

# Introduction

What you hold in your hand is journey for one hundred days of abiding in the presence of the Lord. I would encourage you to take time reading over the verse included with each day. Meditate upon the verse. Read over the devotional. Personalize the prayer that is included and then write down what the Holy Spirit is speaking and revealing to your heart.

God's desire is greater intimacy with us. When Jesus went to the cross, He went to reconcile humanity to Almighty God. We are separated by our sin and there is only one who was worthy to take the punishment that we deserve upon Himself and lay down His life in our place.

Because of the precious blood of Jesus Christ, we are able to draw near to the throne of grace with confidence. Jesus is our faithful and compassionate High Priest. He has called us to abide in Him. As we spend time in His presence, we abide. As we spend time in His word, we abide. As we bring all things before Him in prayer, we abide. It is about abiding in Him. This is the secret to the Christian journey.

I pray this devotional blesses you and that you continue to grow deeply in your relationship with Christ. I pray that it challenges you to greater holiness and righteousness that is only produced in our lives because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Let us begin our journey.

## Day 1

# God has incredible things planned for those who truly love Him

*1 Corinthians 2:9*

*However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"—the things God has prepared for those who love him—*

Every person who loves God and is called by His name has a destiny and purpose in His kingdom. We are not placed on this earth by accident. We don't come to Christ by accident. God is the one who draws us. Jesus told us that no one can come to Him unless the Father draws them (John 6:44). Through the person and work of the Holy Spirit we are drawn into a relationship with Christ and Christ becomes the open door through which we are able to draw near to the throne of grace with confidence.

But one of the greatest lies of the enemy is that our lives are a mistake. That we are insignificant. But this is simply a lie. For we are created in the image of Almighty God. When we are created the Lord has designed us to accomplish plans and purposes of His kingdom (Ephesians 2:10). We are saved

by the grace of God and His salvation is a gift to us (Eph 2:8-9). As we draw near each day with Christ and spend time in intimate fellowship with Him, the Lord shall reveal to us the plans and purposes He has for us.

You may be wondering "how do I come to know what God has called me to"? I am glad you asked this question. What I have learned with the Holy Spirit is that He leads us with holy desires. As we spend time intimately walking with Him and fully surrendering to Him, the Lord begins to shape the dreams and desires that exist within us. Instead of hungering after this world and the things of wickedness, our passion and obsession simply becomes Him.

The Lord says those who delight themselves in the Lord, He will give them the desires of their heart (Psalm 37:4). That desire becomes Him. For when we delight ourselves in Him, He becomes our focus and our priority. Everything else fades away and takes second place to who He is. This is why no one can fully conceive and imagine the things God has planned for those who love Him. Because when we love Him, we walk in right relationship with Him and all that He has and His kingdom is all made available to us. It creates the dynamic and opportunity to walk and do things that are far greater than anything we could truly dream.

### *Prayer*

*Father today help me to walk in your purposes and plans for my life. Remove from my life anything that would hinder what you want to do. May my heart simply be surrendered to you. May my life be rooted and grounded in you. May your love and life fill me and may I truly become an extension of your hands and your feet. May every purpose and plan be accomplished in your time. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 2**

### **But I Will Sing of Your Strength**

*Psalm 59:16*

*But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble.*

God is our refuge in times of trouble. The Psalmist writes of singing of the strength and power of the Lord. That word strength is the Hebrew word Oz and it can mean boldness, loud, might, power, strength, strong. When we have a right understanding of who God is, it causes us to continually live in a place of worship and also to continually walk in peace.

But how is it that we develop a right understanding of God? It is through the study of His word and time spent in His presence. God sets a banquet table before us each day and bids us to come and spend time with Him. He understands how important it is that we abide in Him. For He is where all life is found and in ourselves we are incapable of doing what God has called us to do.

But in Him is found strength without end. He tells us that His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Cor 12:8-10). God is not calling us to rely on our own strength, wisdom, or power. He tells us that it is not by human power or might, but by the working of His Spirit (Zech 4:6). Relying on God is the key to victorious living and seeing the purposes of God accomplished.

Jesus told us in this world we will have trouble, but to fear not He has overcome the world. The question is not if we will have trouble, but when we will have trouble. But when He is our refuge and our strong tower there is nothing the enemy will do against us. The Lord calls us to fully trust in Him and to follow Him. He will lead us to victory. The question we must ask ourselves is are we truly trusting and following Him?

#### *Prayer*

*Father, today I come to you and ask you to help me to trust you. I know that all authority and power are in your hands. I confess to myself I am nothing. But in you I know true strength is found. Today I praise and thank you for all you have done in my life and I pray that daily you would teach me to rely fully upon you. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 3**

### **We Also Ought to Love One Another**

1 John 4:11-12

*Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.*

If we truly claim to be in Christ we must love one another. If we claim to follow Christ and if we claim to love God, how then can we not love those that God has created in His image. This is the distinguishing mark of every believer in Jesus Christ. Do we truly love one another?

Jesus made it clear that we would be known as His disciples by His love. In the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians the apostle Paul lays out the importance of God's love. That we can move in the power of God and all the gifts of the Spirit but if we are without love we are nothing.

It is truly impossible to claim to be a child of God and not love. Our desire should be to grow in the love of God on a daily basis. This is only possible through daily fellowship with the Lord. Our Father has set a table before us. He has provided the way for us to draw near to Him without fear and with confidence. Through the precious blood of Jesus, you and I can draw near to God and be transformed on a daily basis.

