



JOURNEYCHURCH

21 DAYS OF PRAYER

GUIDE TO PRAYER & FASTING

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INTRO

This 21-Day Prayer Journey was written by people who love Jesus deeply. Though imperfect, they've experienced healing, strength, and hope in His presence. Our prayer is that as you walk through these days of prayer, your faith is strengthened, your heart is renewed, and you encounter Jesus in a fresh and powerful way.

HOW TO USE THIS DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

Use this 21-day guide to draw closer to God through daily prayer and reflection. Each day includes Scripture, a devotional thought, and a focused prayer theme. You can use this personally, with a friend, or as a family.

FASTING GUIDE

What does the Bible teach about fasting?

Biblical fasting involves abstaining from eating (and/or drinking) for spiritual purposes.

In the Old Testament, Israel celebrated certain annual fasts, the most prominent being the Day of Atonement. There were also occasional fasts tied to specific historical events, sometimes individual and sometimes corporate. Here are a few of the occasions for fasting: at a time of grief (I Sam. 31:13; Nehemiah 1:4), at a time of repentance (I Sam 7:6; I Kings 21:27), as an expression of humility (Ezra 8:21; Psalm 69:10), and as an expression of a need for God's guidance and help. What all of these fasts share in common is that they were an expression of dependence on God. Isaiah 58 reminds us that the kind of fast God desires goes beyond skipping meals. As we fast, we are not just giving something up—we are aligning our hearts with God's heart for people.

Several New Testament passages give us insight about fasting.

Fasting teaches us to that God's Word nourishes us: Matthew 4:1-4 records the only example of Jesus fasting, just prior to His being tempted in the wilderness. He faced temptation with these words, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 8:3-5 which talks about the 40 years Israel spent in the wilderness, depending daily on manna to sustain them. He says that God humbled them and let them be hungry in order to teach them to depend on God's Word to sustain them. By His example of fasting, Jesus reminds us that food alone can't sustain us. We need to be nourished by God's Word.

Fasting teaches us that doing God's will sustains us: John 4:31-35 records Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well. When the disciples return, they encourage Jesus to eat. He responds by saying, "I have food to eat that you know not of." Then He adds, "My food is to do the will of the Father." Again, Jesus reminds us that food alone is not enough. We are sustained by doing God's will.

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Fasting teaches us that Jesus Himself sustains us: In John 6:48-50 Jesus says, “I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.” We see this pictured symbolically in the bread and the cup of the Lord’s supper. Jesus is the source of eternal life. Fasting is feasting on Jesus.

Jesus assumed that fasting would be a part of His disciple’s spiritual life. In Matthew 6:16-18, He says, “when you fast,” not “if you fast.” He warns us not to fast to impress people, but to be near to the heart of God.

What is the purpose of fasting?

Fasting is designed to intensify our dependence on God by weakening our dependence on food and other things. How does it do that?

Fasting reveals and heals our dependence on food (and other things) to fill the discomfort caused by low self-esteem, unfulfilling work, unloving relationships, uncontrollable circumstances, etc. It removes the false peace derived from the pleasure of eating.

Richard Foster says, “More than any other discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us. This is a wonderful benefit to the true disciple who longs to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed almost immediately. David writes, “I humbled my soul with fasting” (Psalm 69:10). Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear—if they are within us, they will surface during fasting.”

Fasting teaches us that we can go without getting what we want and survive. Fasting can free us from having to have what we want. Therefore, fasting can teach moderation or self-control, not only in relation to food, but in other areas as well. It teaches contentment. (1 Timothy 6:6)

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Fasting expresses and deepens our hunger for God. Richard Foster says, “Fasting reminds us that we are sustained “by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God:” (Matt. 4:4). Food does not sustain us; God sustains us. In Christ, “All things hold together” (Colossians 1:17). Therefore, in experiences of fasting, we are abstaining from food or other activities and feasting on God’s Word. Fasting must always, first and foremost, center on God. It must be about Him.

Step 1: Clarify the purpose of your fast

Why are you fasting? Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer fast. This will enable you to pray more specifically and strategically. Fasting is God-led and God-initiated. That means that He fuels a desire to fast and pray. He loves it when we fast.

Step 2: Specify the kind of fast you will do

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus implied that all of His followers should fast. (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14,15) For Him it was a matter of when believers would fast, not if they would do it.

Before you fast, decide the following up front:

- How long you will fast - one meal, one day, one week, several weeks, certain days (beginners should start slowly, building up to longer fasts)?
- The type of fast God wants you to undertake - discussed in the Types of Fasts section below.
- What physical or social activities you will restrict.
- How much time each day you will devote to prayer and God’s Word

Making these commitments ahead of time will help you sustain your fast when physical temptations and life’s pressures tempt you to abandon it.

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Step 3: Prepare your heart, mind, and body for fasting

Fasting is not a spur-of-the-moment thing. It is planned. We must prepare. The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Unconfessed sin can hinder your prayers. There are several things you can do to prepare your heart.

- Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment. Some persons should never fast without professional supervision.
- Do not rush into your fast. Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Avoid high fat and sugary foods. Eating raw fruit and vegetables prior to your fast is helpful. Physical preparation makes the drastic change in your eating routine a little easier so that you can turn your full attention to the Lord in prayer.
- Prepare your heart and mind: Remember that God is your Father and He loves you and is for you.
- Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and accept God's forgiveness (1John 1:9). Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended and forgive all who have hurt you (Mark 11:25; Luke 11:4; 17:3,4). Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.
- Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1, 2). Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power, wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion, and others. (Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8, 11-13)
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart. (Hebrews 11:6)
- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit. (Galatians 5:16,17)
- Finally, and of deep importance, Jesus instructs us in Matthew to not let others know about your fasting. The strict details of your fast should not be something you constantly talk about to others. It should remain between you and God.

