage and family life; 7) prayer and personal devotion. How are you doing here? **Friends, 2020 was a test. Did you pass or fail?** Let's take a moment to prayerfully reflect and pray together.

Help me improve my notes! The first person to point out a legitimate mistake/typo on this document (during service) gets \$1.

Greater Peoria House of Prayer Announcements for March 12, 2021.

1. **Welcome** to the Greater Peoria House of Prayer... we're glad you're here and blessed to be worshipping God with you! Be sure to pick up the **free** materials at the back table in the prayer room or the desk near the front of the downstairs fellowship area, which includes teaching notes, stickers, pens, prayer cards and more. **Daily schedule:** We have morning prayer right here in this room seven days a week from 7-8 a.m. Monday - Friday and 8-9 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. We have afternoon prayer four days a week: Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 11:30 a.m. - noon. We have evening prayer with live worship from 6-8 p.m. Monday - Saturday. On Friday's, we have an extra prayer gathering from 10 a.m. - noon. Our **Friday Encounter Night** is from 6-9 p.m. and is our main corporate gathering each Friday evening featuring live worship and a teaching to inspire love for Jesus and prayer.
2. **UPCOMING EVENTS:**
 - We're open from 7-8 p.m. every night seven days a week. Hope to gather with you in prayer!
 - We have a family leadership lunch on March 20 at 11 a.m. Avanti's will be served at 12:30 p.m. You're invited!
 - I am asking our community to come to evening prayer as much as possible throughout April as we inquire of the Lord together about the next season.
3. **Prayer room ministry opportunities:** If you are interested in leading or ministering during a live worship set by singing, playing an instrument, prayer leading or behind the sound board, please contact us at info@gphop.org. We'd love to have you serve on one of our teams! **Team ministry opportunities:** If you feel the Lord has gifted you in the prophetic (or would like to grow in this gifting) and would consider helping on a prophetic team, send an email to info@gphop.org. Contact Mandy Kistner at mandy@gphop.org if you would like to schedule a future healing ministry appointment or help out on the healing team.
4. **Missions:** Please keep the following missionaries we support in prayer as well as be sensitive to their financial needs: **Ashley Bucknam** (YWAM, Hawaii); **Alicia Wright** (India); **Tim and Blair Fraim** (Florianopolis House of Prayer; Florianopolis, Brazil); **Eric and Erin Simmons** (Minnesota House of Prayer Network; Twin Cities, MN); **Austin and Amy Zhu** and **Phil Kellenberger** (International House of Prayer; Kansas City, MO); **Babett Mueller** (111 Global; Kansas City, MO). Also keep friends **Tyler and Sarah Cook** and family in prayer who lead the Illinois Valley House of Prayer in Ottawa, IL.
5. **Military:** Please keep the following members of our military in prayer as they valiantly serve the United States of America: **Jake Gerst**, currently stationed in Grafenwoehr/Grafenwöhr, Germany.
6. **Social media:** Follow us on Facebook (Greater Peoria House of Prayer - GPHOP), Twitter (@GPHOPrayer), Instagram (@GPHOPrayer), Vimeo and YouTube for regular updates and inspiration. Use these social media sites to get the word out, share pictures, quotes you heard, etc. Contact Derek at derek@gphop.org if you're interested in helping with GPHOP's social media.
7. **Haven ministries:** Do you need space to pray just one-on-one. Maybe your Christian group needs a place to meet every once in awhile. We're making available the upper Prayer Room and lower-level Gathering Grounds for rent by donation. Email info@gphop.org if interested.
8. We provide **free Wi-Fi** to everyone here! The password for the **GPHOP** router is on the chalkboard in the downstairs fellowship area. You can also connect to either the CableWiFi or xfinitywifi routers if you have a personal Comcast account.
9. **Prayer requests:** If you would like our community to pray for something specific, please submit it to info@gphop.org.
10. **Giving:** If you have been blessed by the GPHOP and would like sow financially into the ministry, we would be more than blessed. You can give in cash, but if you would like to give to GPHOP with a check, please make it out to "Greater Peoria House of Prayer" or "GPHOP"—your gift is tax deductible. Thank you for your generosity! It's helping make day and night prayer with worship possible in central Illinois. You can place your gift in the Saturday night offering during the 7 p.m. teaching or drop it in either of the two black donation boxes. Donations can also be mailed to our physical address at 117 East Washington Street, East Peoria, IL 61611. Donors can also use PayPal or our website (gphop.org/donate) to give electronically.

*Thank you for helping to **keep this prayer room sacred** by ensuring conversations with others are brief and kindly reminding others to do the same. Use the large Gathering Grounds fellowship area downstairs if you would like to chat at length.*