A relationship with Christ is not merely a religious experience or ritual. It is a living relationship with the Living God. Christ has given us the ultimate example in living His life on this earth. In everything He did He was moved by compassion and moved by love. It is actually His love that held Him to the cross and led Him to the cross. His love for us caused Him to lay down everything so that we could be redeemed and restored to the Father.

It is love that led the Father to send His Son. For the Father knew that when He created humanity in His image and gave them free will, that they would sin and choose to disobey His word. But regardless He still created us because of His love for us. Because before He ever created anyone the plan of salvation was already established and the decision was made to send His only begotten Son to the pain and suffering of Calvary to take the wrath that we deserve.

Understanding all of this should show us the importance of love. That in all that we do we should have the love of God filling our lives and driving every decision and choice. No matter who we encounter, our goal and desire should be to lavish the love of God upon them. For if we truly love one another He lives in us and His love is made complete in us. Honestly can we truly claim to be in Christ if His love is absent from our lives? Something to think about.

*Prayer*

*Father, today I come before you and ask you to grow your love within me. I pray that you would lead, guide, and direct me. Help me to love those who are difficult to love. I pray that you would prune my heart and life so that my capacity to love would increase ever more. I pray that my life*

would bring honor and glory to you and that wherever I go and whoever I meet that your love would be manifested and lavished upon them. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

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## Day 4

### He Who Covers Over An Offense Promotes Love

*Proverbs 17:9*

*Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends.*

There is incredible restoration and healing that happens when forgiveness happens. God has called us to forgive. Jesus even told us that if we are unwilling to forgive that our Father in Heaven is not able to forgive us (Matt 6:14-15). To say that forgiveness is important to our Father in Heaven is an understatement.

But Satan understands the destruction that division can bring. When Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment He said to love the Lord thy God with everything and to love our neighbor as ourselves. If we truly love our neighbor as ourselves then no matter how we have been wounded or offended we will be willing to forgive.

To cover an offense means to forgive. It means to let go. It means to not return to the offense. For if we return to the offense and repeat the pain and heartache it will only work to sever a relationship. God has designed us for relationship. Relationship is vital to experiencing all that God has for us in life. God's desire is that we would walk in love and peace and offense is a major tool the enemy uses to destroy this.

Today be willing to forgive. Be willing to let go. Stop allowing bitterness and discouragement to rule your life. Have we all been hurt by someone in life, the answer is yes. But if we continue to live life with a victim mentality blaming everyone and being unwilling to forgive we simply give Satan a foothold to destroy our lives.

*Prayer*

*Father today help me to forgive. Help me to let go of the pain and the offense. Help me to love as you love me. For I don't deserve your forgiveness but you have chosen to forgive me. Help me to*

see others as you see them. Help me to forgive and not return to the offense again. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen.

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## Day 5

### Love Your Neighbor As Yourself

*Romans 13:9-10*

*For the commandments say, "You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet." These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God's law.*

We are called to love our neighbor as ourselves. I always laugh when people make the statement or have the belief that Christianity is simply about following a bunch of rules. To truly follow Christ simply means to walk in love. If love is the driving force behind every decision then we will naturally walk in obedience and all that we do will be pleasing unto God.

The Lord originally gave the nation of Israel the law. The ten commandments lay out ten commands based on their relationship with their creator and their relationship with one another. The first four focus on their relationship with God. For if our relationship with God is not right our relationship with others will not be right. The last six point to relationship between one to another.

But when Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment, He summarized everything in this statement "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt 22:37). Within this statement Jesus summarized the entire law.

For God's desire is that all who would call upon Him as Lord and Savior would simply walk in love. That all we do for God is not based on obligation or religious requirement, but flows from a place of love for Him because of what He has first done for us. We must remember it is He who has chosen to first love us. It is He who knew no sin who became sin for us. He has moved heaven and earth to redeem and rescue us.

Understanding this should lead us to a life of love and devotion to Almighty God. But when we have a right understanding of God and our love for Him, it should then have a trickle down effect

to our love for our neighbor. Can we truly claim to be in Christ if we fail to love our neighbor? The answer is no. Christianity is not about wearing around a title. It is not about following a bunch of rules and checking them off. It is about living for God. Loving Him with everything, and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

*Prayer*

*Father I pray today that you would help me to love. Help me to grow in your love and may your love overwhelm my heart and life. I pray that you would help me to love those who are difficult to love and that I would simply live a life that is pleasing and honoring to you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 6**

### **There Is No Fear In Love**

*1 John 4:18-19*

***18** Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love. **19** We love each other because he loved us first.*

Having a right understanding of God's love is vital in our relationship with Him. The greek word for love that John uses here is the word Agape. It means affection, good will, love, benevolence, brotherly love. It is the love that is only found in God. It is a sacrificial love that is based on decision and will.

This is the love that God has established upon us. In Christ we have moved from being enemies of God to becoming His sons and daughters (Rom 5:10). There is no fear in our relationship with Christ because the sin that has separated us from God no longer remains. All of our sins have been forgiven. Our past, present, and future sins are dealt with upon the cross. If we sin today we are able to confess our sin and our Father in Heaven is faithful and just to forgive us (1 John 1:9).