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Types of Fasts

Now that we have explored the Old and New Testament teaching and instruction on fasting, we can proceed to discuss specific kinds of fasts. Let us begin with the helpful words of Richard Foster in his classic, *Celebration of Discipline*: “As with all the Disciplines, a progression should be observed; it is wise to learn to walk well before we try to run.”

Biblical fasting almost always concerns food. Since the purpose of fasting, as we saw above, is to focus on God, to humble ourselves and to remind ourselves that we are sustained by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, then the task in fasting is connecting our “going without” to “hungering for God.” This takes time, focus and prayer in itself. Please do not expect to be an “expert” at fasting right away. Fasting is a discipline that can take a very long time to understand well. Also, do not let this fact deter you or intimidate you.

Fasting is not unlike a beautifully written masterpiece of literature. It is simple enough for a youth to understand and enjoy, and yet magnificently rich enough for the scholar to devote his/her entire life to.

Abstaining from certain types of foods (meat, sweets, etc.) - Daniel 10:3 ~ This type is a good one for beginners to fasting or those with health needs and special or restrictive diets.

Choose to abstain from something like breads, sweets, sodas, coffee, or even red meat. Perhaps spend some time reading through Daniel’s fast in Daniel chapter 1 and chapter 10. Stick to only fruits and vegetables like he did or something similar.

Determine the timing and duration of your fast and begin. You may choose to go without this specific type of food on only certain days like Fridays, or you may go without during the weekdays only or perhaps every day.

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Finally, choose the duration of your fast. This fast is 21 days (January 6 – January 26), but that does not mean you must go without for all of the 21 days. Determine the timing and duration ahead of time and stick to it. Rather, pray through it.

Abstaining from all food - Esther 4:16; Acts 9:9

This kind of fast is more difficult but can be broken up by timing and duration. This seems to be the most prevalent of the fasts we see in the Bible. It is also the most intimidating but refuse to let it scare you. Fasting from all food is not scary if you determine beforehand when you will do so and for how long.

Here are some ideas:

- Start slowly. Begin with fasting for only a part of a day (lunch, or lunch and dinner). Do this for one day a week, or perhaps three days a week. You determine the timing and duration. Take a step of faith. Fasting is risky and involves our faith.
- Next, try fasting from food but not beverages. This means that according to your timing and duration, you would not eat any solid foods but only water, juices, smoothies, or perhaps simple soup broths.
- Do this for the first one or two weeks. Devote the time that you normally would eat to Scripture reading and prayer. Focus on Jesus' statements about food.
- Next, try a 24-hour fast. This means that you get up and eat a good breakfast and drink only water or juice until the following breakfast the next day. Set aside specific time, during normal mealtimes, if possible, to pray and seek God.
- Finally, you may progress to a two or three day fast. For some, progression may lead to a multi-day, even multi-week fast. But remember the purpose of your fast.

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Abstaining from entertainment - Daniel 6:18

The king's voluntary "fasting" from entertainment in the time of Daniel helps us further understand yet another type of fast. Fasting from entertainment can be particularly helpful and accessible to kids and teens.

Think of abstaining from television, social media, video games, all reading except the Bible, music, texting, etc. for the duration of your fast. This can be a very powerful decision even as a supplement to food fasts.

Choosing your fasting plan is a very personal decision. We are all at different places in our walk with God and our spirituality should never be a cause for comparison or competition. There is nothing more "inherently spiritual" about one type of fast as opposed to another. Your personal fast should present a level of challenge to it, but know your body, know your options, and most importantly, seek God in prayer about this and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do. It's also important to not let what you eat or do not eat become the focus of your fast. This is a time to disconnect enough with your regular patterns and habits in order to connect more closely to God.

If you do not choose to fast, or no matter what kind of fast you choose, seek God with us in prayer.

LOVE GOD

January 5 - Who is God?

Job 38:4-11, NKJV

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut in the sea with doors, when it burst forth and issued from the womb; when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band; when I fixed My limit for it, and set bars and doors; when I said, ‘This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!’”

God, in short, is our Creator and Savior although there is so much more to why we use these two simple words to define Him. Job 38:4-11 shows God humbling Job by asking questions about creation and who created all the miraculous things our world has to offer. The answer is obvious; God didn't expect Job to answer. He makes this plain to Job with his first two questions in verses 4 and 5 being, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know!” God asked this because He wants Job, and all of us, to understand His power clearly. He is our all-powerful Creator who built this world with perfect measurements with might no human could muster. A master craftsman that filled us all with the breath of life.

The Bible reveals how deep God's love for us is with His sacrifice made on Golgotha. Contemplate how much love it would take to go to those lengths. However, we know that God did not change His nature to make this sacrifice; we learn of His love for us as far back as Exodus with God speaking directly to Moses saying, “...The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...” (Exodus 34:6-7a).

Furthermore, in Deuteronomy 7:9 God expounds on His love for us saying, “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations...” In these three verses we learn why He ultimately chose to become our Savior because of His unconditional love for His people. He has mercy on those who have fallen, keeping His covenant of forgiveness even to the point of allowing the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, fulfilling that covenant for all future generations. Yes, God is our Creator and Savior, “Surely you know” now why we call Him as such.