Those who struggle in their relationship with God and especially under the assault of condemnation of the enemy simply do not rightly understand the love of God. God's love is not dependent on our performance or behavior. He chooses to love us. Regardless of our mistakes and shortcomings, He still loves us. Now because He loves us He will indeed discipline us if

discipline is needed. Any father who truly loves their children will discipline them for their own safety and their good.

But the purpose of God's discipline is to teach, shape, and mold us. It is not judgement. For in Christ we have moved from the place of judgement and wrath, to the place of mercy and grace. In Christ the wrath we deserved was poured out upon Him. Our Father's desire is that we would grow daily in His love and in turn we would pour that love out on others. Jesus told us that we would be known by our love. If we are truly in Christ the love of God should be the driving force in our life.

### *Prayer*

*Heavenly Father today I ask that you would grow your love in me. That you would lead, guide, direct me into a deeper walk with you. Father remove from my heart and mind any misunderstandings of you and your love. I pray today that you would set me free of all condemnation and any other lie of the enemy. May my heart be free to simply praise you, grow in you, serve you, and honor you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 7**

### **And In That Day**

*Isaiah 12:4 (Amplified Bible)*

*And in that day you will say, "Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name [in prayer]. Make His deeds known among the peoples [of the earth]; Proclaim [to them] that His name is exalted!"*

There is a great and mighty day coming when the Lord shall bring to a close all that He has stated in His word. Every day God is accomplishing His will and purpose in the lives of His people. Often we can get focused and fixated on what the enemy is doing. But we must understand that in the midst of great times of darkness, that God is doing a mighty work in the earth.

May our hearts be focused and fixed on Christ today. To know that He alone is fully in control. He is calling us to unceasing prayer. He is calling us to cry out for righteousness and justice. As long as the body of Christ is on the earth, we have the authority to resist every plan and purpose of the Devil and see the purposes of our Lord and Savior accomplished.

God is calling us His people in this hour to stand against the powers and armies of darkness. Many in our generation are lost and without hope. He is calling us to be His mouth piece and to let our

light shine. May our aim and obsession be to become more like Jesus every day. May His love consume us, may His grace immerse us, may we truly be vessels of His glory.

### *Prayer*

*Father I pray today that you would prepare my heart daily for the return of your Son. Help me not to focus on what the devil is doing, but instead help me to focus my heart on you and your kingdom. I pray that my life would be a living sacrifice to you. I pray daily I would grow in your love and your grace. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 8**

### *Psalm 100:5 (Amplified Bible)*

*5 For the Lord is good; His mercy and lovingkindness are everlasting, His faithfulness [endures] to all generations.*

The Lord is good. Good here is the Hebrew word meaning good, pleasant, agreeable. Everything that God does in our lives is because of His love for us. Even in the midst of very difficult seasons and circumstances in our lives we can know that God is doing all things because He loves us. He will work all things together for our good. It is because of who He is. He is love and everything He does is driven by His love for us.

It doesn't mean our life and journey with Him is going to be easy. It is actually in the valleys and the hard times that the greatest growth happens in us. We must remember that when we come to Christ we come broken and mired in sin. Every choice we have made in our lives up until meeting Jesus has been in pursuit of the selfish sinful desires within us. But when we come to Christ, that all changes. But we must die to ourselves. The greatest pruning our Father does is often in the very difficult seasons. We must remember that pruning is not comfortable.

His mercy and lovingkindness is everlasting. It means that it is unchanging. It is eternal. God's feelings don't change toward us based on our behavior or performance. It doesn't mean that He won't discipline us because His discipline is an outworking of His love for us. But His mercy and lovingkindness is everlasting. No matter how badly we screw up and fall short we can always come before His throne boldly with confidence and confess our sins and know that He will forgive us. We must remember that everything we have in our relationship with God is a gift. It is not earned and we can not keep it by our goodness. He simply calls us to surrender.

God's faithfulness endures to all generations. The choices we make today will impact future generations behind us. A person fails to fully understand the impact of their decision to follow Jesus Christ. We may not think it is that big of a deal but the purposes of God are carried on from one generation to the next. Our decision to follow Christ means that not only our life is in His hands, but those we impact are in His hands. Especially if we have children at some point, our children will be impacted by our decision to follow Christ and to live for Him.

*Prayer*

*Father today I come before you and ask you to help me to understand the depths of your mercy, goodness, lovingkindness, and faithfulness. Help me to let go of trying to earn anything. I pray that you would help me to simply live for you on a daily basis. Help me to rightly understand your word and your truth. May it impact my life and renew my mind. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 9**

### **Heaven And Earth Will Pass Away**

*Matthew 24:35 (New International Version)*

*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*

The word of God will stand forever. Often times we become focused on this world. We can become so focused on this world and so worried about what is going to happen tomorrow that we can begin to lose sight of who God has called us to be and truly forget that our true home as believers is Heaven.

Jesus says that His words shall not pass away. He is telling us that His words can be trusted. That upon His word we can build our lives. He is the foundation stone on which all things are built. He is the solid rock that is unmovable. In this life we will face many storms that may try to shake us and destroy us, but when our lives are built upon Jesus Christ they shall never be moved.

Let us never forget this world is passing away. To live one's life focused on this world is foolishness and it is empty. When we sow to this world and the desires of this world the end result is simply destruction. But when we sow to God's kingdom and living for Him is our sole pursuit, it is then that great and mighty awards await us in His kingdom.

Today be willing to let go of all your fears and worries. Let go of being concerned with the desires of this world. Live not for this world, but live for the life that awaits you in Heaven some day. This world is passing away because it is mired in sin. Someday there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. Until that day may we live each day continually building our lives upon Jesus and upon His word. He is a foundation that will never be shaken.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come before you today and ask you to help me not to focus on this world. Help me to be diligent to study your word and spend time in prayer. Lead me to set aside time each day to sit in your presence and to come to know your heart and mind. I pray my heart and mind would become one with you. I pray would stop living for this world and its desires and my focus would be upon your soon return Lord Jesus. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 10**

### **As For God, His Way Is Perfect**

*Psalm 18:30 (New International Version)*

*As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him.*

The way of the Lord is perfect. His plans and purposes are perfectly designed for who we are. God has created us with every gift and talent for a reason. Our very personality, the way we physically look are all designed by God and for a specific reason. The problem we often run into is that we feed into the enemy's scheme of comparison. When we begin to compare our lives against other people we miss out on the beauty and uniqueness of who God has created us to be.

The Lord's word is flawless. God's word is unfailing. He is always faithful to His word. His word will never return void. When the word of God goes forth it is faithful to accomplish His purposes and His plans. When He created all things He did it through His spoken word. It is because of His supreme authority that His word cannot be stopped. Just as He created all things by speaking them into existence, He does the same today with His purposes on the earth. Through the mouths of His sons and daughters declaring His word, the Lord is fulfilling every plan and purpose in the nations.

The Lord is our shield and He is our rampart. Those who take refuge in the Lord will be protected. To take refuge in the Lord means to trust in Him, to confide in, to put our hope in Him. It is in Him

alone that we rely and we trust. Satan will try as hard as he can to get us to abandon our trust in Almighty God. But we must remember that Satan is a liar and a deceiver. Everytime the enemy whispers a thought into our minds that would doubt the power of God or His faithfulness, we must renew our minds with the truth of His word. Not relying on feelings or our own thoughts. Our own feelings and thoughts will deceive us. But it is upon the word of God alone that we build our lives.

Today you may find yourself in a difficult season in which the enemy is overwhelming your heart with discouragement and doubt. But know that God is in control. God has a purpose for everything you are facing. He has ordered your every step and He has designed your life. Nothing you are facing is by accident and we must remember that He will work all things together for our good (Romans 8:28). With God nothing is wasted and every trial and challenge we face has a divine eternal purpose (James 1:2-8). God desires to develop maturity in our lives but we must trust Him and rely upon Him. We must let go of our own understanding. True freedom and liberty comes when we simply let go and give God full rule and reign in our lives.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and ask you to help me to trust you. Help me to stand upon the truth and promises of your word. To know in my heart that no matter what I face that you are always faithful. I pray that you would be my rampart and my refuge. Guard my heart against every flaming arrow of the evil one. Strengthen my faith in this hour and help me to press on toward the high call in Christ Jesus. I pray you would give me eyes to see and ears to hear. Help me not to rely upon my five senses, but help me to simply walk by faith. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 11**

### **I Will Bow Down Toward Your Holy Temple**

*Psalm 138:2 (New International Version)*

*I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your unfailing love and your faithfulness, for you have so exalted your solemn decree that it surpasses your fame.*

The writer of the Psalm speaks of bowing down toward the holy temple of the Lord. To bow down is an act of worship. It is a choice to humble oneself before the Living God in response to an understanding that God is fully in control. Thanks and praise is given for the unfailing love and faithfulness of Almighty God.

God's love is unconditional and it is unending. If God's love was based on our performance or behavior, we would not be able to be loved by Him. His love is perfect in every way. It is who He is. God is perfect and there is nothing in Him that is false. So many in this world seek to be loved and accepted. The chase after the lies of the world and the desires of the sinful nature. What they find is the more they chase after them, the more empty and discontent they become.

But not only is God's love unending, He is always faithful. He will always work and do according to His word. If we have built our lives upon the word of God and His promises, we have nothing to fear. This is why the psalmist praises God. This is why he bows down before Him. For God is the Alpha and Omega, there is none that is greater.

God will always fulfill His word and purpose. His fame goes forth and at this time the greatness of God was seen in the rule and reign of King David upon the earth. God took a mere shepherd boy, anointed as the next king of Israel, guided him through many trials and tribulations, through it all God was preparing and refining David to be King. David didn't understand the process, but this is why we are called to walk by faith and not by sight.

Today you may be in a season or circumstance in your life where you feel abandoned or forgotten by God. But know that God has a plan. He has a purpose for everything you are facing. His word is true and He is always faithful. Continue to pray and seek His face. Stand upon the promise of His word and when the lying voice of the enemy comes to taunt you and get you to abandon your faith in Jesus Christ, hold fast to the faith you have and fix your eyes upon Jesus alone.

*Prayer*

*Father today I worship and bow down before you. I thank you that your love is unending and that you are always faithful to your word and purposes. Help me in my unbelief. Help me in my doubt. Guard my heart against every fiery dart of the wicked one. Deliver me this day from every scheme of the enemy. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 12**

### **Being Confident Of This**

*Philippians 1:6 (New International Version)*

*being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Before this verse Paul speaks about praying for the believers in Philippi. He is overjoyed because of their partnership in the gospel. Because of this Paul has great joy and confidence in the Lord and what He is doing. Paul says “that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus”. This is not only good news to the believers found in Philippi but it is also very good news for us who are serving Jesus Christ today.