Prayer Prompt

God, help us to always appreciate the fullness of who You are. Let your grandeur, mercy, and love keep us humble as we walk through our earthly life, thinking always of your majesty. Help us to never take your presence for granted but to always be thankful to have such a powerful and merciful God, ever in awe of You.

LOVE GOD

January 6 - Love God because He Loves Us

1 John 4:16, NKJV

“And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”

John 3:16-17, ESV

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

As we see written in 1 Corinthians 13:4, “Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up...”. So this Biblical definition of love looks like being warm and gentle with others in their times of distress, not approaching them with ulterior motives or a desire to have what is theirs. 1 John 4:16 declares God is love, and if we abide in love, we abide in Him. We need to live life with His genuine love flowing out of us. We should produce love in our lives like a branch grows fruit. Without His love we cannot truly be Christ-followers, and without having love within us we cannot walk like Him.

Because of Adam and Eve’s Original Sin, humanity is born separated from God. Romans 3:23 says, “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Later in Romans 6:23, we read, “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” We all are innate sinners, and we all deserve a death penalty because of those sins. But God loved us too much to let our story end there. He became the perfect sacrifice to pay the price for the sins of the world so that we could have the opportunity to live a life free from sin and spend eternity with Him. He did this while we were still sinners with no guarantee that we would ever choose Him. How can we do anything but love Him back because of His great love for us? His love for us is unconditional and proven again and again.

If you are feeling unloved or forgotten today, remember that God loved YOU so much that He died on a cross to pay the ransom for your sins. God has been seeking you and longs for you to turn to Him. You can honor his sacrifice by turning to Him, repenting of your sins, thanking Him for His eternal love, and loving Him back in the way He defines for us in His word.

Prayer Prompt

Jesus, push me to love like you do, desiring to love with patience and understanding. Lead me away from jealousy and boasting, not allowing them to corrupt my love for you or for others. I want to walk in an abundance of love. Lord, I love you because you first loved me. Every day of my life, you've been pursuing me and blessing me even though I'm undeserving. Before I ever called your name, you had already paid the price for my sins. Thank you for loving me enough to pay the ultimate price. Help me remember your sacrifice. I long to love you the way you love me.

LOVE GOD

January 7 - Love God through Prayer

Daniel 6:6-10, ESV

“Then these high officials and satraps came by agreement to the king and said to him, ‘O King Darius, live forever! All the high officials of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked.’ Therefore King Darius signed the document and injunction. When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.”

Living in our digital world today involves finding one’s attention pulled in a hundred different directions. Unfortunately because we as humans cannot give attention to life’s concerns without simultaneously giving away our time, focus, and energy, we must rely on deeply rooted, spiritually-intent priorities that can only be instilled through the practice of diligent prayer and communion with God. This irreplaceable act of prayer is vital to keep the importance of God and His kingdom placed above the entities that we are constantly receiving new information about - including governments, corporations, and even culture. Because of the sheer amount of data input we process, we are faced with hard choices regarding where we put our energy.

Daniel was confronted with a test of loyalties. Knowing King Darius’ decree to banish any prayer in the kingdom except to his own self, Daniel did not hesitate to continue worshiping the one true God anyways. He followed his customary practice from the beginning of his walk with God, continuing not only to pray consistently, but openly and unabashedly.

He was a loyal subject of his king, yet he knew that the King of Kings deserved a higher loyalty. Daniel refused to give to the government the measure of obedience that belonged to God alone. Like Daniel, we need to submit every crisis to God's sovereignty. Communicating with Him gives a stability of the mind, heart, soul, and spirit that no remedy of this world could provide. Philippians 4:6-7 emphasizes this antidote to the fear that we as Christians are faced with surrounded by a sinful world that is waiting to be redeemed. It instructs us "do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Because God's presence is the antithesis of the world's spiritual condition today, the feelings of anxiety and apprehension that may come with living our lives can be washed away by a God who has already paid the ultimate price and cleared the way for us to live in victory over our sin's devices through prayer.

Prayer Prompt

Lord God, teach us more of the importance of prayer in each of our lives. Help us not to miss the wonder and the weight of what we're doing as we pray now in this very moment. Help draw us into deeper intimacy with you in prayer, and help us to be long in prayer, such that it's evident by the way we live, that prayer to us is more important than life itself. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LOVE GOD

January 8 - Love God through Scripture

Deuteronomy 6:6-9, ESV

“And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

As Moses prepared God’s chosen people to enter the land of Canaan, he emphasized the importance of truly honoring God by showing reverence to His Word. Although the Israelites had endured immense hardships immediately preceding the time that this passage took place, Moses was conveying the importance of the Word of God as something that is sustaining for all seasons and situations of our lives and not just when we find ourselves in our lowest valleys. This daily obedience to the command of the Lord would demonstrate a genuine love for God and result in close communion with Him, while disobedience would exhibit an unbelieving heart and unacceptable contempt for the Lord, His Word, and His Will.

Not only did each Israelite spoken to in these passages need to constantly reflect on God’s laws, he needed to pass the knowledge to his descendants as well. In other words, the knowledge of God should flow from the individual’s private heart to his own family in the home. But we must take it abroad as well. The Bible references this very topic many times, including David when he mentions in Psalms 1:2 that a believer’s, “...delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.”

In essence, the true transformational power of the Bible takes hold whenever we lean on His word to the point that it is woven into our lives from the time we wake to the time we sleep again. Because the Word of God is dynamic and alive, it cannot help but flow through us and out of us whenever we truly have it hidden in our hearts. If we indeed do possess and manifest God's word internally, then we also understand our mission to spread God's love, and it cannot truly be hidden in our hearts; its truth and light will gush out of us like water through the cracks of a quarry. Loving His Holy Word shows a love for Him.

Prayer Prompt

Heavenly Father, thank You for the Word of God and all the wisdom and instructions it contains. I pray that we will abide in You and You in us, that our lives would be a testimony of Your goodness and grace. May our actions, attitudes, speech, and motives reflect beings that love the Word of God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LOVE GOD

January 9 - Love God through Worship

John 4:23, NKJV

One day Jesus decided to return to Galilee through Samaria; this was not the usual route for the Jewish traveler, but He knew He had a divine appointment. As the disciples went off to the city, He sat down there at Jacob's well and waited. This detour was meant for a woman who needed to hear about the Living Water that only He could give. He knew that she would eventually bring the whole town out to see Him and many would believe in Him. This is a familiar story, but notice that she and Jesus end their conversation speaking about worship. Jesus makes this prophetic statement, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him."

Throughout the Bible the thread of worship is woven between God and His people. Adam and Eve fellowshiped with God in the cool of the day, their sons made offerings to God, Noah built an altar, and Abraham bowed down to God; Moses and Miriam sang songs of praise and worship after they crossed the Red Sea, the judges and the prophets all worshiped God, and perhaps one of the most famous worshipers of the Old Testament was King David. These all worshiped before the Messiah came to Earth. For millennia the Israelites tried to stay faithful to the one true God of the Patriarchs and worship Him, but repeatedly failed.

In this passage, Jesus is telling the woman at the well that the Father is seeking a certain type of worshiper and that He will freely give the Living Water to all who ask. Later in John 7:38 Jesus gives us more information about that Living Water: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of Living Water.' (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they who believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

These verses reveal what Jesus was truly saying that day at the well. The Father seeks worshipers that are filled with the Holy Spirit and who will worship Him in the same Spirit of Truth. What an invitation! Jesus said in John 16:13 that when the Spirit of Truth has come, He will guide us into all truth. We can be the true worshipers that the Father seeks.

Prayer Prompt

Let's pray this prayer together. Lord, today we pray that we will be filled with your Spirit so that we will be able to worship You in Spirit and in Truth as You desire to be worshiped. We honor You and revere You, Almighty God. We recognize Your power and your authority. Help us to walk in the Spirit today and to speak Truth. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

LOVE GOD

January 10 - Love God through Obedience

Acts 9:10-18, NKJV

“Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ And he said, ‘Here I am, Lord.’ So the Lord said to him, ‘Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.’ Then Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.’ But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.’ And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’ Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.”

Obedience to God is necessary for a successful, Apostolic walk. It demonstrates our maturity and faith in Him and His commandments. We see Ananias obey God in a seemingly impossible situation by God having him lay hands on the man that persecuted and killed his brothers in Christ. The fact that Ananias loved our Lord so deeply, that he followed His instruction and prayed for Saul is a true testament to his trust in God’s words. Ananias played a pivotal role in creating one of the most powerful apostles of all time.

We should all strive to be like Ananias, having a love for God that surpasses all earthly emotions of anger and frustration. Being able to be obedient without question or thought shows a love for God's commands that nothing else truly can match.

What Ananias was told to do may be incomparable to what God is asking of us, but rest assured when you are given a command that is hard to accomplish on your own, obeying His word embodies your love toward Him.

Prayer Prompt

God help us to desire to love you through obedience. Help us to not doubt your commands, and let the fruit of our obedience instill faith in us. Free us from doubt and let us hold onto your Word and commandments.

LOVE PEOPLE

January 12 - Love God by Loving People

John 15:12-13, ESV

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”

Because we are God’s people and He died for us, His greatest joy is to see us love one another, as brothers and sisters in Him. Later in this chapter, in verse 16, it is written that God chose us so that we can bear fruit. God is love, and because He first loved us, we should show His love to others. Throughout the Bible, the idea that we should be a light and carry the fragrance of God is mentioned many times. The fruit of the Spirit is filled with His aroma. If we want to be seen as holy in a world full of sin, we need to reflect the love of God through our own appearances, words, and actions. Even as our personal relationships with God are our top priority, loving others through the word of God should be a close second because that shows our love for Him too.

Now, our love for others should never surpass our love for Him. If we see other people or objects as greater than our relationship with the Lord, our spiritual walk will falter; we must be careful not to create idols of worship in our lives. We must always put God first. Find the right balance between loving God and loving others, and no matter what, keep in mind that God loves us more than we can imagine. The author of the entire universe, the Creator of the stars we see and the wind we feel, created us. All of us. Loving your fellow neighbor, even to the point of death for their sake, is Biblical and smiled upon by God. He loves to know His children care for one another, just as He loves us.

Prayer Prompt

Jesus, thank You for designing our bodies and minds in a way that is pleasing to You. Thank You for giving us the chance to show the people around us Your mercy, holiness, and love. Guide us in our walk with You and in our relationships with others, Lord. We understand that our love for You is shown by our love for people; guide us to find the balance between these levels of love that is perfect for our personal relationships with You, in a way that glorifies Your name. Amen.

LOVE PEOPLE

January 13 - Love People through Relationships

John 13:35, ESV

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1 John 4:7-9, ESV

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.”

Matthew 22:36-37 & 39, ESV

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” ...And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

The two greatest commandments that God gave were in relation to love: to love the Lord God with all your heart, mind, and soul and to love your neighbor as yourself. The Bible makes it clear that our loving others is vital to God. Jesus says in John 13 that His disciples will be known by their love for one another. To be marked as a disciple of God, we must have His love illuminating through our lives. Godly love is a supernatural love that we could not show on our own. We need to be filled with His Spirit, so that His authentic love flows through us and becomes visible to the people we form relationships with.