Those who are in Christ are chosen by God. We don't find our ways to God by chance or based on an emotional response to a sermon. When we truly come to Christ in salvation, it is the Father who has drawn us through the Spirit of God and it is the Lord who has enabled us to respond in repentance. When God calls us, it is the beginning of a daily journey with Him.

The great comfort is knowing that it is God who fulfills His plans and purposes in our lives through His grace and His power. An important lesson for all Christians to learn is to let go of their own strength, power, and wisdom, and instead rely fully upon the Lord for all things. The purposes of God are fulfilled in our lives as we walk with Him on a daily basis. As we seek Him and draw near, we will find Him and He will draw near to us. As we seek Him and walk closely with Him, it is the Spirit of God who lives within us who will work and accomplish the purposes of God through us.

This was the confidence that Paul had. This is why even in the midst of writing this letter from a prison cell, he had so much joy. His focus was upon Christ and what Jesus was doing. It wasn't upon Paul, it wasn't upon his circumstances, it was upon Jesus alone. When Jesus is our obsession and the only thing we truly pursue on this earth is when we will walk in the abundant life He spoke of and we will see the purposes that God has designed us for accomplished in our lives.

#### *Prayer*

*Father help me today to let go of control. Help me to trust you and to simply walk with you intimately. Help me to let go of worrying about things being accomplished and achieving things in my own power and strength. Remove all selfish ambition and may I simply live for you. Father I pray that I would decrease that you might increase. I pray my heart and mind will be given fully over to you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 13**

### **I Am Not Ashamed Of The Gospel**

*Romans 1:16 (New International Version)*

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.*

I am not ashamed of the gospel. The apostle Paul suffered greatly for the cause of Jesus Christ. But what he understood is that the cost of following Jesus was worth every moment. Paul stated that in his weakness the strength of Christ is perfected (2 Cor 12:8-10). No matter what Paul faced he understood that no matter the level of suffering that the grace of God would be sufficient.

But it was the suffering he went through and endured that made him the apostle that he was. Every time we are called to suffer for the name of Jesus we die to this world and its desires. Paul was ridiculed at times for preaching the gospel. But he understood it was the proclamation of the gospel that carried the power of salvation for everyone who would believe and receive.

When the gospel is proclaimed we never know the seeds that are being planted and the eternal impact it is making. God leads and guides us one step at a time. When we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit to share and proclaim the gospel, there may be those who ridicule us and make fun. But in that moment it is the Lord who strengthens us. For true joy is found in the Lord. It is the joy of the Lord that is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10).

The wonderful news is that the offer of salvation is open to all who will believe. Paul writes here to the Jew first, then to the gentile. God first called Abraham and told him through him the nations of the world would be blessed. That he would have many descendants. God was speaking about the eternal impact of Abraham's obedience. Abraham's willingness to say yes to God paved the way for the Messiah to one day be born through his line. Jesus would come preaching and ministering to the nation of Israel. But it was the Father's will for Him to be rejected that the way of salvation would be made available to all people.

Let us never forget God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son. That whoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. The key is whoever. The door of salvation is open to all people and to unlock that door and become a child of God requires that a person receive Jesus as Lord and Savior and begin to live and walk with Him each day. This is why Paul was not ashamed to proclaim the gospel because when it goes forth it has the power to save.

*Prayer*

*Father, I come to you today and ask you to fill me with your boldness. Enable me to proclaim and share the gospel with those around me. Help me to have eyes to see those who are lost and give me the words to speak that will plant seeds in their lives. Water those seeds through the power of the Holy Spirit and in this time may many come to saving faith in Jesus. Father help me to be the disciple you have called me to be. In the name of Jesus.*

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## Day 14

### If We Walk In The Light As He Is In The Light

*1 John 1:7 (Amplified Bible)*

*but if we [really] walk in the Light [that is, live each and every day in conformity with the precepts of God], as He Himself is in the Light, we have [true, unbroken] fellowship with one another [He with us, and we with Him], and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin [by erasing the stain of sin, keeping us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations].*

If we walk in the light. Everyday we have a choice to live for God or not. As followers of Jesus Christ we have been made brand new because of what Jesus has done upon the cross. Our sins were nailed to the cross with Him and our lives no longer belong to us. His grace covers our lives, and we have true freedom in Jesus Christ.

But this grace and freedom does not give us the right or license to live how we desire. For John writes if we walk in the light as He is in the light. Jesus has modeled for us what a life looks like fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit every moment of every day. When Jesus was born on this earth He fully became man. He never stopped being God, but His existence on this earth was as a man and He relied fully upon the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The apostle Paul tells us to walk and live according to the Spirit so we will not gratify or fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). God's desire is unbroken fellowship with us. When we give into temptation and indulge in sin, we break fellowship with our Father. But thankful the Lord tells us in 1 John 1:9 that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. The only way we can truly walk in obedience, holiness, and righteousness is a life fully surrendered to Jesus Christ and one that abides with Him on a daily basis.

Not only will our abiding in Christ impact our fellowship with the Father on a daily basis, but will enable us to walk in intimate fellowship with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. When we live a life with one foot in the world and one foot in God's kingdom our lives are filled with compromise. Any time compromise is present we will work to hide those things we are engaged in that are not pleasing to God. This will impede our ability to live in close relationships with our fellow brothers and sisters because we will be afraid if we open our lives too much that the compromise that exists will be exposed and we will be found out.