God so loved the world that He sent His Son with the intention of being the ultimate, sinless sacrifice so that we could one day be in relationship with Him forever in Heaven. He sacrificed and prepared so much that we could all be saved from damnation. There are not enough words to describe how immeasurable God’s love is for us.

When we begin to comprehend God's love for the world, it will change our every interaction. God prioritizes love above all other commandments, and we should as well. Prioritizing love means loving people unconditionally and putting effort and time into investing in bonds with them.

Loving others looks like growing relationships with them. God desires a relationship with each of us, so we can show our care and heavenly love for each other by seeking out friendships and relationships that give us an opportunity to display and exercise the love of God to them. Are your relationships exemplifying God's love? Are you investing time into friendships? Show God's love for people through the relationships you build. Let it be a proof that you serve and worship a loving God.

Prayer Prompt

Pray that God will fill your heart with His love in such a deep way that it overflows into every relationship in your life. Ask Him to help you love beyond convenience, beyond emotions, and beyond what feels easy—so that your love reflects His sacrificial, patient, Spirit-empowered love. Pray that your life would be a visible witness of God's heart, and that others would recognize Christ in you by the way you love, serve, forgive, and invest in people.

Ask the Lord to show you:

- *anyone you may need to forgive*
- *anyone He wants you to intentionally love and invest in*
- *any ways you can grow in loving like Jesus*

Close by thanking God for His immeasurable love toward you—and ask Him to help you love others the same way.

LOVE PEOPLE

January 14 - Love People through

Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-22, NKJV

“Then Peter came to Jesus and said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’”

Peter’s question was an opportunity for Jesus to explain the magnitude of forgiveness. He understood that it would often be difficult in the flesh and would require our reliance on His love and grace. He also knew in the simple act of choosing to forgive others, we would reap great rewards in our own lives. He told Peter, not seven times, but four hundred-ninety times; in other words, we must always forgive. Jesus is an expert on this topic. As our Savior, His role in the plan of salvation is the Forgiver. When we are drawn by His Spirit and convicted, we come to Him confessing our sins, as 1 John 1:9 says, “He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” In His infinite mercy He releases us from the penalty of our trespasses and gives us freedom and eternal life.

Continuing in Matthew 18, Jesus tells a parable about the Kingdom of Heaven. A certain king, wanting to settle his accounts, pardoned one of his servants. The king was moved with compassion when the man fell before him and forgave him his debt. However, that servant went out and demanded payment from another fellow servant, who owed him a debt; and when that servant begged for mercy, he had no compassion but threw him in prison.

When the king heard about this, he called him to himself and said, “‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ And his master was angry and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

‘So My heavenly Father will also do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.’” Our own forgiveness comes with a condition attached to it. It is a very serious subject with God.

Yes, God is faithful and just to forgive us, but He also requires that we forgive others. This concept is fundamental to being a Christian. We must walk in love, daily extending mercy to those around us. We may think some people are undeserving of our forgiveness because of the hurt, pain, financial loss, or other offense that may have been done to us, but we must learn to quickly forgive because not only does it bring a special gift of reconciliation and peace in our own lives, but it is one of the most selfless and kindest acts of love that we can do for others.

Take some time today to examine your relationships. Is there anyone in your life who has something against you or if you are holding a grudge or offense against someone else? If your answer is yes, I encourage you to make a phone call or send a text message and find a way to come to reconciliation and forgiveness. The more you exercise this vital Christian attribute, the easier it will become, and your heavenly Father will be well-pleased with you!

Prayer Prompt

Pray that God will help you release every offense and freely forgive, just as He has forgiven you. Ask Him to heal any hurt, soften your heart, and give you grace to extend mercy, reconciliation, and peace to others.

LOVE PEOPLE

January 15 - Love People through Giving

Acts 2:44-47, ESV

“And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

As we read the Bible, we see over and over again that when we give, more gets added unto us. As the believers in Acts 2 gave everything they had with intentions of pleasing the Lord, they received blessings. This is something that God will always do! In 2 Corinthians 9:7, it is written that “God loves a cheerful giver.” This is because God loved us first; so much so that He gave us a gift, Himself manifest in the flesh. Just as He gives, He loves to see us to give to others.

There are many ways to give, the most meaningful usually being intangible things we share. One way we can help others is by expressing gratitude. Giving thanks to others for their efforts in our lives, whether it be emotionally, physically, or spiritually, pleases the Lord. This can help us feel satisfied within ourselves, and it gives us the opportunity to lift people up. Another way we can give is being prepared to make random acts of generosity. God encourages us to help others despite where we stand in life. If this means sacrificing the little that we have for the sake of others, we should pray that God gives us the ability to do so with no hesitation! If the act of giving feels difficult, it’s important to remember that we belong to God. He supplied everything we have and everything we decide to give. Trusting the Lord to provide when it seems like we don’t have enough to share will help the thought of giving come more naturally to us. Giving is not just an act of kindness, it’s a need, and remembering that we belong to God will help us prioritize generosity toward others.

Take some time to examine your priorities today, and purposefully move giving higher on that list. We are God's, as well as everything we possess. Just as we love, we should give.

Prayer Prompt

Jesus, thank You for blessing us with everything we have. The very idea that You gave yourself for us and proceeded to give us blessing after blessing is enough for us to praise You forever! Help us to understand that in order to love You, we need to take on the responsibility of giving to others as You did and as the original Church did. We are Your children, and we want to prioritize sharing with others the gifts that You've given to us.