God's desire for us is to simply walk with Him and live for Him. He calls us to walk in the light. The world and its system is built upon the lies and deceptions of Satan. Those who live for the world live in darkness. God is calling us to flee this perverse and crooked generation. May our lives simply be consecrated for Him on a daily basis and may we choose to simply live for Him.

*Prayer*

*Father, I come today and ask you to examine my heart. Remove any wicked way within me that is unpleasing to you. I pray that my heart and mind would be fully surrendered to you. That you would fill me with your Spirit and lead, guide, and direct every decision and choice I make. Forgive me in the ways that I have sinned and broken your heart. Empower me to walk in obedience and simply fall in love with you more and more. May you simply be my obsession and my sole desire.*

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## **Day 15**

### **But Without Faith It Is Impossible To Please God**

*Hebrews 11:6 Amplified Bible*

*6 But without faith it is impossible to [walk with God and] please Him, for whoever comes [near] to God must [necessarily] believe that God exists and that He rewards those who [earnestly and diligently] seek Him.*

Faith unlocks all that we have in our relationship with God. We cannot be restored into right relationship with God without faith in Jesus Christ. During Jesus' earthly ministry when He returned to His hometown of Nazareth, He was not able to do many miracles because of the lack of faith that existed in the hearts of the people (Matt 13:58). Faith unlocks the power of God in the earth and without faith it is impossible to please God.

This should give us great comfort. Our ability to please God is not based on our performance or our ability to perfectly keep the law and commands of God. It doesn't mean we are not called to walk in obedience because Jesus said those who love Him will obey His commands. God's word is not a suggestion, it is given to us by God to dictate the very course of our lives. But it is faith alone that pleases the Lord.

Our faith in Jesus Christ unlocks our ability to walk with God. Before we come to know Christ our lives are broken and mired by sin. But coming to Jesus our lives are changed forever. By walking

with Him daily we are supernaturally changed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Christianity is not a journey of checking off things on a list or completing the demands of God, it is a living relationship with the one who loved us so much He gave His life for us.

When we draw near to God we must believe that He exists. He rewards those who diligently and earnestly seek Him. This means that we seek Him on a daily basis. We seek Him with all our heart. It means that Jesus has become the center and priority of our lives. Our lives no longer belong to us, they belong to Him alone. When we begin to surrender all of our lives unto Jesus is when we see the supernatural power and hand of God work in our lives to bring restoration and wholeness.

Many times people want God to move into areas of their lives and bring healing without surrendering to Him. God wants to restore and heal, but what He desires more is an intimate relationship with us. Many times God will wait for us to surrender to Him. For His word says that if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us (James 4:8). It requires that we draw near to God first and surrender before the Lord will begin to move in our lives.

Today my encouragement to you is to believe and surrender. Without faith it is impossible to please God, but Jesus says all we need is faith the size of a mustard seed. Come to Him believing today and be willing to surrender. May our desire be that our hearts and minds align with His will and purposes for us. He loves us with an everlasting love and whatever we are facing today is by His design to produce within us His character and nature.

#### *Prayer*

*Father I come today and ask you to help me in my unbelief. Help me to truly believe what your word says and to remove all unbelief and doubt from my heart. May my life truly be surrendered to you and may I truly seek you with all my heart. Father help me in the areas I fall short and forgive me for failing to surrender fully to you. May everything in my life be used to bring honor and glory to you. May I experience and come to know the abundant life you have for me. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 16**

### **It Is Well With The Man Who Deals Generously and Lends**

*Psalm 112:5 (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)*

*It is well with the man who deals generously and lends, who conducts his affairs with justice.*

It is well. This word well in the Hebrew means pleasant, agreeable, or good. Those who are generous and willing to lend to those in need will be greatly blessed by the Lord. Jesus said those who are faithful with that which is little, will be entrusted with much (Luke 16:10). God is always measuring our lives by our actions. We may say we love God and we may even claim to be a generous person, but the question is: is it truly evident by our actions on a daily basis.

As we mature in Christ one of the things we come to understand is how to properly view money. Before coming to Christ we believe that our money belongs to us and for us to be happy, content, and satisfied our money must be spent on things that we selfishly desire. But as we grow in Christ we understand our money doesn't belong to us. It is given to us by God. Our jobs and the money earned from our jobs is all provided by the Lord.

He is the one who has given us the skills and abilities we have to work the job we have. He is the one who has opened the doors and put us in relationships with those who would provide us employment. What we find as we walk and grow with Christ on a daily basis is that true contentment is found in surrender to Christ. This especially includes our finances. When we understand our money doesn't belong to us but instead develop an attitude of generosity in all things, we see the storehouses of heaven open and the blessing of the Lord touching everything. It says here "who conducts his affairs with justice". This word affairs in the Hebrew means a word, a matter, or a thing. It speaks of the way we speak or conduct our lives especially in business. Justice means judgement, justice, right, rectitude. Rectitude means moral conduct, righteousness, attributes of God. When a person conducts themselves in the affairs of their lives in accordance with the character and nature of God, they will be blessed in all they do.

Jesus said to seek first His kingdom and righteousness. When we are seeking first His kingdom we are choosing to live for Christ and surrender all things to Him. Every person on this earth has been given a freewill. Even when we come to Christ we are presented daily with the choice to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit or the desires of our sinful nature. But the more we mature and surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit, the more following His leading will become a natural part of who we are.

This is where blessing, wholeness, and being well is found. Walking in obedience to God and His ways. Many times people desire for God to bless them, but they have not fully surrendered or are unwilling to surrender control of their lives to Him. They are still living for themselves and the ways of sin. But God is clear in His word that the wages of sin are death (Romans 6:23). May we be people who are generous and willing to lend. May we conduct all of our affairs with justice and righteousness.

*Prayer*

*Father today I ask that you would lead and guide me. Help me to be generous in all things. Help me to be generous with my time. Generous with my finances. Generous with my life. May all of my life be in your hands and may I be fully surrendered to you. Father lead and empower me to conduct all my affairs with justice and righteousness. In all that I do I pray that I would bring honor and glory to you. That your character and nature would be reflected in me. Forgive me in any area that I have fallen short and continue to prune my life of anything that would hinder what you want to do. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 17**

### **Jesus Is The Same, Yesterday, Today, and Forever**

*Hebrews 13:8 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*

*8 Jesus Christ (the Messiah) is [always] the same, yesterday, today, [yes] and forever (to the ages).*

Jesus is always the same. This verse should give us great comfort in a world that is constantly changing and being filled with darkness each day. God is in control. Jesus is on the throne. He holds all things together by His mighty power (Colossians 1:17). There is nothing that we will face that will surprise the Living God. Jesus is greater than any challenge or trial that we face. Through it all God calls us to trust Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Placing all things in His hands.

He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. All that we read in the Old Testament reveals to us the character and nature of God Almighty. Many times Christians may only spend time reading and studying the New Testament. But when we study the full counsel of God's word we gain a greater understanding and picture of who God truly is. We see His faithfulness in the lives of so many who have gone before us. There are real moments in our journey with the Lord that we may doubt the promises and faithfulness of God. But we must hold fast to the truth of His word and know that He is unchanging.

Today if you find yourself struggling with doubt and unbelief, I would encourage you to get alone with the Lord and ask Him for help. Immerse your mind and heart in the word of God and cry out to Him. He is not calling you to struggle through life alone. He is calling you to trust Him and know that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is not changing. His love is not changing. His

faithfulness is unchanging. Hold fast to your faith in Jesus Christ and know that He will lead, guide and direct you.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come today and ask you for strength. I pray that you would help me to overcome any doubt and unbelief I may be facing. Help me to trust you and your word. You are the same yesterday, today, and forever. Jesus I thank you for dying for my sins. I thank you for your resurrection. Today I have victory and authority because of who you are. I have no reason to live in fear. I have no reason to allow doubt and unbelief to cripple me. Help me Father this day to be the warrior and child you have called me to be. I thank you today that I am royalty in your kingdom. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 18**

### **Since We Are Surrounded By So Great A Cloud Of Witnesses**

*Hebrews 12:1 (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)*

*Therefore then, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses [who have borne testimony to the Truth], let us strip off and throw aside every encumbrance (unnecessary weight) and that sin which so readily (deftly and cleverly) clings to and entangles us, and let us run with patient endurance and steady and active persistence the appointed course of the race that is set before us,*

The writer of Hebrews tells us through the leading and inspiration of the Holy Spirit to strip off and throw aside every encumbrance of sin that would try to cling to us and destroy the purposes of God in our lives. When we allow sin into our lives and we give into temptation, it is as if we are adding unneeded weight upon us as we try to run this race and journey of faith.

The writer of Hebrews tells us to run with patient endurance and steady and active persistence. This is not a 100 meter sprint, this is a marathon. Daily we find ourselves in the middle of a spiritual battle. We have an invisible enemy who is trying to do all he can to destroy the purposes and plans God has for us. The way he tries to gain access into our heart and mind is through temptation. When we come to Christ we are set free from slavery and bondage to Satan. But when you and I give into temptation we open the door for Satan to influence us and destroy us. If we give an inch, he will take a mile.

We are told about the great cloud of witnesses. Before chapter twelve in chapter eleven we are given many of the names that are found in the faith hall of fame. These are men and women who have faithfully served the Lord upon the earth. It doesn't mean they were perfect, but they faithfully served the Lord. In light of this truth and understanding, we as believers should run our race with persistence and endurance. Casting off every sin that so easily entangles and has the sole purpose of destroying us.

As followers of Jesus Christ we have one mission and that is to live for Him. In all that we do we should desire to bring glory and honor to the Lord. When our sole desire and purpose is to honor and glorify Christ in everything, His blessing will be poured out in abundance in every area of our lives. Healing and restoration will come as a result of seeking first His kingdom and His righteousness.

God has a specific plan and purpose for our lives. The very way that God has created us is specifically designed because of the race and journey He has set out for us. We must remember His grace is sufficient. No matter what we face we will overcome through Jesus Christ. In this moment of time if we are weary and tired we must cling to Jesus and seek Him for His strength and His endurance. He has not called us to do this alone. He has called us to partner with Him each step of the way.

#### *Prayer*

*Father, today I am tired and worn out. I ask you to strengthen me by your might and your power. Fill me with your endurance to faithfully run the race you have marked out for me. Help me to stand in the day of battle and against every assault and accusation of the enemy. I pray that my mind and heart will be fixed upon you and your word. May my life be built upon your promises. May my life bring glory and honor to you in all places. Remove from my life anything that would hinder what you desire to accomplish. My life no longer belongs to me. I surrender it fully to you and ask you to use it for your will and purposes. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 19**

### **I Press On Toward The Goal To Win The Prize**

*Philippians 3:14 (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)*

*I press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward.*

Athletes are driven to train to win championships. Every great athlete desires to win the ultimate prize in their field. In the sport of wrestling it is an olympic gold medal. In football it is to win a superbowl. Athletes train all their lives with the hope to be able to compete for a championship.