LOVE PEOPLE

January 16 - Love People through Prayer

2 Corinthians 1:11, ESV

“You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.”

Paul opens his second letter to his brothers and sisters in Corinth by painting a sobering picture: that the first Church of the apostles was a two-sided coin, affliction and comfort. Paul knew the Corinthians would most likely face a similar fate, being unapologetically Christian. He not only prepares them for what is to come from the opposition but also informs them that if they seek God during these trials, He will sustain and deliver them. Verse eleven reveals that personal faith and prayer as a Christ-follower for your fellow brothers and sisters is paramount in helping them. Other Christians are our partners in this spiritual warfare we are fighting while here on Earth, so they should be the topic of our most regularly spoken prayers. We should passionately fill Heaven’s throne room with prayers for others, interceding for them, advocating blessings for them, and asking that God would give them strength to fight the good fight.

We should pray not only for our other brothers and sisters in Christ but also for those of a different faith, little faith, or no faith, that they may also gain a heart for Him. We should pray that the Truth be revealed throughout the world to all people, as that is the best way to love them. Because God is love and we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, praying that they receive the revelation of Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords is a beautiful way of expressing active love for people. In fact, at the temple gate called Beautiful in Jerusalem, Peter exemplified love for a lame beggar by uttering a simple, yet power-filled prayer in Acts 3:6, “...Peter said, ‘I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!’” This petition to Jesus led to a miracle and a new faith and way of life for this man. All because of a prayer. Love people through prayer.

Access your love for others. Meditate on whom God has given you a burden for, and take some time right now to lift up their names to Jesus. Ask Him boldly to surround them in His presence, His will, His love and comfort, His sustaining power.

Prayer Prompt

Lord, help us all to approach you more often with prayers for others out of a deep, sincere, soul-focused love for them.

Lord, place people on my heart today—friends, family, leaders, those who are hurting, and those who are far from You. I lift them to You now. Strengthen believers, comfort the broken, save the lost, protect the persecuted, and empower Your church everywhere. And God, please don't just hear my prayer, but let me be part of Your answer. Help me love people enough to keep praying for them with faith and compassion. In Jesus' name, amen.

LOVE PEOPLE

January 17 - Love All People because God Loves All People

Romans 5:8, ESV

“But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Acts 2:39, ESV

“For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself.”

Matthew 22:36-37 & 39, ESV

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” ...And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

It's easy to love the people that love you; most of us probably already do that pretty well. But God asks more of us. God's love is universal and unconditional. He loves each and every one of us, regardless of what we've done. He doesn't pick and choose who He will love based on age, gender, race, social status, or talent. In James 2, James instructs the Church not to favor or show honor to a rich guest over a poor guest. He says it is a sin to show partiality to one over another. Galatians 3:27-29 says, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.”

God loves all people! God died for all people! So the church must do all it can to reach all people! Loving people is a great way to show them the love of Christ. When we extend universal and unconditional love to others, we reflect God's perfect love. What a privilege that God uses us to reach others with His love.

Spend some time today examining your heart. Ask God to give you a genuine, true, godly love for all people. Identify any areas where you have been lacking love and grace, and ask God for forgiveness. Identify people in your life to whom you can show God's love.

Prayer Prompt

Thank you for your great love, Jesus! You loved us while we were still sinners. You love each and every one of us regardless of what we've done. Help us to love others like you love us. Forgive us for only loving the people that love us. We want the gospel to be shared with the whole world. Help us be your hands and your feet to everyone we interact with so that they can see the love of God in us.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

January 19 - Love God by Making a Difference

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Some of us have grown up in the church, giving to missions and looking forward to when a foreign missionary comes to preach. His family would usually sing or give a demonstration that shows us a little bit of the culture of the people that they have been called by God to minister to and preach the gospel. Maybe some of you grew up wanting to be a missionary or contemplated what particular purpose or task God has called you to do. The prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament tells of his experience when he answered the call of God in his life. He writes in Isaiah 6:8, “Also, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here I am; send me.’” (NKJV) His response is exactly what God wants to hear from us today. Isaiah was willing to sacrifice his own plans to become a prophet to God’s people.

Most of us will not be called to leave our homes, families, and jobs and move across the ocean to preach in distant nations, but we are ALL called to make a difference in the lives of the people around us. We are to be ambassadors for Christ to implore people on His behalf to be reconciled to God. Paul instructs Timothy to “not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord,...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling,...according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ, ...to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles” (2 Timothy 1:8-11). So whether we are called to be a preacher, an intercessor, a friend, a Bible Study leader, a greeter, a singer, or to complete a unique task that God has purposed especially for you, we need to align our lives with His purpose and plan. Paul told the Ephesians, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10, NKJV). We can love God by loving people and telling them about Jesus which will make a huge difference in their lives.

Have you shown kindness and the love of God to someone this week? Have you shared the testimony of what Jesus has done in your life with someone recently? Right now, prayerfully ask God to lead you to people who are hungry and thirsty for Him.

Prayer Prompt

Lord, thank You for calling me, saving me, and trusting me with Your purpose. Help me say, "Here I am, send me," with a willing heart and obedient spirit. Open my eyes to the people around me who need Your love. Give me courage to serve, compassion to care, and boldness to share the hope of Jesus. Let my life shine for Your glory, and use me to make a difference wherever You place me. In Jesus' name, amen.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

January 20 - Make a Difference like Abraham

Genesis 22:1-5, ESV

“After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, ‘Abraham!’” And he said, ‘Here I am.’ He said, ‘Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.’ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. Then Abraham said to his young men, ‘Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.’”

Make a Difference like Abraham: Build Unwavering Faith. God’s relationship with Abraham prior to this pivotal moment was that of love, respect, and trust. God chose Abraham to be the leader of His people. God listened to Abraham and allowed him to negotiate for his nephew’s safety from a city of sin. From birth, God called Abraham to be the father of a multitude of nations (Genesis 17:4). Even his name change from Abram to Abraham signified his promise from God, transforming him from an “exalted father” to a “father of multitudes”. This covenant became the foundation of the Old Testament. Genesis 17:16 shows us that Abraham’s nations would come from his union with Sarah, that their son would be the beginning of this people. And He did what He promised; Sarah was barren no longer and birthed Isaac even in her advanced age.

By this point, Abraham knew God; he knew he could trust Him undoubtedly. If God said his son would be the start of many nations, then he would be, no matter what unexpected, seemingly impossible obstacles might interfere. Abraham knew this. That’s why when he declares at the end of this text that he and the boy will go, worship, and return, he spoke in faith, believing his son would be with him when he reunited with his servants. What if Abraham had not trusted God at this moment?

What if Abraham had brought an animal for sacrifice instead or not made an offering to the Lord at all? Do you think Abraham would have remained a Patriarch of our faith? His unwavering faith made a monumental difference in the structure of Scripture. He kept himself in God's story by trusting Him beyond reason. Since we have all His Word to base our faith on, along with our own personal experiences, our faith should be just as strong or stronger than Abraham's so that we can make a difference in His grand Earth story.

Are your conversations with the Lord reflective of a relationship that shows knowledge of each other? Do you trust Him resolutely? If not, what steps can you take to begin that process of building unwavering faith in Him? Faith in Him and His plan will determine the difference you make in His kingdom.

Prayer Prompt

Lord, help me trust You the way Abraham trusted You. Strengthen my faith so that when I don't understand, I still obey; when the path feels uncertain, I still believe Your promises. Remind me of Your faithfulness in my past and give me courage to surrender my plans to Yours. Build in me an unwavering faith that honors You, makes a difference in Your kingdom, and keeps me in the center of Your will. In Jesus' name, amen.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

January 21 - Make a Difference like Esther

Esther 7:3-4, NKJV

“Then Queen Esther answered and said, ‘If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king’s loss.’”

The Bible is full of stories wherein godly men and women put their lives on the line to defend what is good. Queen Esther is a prime example of a woman risking it all to stand up for what she knew to be right. Living amongst the very men who were planning the demise of her people, she had every opportunity to stay undercover in her place of safety in the palace. Instead, she took courage, stood firmly for her cause, and made a petition to the King at the risk of her own life. Without her boldness, the Enemy’s plot would have been carried out, and her people would have been annihilated. By her boldness, her people were saved. We may never be positioned where we must stand before a king, requesting pardon for our people; however, we can still learn from Queen Esther’s actions.

We can allow ourselves to be inspired by her bravery and let it move us to practice fighting for what is true and good. Like Esther, when we stand in the gap for righteousness, we have the opportunity to sway opinions, opinions that could lead to great change in the future. Our boldness in the face of ungodliness, even in little things, can be a witness that changes lives and points people to Christ. Even small-scale resistance against common evils can have a dynamic effect.

Taking a stand for what is good while being surrounded by so much unholiness in the world is something that will not go unnoticed by others. Even if we believe our voice is weak, people will recognize the difference in our lives, and Jesus’ Spirit and might will support our defence. We can be witnesses of His goodness in the day to day simply by speaking up in seemingly inconspicuous ways. Fight for goodness. Defend His word. Speak up for His purpose.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

January 22 - Make a Difference like Mary

Mark 14:3-9, ESV

“And while He [Jesus] was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over His head. There were some who said to themselves indignantly, ‘Why was the ointment wasted like that? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.’ And they scolded her.

But Jesus said, ‘Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.’”

This woman, whom the Bible reveals as Mary, the sister of Lazarus, based on John’s gospel, worshipped Jesus by uniquely and compassionately anointing Him with an expensive salve. Anointing in the Bible is done to consecrate and make holy what the oil touches. Anointing also designates a royal reign, like the Kings of the Old Testament. When Mary breaks open the box and pours the oil over Jesus’ head, she honors Him, identifying Him as sacred and holy. Her actions prepare Him to take on His perfect role as King of Kings and Lord of Lords fully after first taking our place on the Cross and in the tomb.

Others complained that Mary should have used the ointment for some other purpose. Yet, Jesus saw her heart through her decisions, and honored her in return. He labels what Mary did as a “beautiful thing” and says that she will be remembered throughout history. The very reason we are studying this woman’s anointing of the Lord today is because she decided to make a difference in the atmosphere of the dinner they attended.

She put the emphasis on the One who deserves praise, even if it was seen as a “waste” or was not perceived as the right time. Acknowledge the Lord. Honor Him. Praise Him. Worship Him in Spirit and in Truth with all your heart, even if others criticize or disagree. Because He sees your heart. Never underestimate the difference your worship to God can make; it will have Biblical outcomes.

Prayer Prompt

Join with me in prayer as we worship our King. Jesus, I worship you! I praise your name! None is higher than you, Jesus! You are King of Kings and Lord of Lords. You are holy, holy, holy! You are perfect and mighty to save! Help us to keep our worship of you always on our minds and hearts. Help us to give you our all. We love you, Jesus.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

January 23 - Make a Difference like Paul

Acts 9:18-22, ESV

“And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, ‘He is the Son of God.’ And all who heard him were amazed and said, ‘Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name?”

And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?’ But Saul [who was also called Paul] increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.”

Paul, even after persecuting the Lord and His people, was healed and forgiven. But, how did he have the strength to forgive himself? It can be difficult to forgive yourself after you've hurt someone or yourself. We sometimes condemn ourselves more harshly than others ever would, so when we commit a sin, it's hard to believe we can be completely forgiven. In Acts 9:4-5, Paul heard the voice of God. God asked, "...why are you persecuting me? ..I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." Paul was blinded that second, and his only hope was in this God he was just denying. He continued into the city of Damascus and there was visited by a man named Ananias, who said God had sent him to heal Paul of his blindness. It was at that moment Paul regained his sight and all his sins were washed away. He felt the full blessing of God's mercy and was subsequently baptized, strengthened, and made new in Him. He spoke the name of Jesus in all the cities he visited, ignoring the blaming, judging words people spoke of him and his past.

Why would Jesus emphasize the fact that He forgives our sins if He didn't intend for us to move past our own sins as well? He wants us to be free of the chains of our former sins; if we purposefully carry the weight of our sins on our shoulders, we're not free.

Romans 8:1 says, “There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” If you’re filled with His spirit, God will not condemn you for your sins. He made us with the intention of building His Kingdom, something we cannot contribute to when we are weighed down with the guilt of our sin. In 2 Corinthians 7:10, it is written that Godly grief opens the door to true repentance that leads to guiltless salvation, while worldly grief will kill our spiritual lives. Instead of asking for forgiveness to make ourselves feel better, we should build a deep connection with the Lord and ask Him from the depths of our souls for forgiveness simply because it is in pursuit of His goodness. As He forgives us, we should also forgive ourselves so we can freely participate in building His Kingdom.

Prayer Prompt

Jesus, thank You for Your mercy and forgiveness! We cast our cares on You because we know You’re a selfless God; You’ll never leave us astray. We thank You for believing that we’re never too far gone, and we ask You to guide us in being like You. As You constantly forgive us, help us learn to forgive ourselves. We give our burdens to you, God. We turn everything over to You, so have Your way in us now.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

January 24 - Make a Difference Where You Are

Mark 16:15

“He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’”

The Great Commission, found in Mark 16, was the last message given to the disciples before Christ’s ascension into Heaven. He gave the command to ‘go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation’. God did not entrust this task to just the eleven that were present at the time. The command was for everyone who believes and is baptized. We know this because after Christ ascended, the disciples set about making more disciples, passing on to them the same commission so that together they could reach the world with the gospel story. Once believing and baptized, they were given the same principal call. God is no respecter of persons; just as He gives the same Spirit to all, He unites us with a common purpose. Even now when we receive the Holy Ghost we receive the same power as the original disciples, as well as the same calling to reach the whole world.

“All the world” starts where you are and with the people that have been placed around you. Every individual has an unique set of souls that others do not have the same access to or relationship with. God places us within their reach in order to be a light that glorifies Him and shows His character through how we live our lives. That’s why it is so important that we are living lives that are pleasing to God. We are His earthly ambassadors representing Him to the people around us in order to draw them closer to relationship with Him. We never know when or how He will want to use us to touch someone's life.

God intended for each born-again believer to have an integral role in the Great Commission. It’s a team effort. We are to be disciples that then make disciples, a ripple effect - everyone reaching for and mentoring others as we grow in spiritual maturity. Consider how you can make a difference right where you are, whose lives you can touch, how you can make use of your personalized role in His Kingdom, and act on it here and now! We have souls in our community to reach!

Prayer Prompt

Lord, thank You for this 21-day journey of prayer and devotion. Thank You for trusting me with Your mission. May I always align my heart with the vision You've given to the Church: to Love God, Love People, and Make a Difference. Help me see the people around me the way You do. Open my eyes to the opportunities right where I am, and give me courage to share Your love, kindness, and truth in everyday moments. Empower me with Your Spirit to be a light in my community and to faithfully reach the souls You've placed within my path. Use my life to make a difference for Your Kingdom. In Jesus' name, amen.

For the last 21 days, we have been chasing after God as we pray and fast. We have deliberately chosen to focus on Him and seek His presence. We have deliberately chosen to take time to read His Word and listen to His voice. For some of us, we can honestly say we didn't really 'hear' from God in a profound way during this time. For others, this has been an amazing time of growth, and we have felt His guidance and direction about something we were seeking.

Regardless of what we have learned through this time or if we have 'cheated' on something we were going to fast from, these past 21 days have been crucial to us because we have obeyed God's command to seek His presence. It is always a beautiful thing when we chase after God and we put Him first because we desire to know Him more. And He promises us that when we seek Him, He will be found. As we conclude our 21 days of prayer and fasting, it is important to ask, "Now what?"

How can you remain committed to seeking Him? Very simply, decide to love God, love People, and Make a Difference. That's right, decide. Look for opportunities to spend time with Him and to learn from Him. Daily. Decide to chase after Him and not the things of this life that quickly distract us from Him. Daily. Give Him your whole heart. Daily. Look for Him in each day, through people, circumstances, the Bible, and creation. Daily. It will take intention, effort, desire, and time. But it will be so worth it as your relationship with Him grows, develops, and you fall more and more in love with Him.

Hebrews 11:16 says that God will reward those who earnestly seek Him. Will you continue to earnestly seek after the God of this universe who loves you completely and desires to walk with you daily? The reward will be great because God is great!



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