As Christian's our ultimate prize is knowing Christ Jesus and having a personal relationship with Him. Paul here says I press on toward the goal to win the supreme and heavenly prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling me upward. The calling on Paul's life was that of an apostle. Paul didn't sign up to be an apostle. He was actually using his life to try to destroy the church and rid the earth of Christianity before God got a hold of him.

But on the road to Damascus the apostle Paul was arrested by Jesus Christ. He was stopped in his tracks. He was blinded and his spiritual eyes were opened to the truth. He came to the amazing revelation that all his life in studying the Torah, the prophets, and the writings had all pointed to Jesus Christ.

Paul would suffer greatly for Jesus Christ. But he understood that his true joy was found in the Lord. The joy of the Lord was truly His strength. When he was weak the strength of God was perfected. All of us have a call and anointing on our lives. All of us have a purpose and destiny in Jesus Christ. The more intimately we come to know Jesus, the more we discover who we are and what God has called us to be.

Life is a very different experience when you no longer live for yourself, but you live to glorify and honor Jesus Christ. This is the ultimate prize. That when we stand before Christ some day when our lives are over we will hear well done good and faithful servant.

Today no matter where you find yourself and no matter how many times you have failed and tripped up, keep pressing forward. Keep pressing on toward the high call in Christ Jesus. Always remember every mistake and shortcoming is simply a lesson to be learned and hopefully we don't continue to repeat the same mistakes. But know that no matter the call God will empower and strengthen you to be the man and woman He has called you to be.

*Prayer*

*Father I thank you that you have a call and anointing on my life. I thank you that I am not here by accident. I thank you that each day you are leading and guiding me, and even in my mistakes and shortcomings, you never give up on me. I admit I cannot do this in myself. I pray you would protect and watch over me. You would deliver me from every scheme of the enemy. I pray you would bless the work of my hands and fill me with your strength, power, and endurance. May my life simply be used to bring honor and glory to Jesus in all things. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 20

### To Become Children of God

*John 1:12-13 (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)*

*But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the authority (power, privilege, right) to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name— Who owe their birth neither to bloods nor to the will of the flesh [that of physical impulse] nor to the will of man [that of a natural father], but to God. [They are born of God!]*

Through faith in Jesus Christ we become children of God. Understanding this truth is essential in walking daily in His love and His peace. Many today follow all different types of religions. But every false, man-made religion in the world has one thing in common: man must do something to earn his way to whatever god he is serving. It is fully dependent upon man.

But this is where Christianity is different. The true and Living God has reached down to man. God has paid the ultimate price to restore the relationship He had with man that was destroyed in the garden of Eden. In Eden God created Adam and Eve. He told them they could eat from any tree except for the tree of knowledge of good and evil. For love to truly exist between God and man, God had to give man a choice to choose obedience or rebellion.

But Adam and Eve choose rebellion. They were deceived and God knew this would happen. That is why before God created anything the plan of salvation was established. It was the plan from the beginning that God's one and only Son would come to this earth, would be born fully man, He would humble Himself, become a servant, and take the wrath and punishment we deserve. Because of His sinless life, His blood was sinless. It is only His blood that is sufficient to pay the debt we owe. God has made it clear in His word that without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sins (Lev 17:11, Heb 9:22).

It says that God gave the authority to become children of God. When a person comes to Christ they are chosen by Almighty God. Jesus made it clear that no one could come to Him unless the Father draws Him (John 6:44). Our salvation we have is by faith alone. It is a gift from Almighty God. God in His mercy has made a way that we can be forgiven. He has made a way that we can have a brand new life. But it is all dependent on what we do with Jesus.

If we reject Jesus Christ and the precious salvation He has purchased and provided we have no one else to blame but ourselves. People will often ask the question: if God is so loving how could He send anyone to hell. But the truth is that God's desire is that none would perish but all come to everlasting life (2 Peter 3:9). He so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whoever would believe in Him would not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

In the end a person who ends up in hell has chosen to reject God and His ways. God stands with open arms and knocks on the hearts of many. But Jesus said broad is the road that leads to destruction and many will walk on it, but narrow is the road that leads to life and few will find it (Matt 7:13-14). The bottom line is to become a child of God we must come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Many in this age will say we are all children of God but according to the word of God that is a lie. We are not all children of God. We don't become a child of God until we come to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

### *Prayer*

*Father, today I come to you and thank you for the precious salvation we have through Jesus. Father, we don't deserve your grace, love, and mercy. But you lavish it upon us. Help us to pursue you with all our heart. Help us to surrender anything that would hinder what you desire to do in our lives. Father today help us to fully understand what it means to be your child. May our lives simply bring glory and honor to you. Forgive us in every place that we have fallen short. May we grow to maturity each day. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 21**

### **The Lord looks on the heart**

***1 Samuel 16:7 (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)***

***But the Lord said to Samuel, Look not on his appearance or at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.***

The Lord looks at the heart. This is a well known passage of scripture. Samuel the great prophet of God was sent to anoint the next King of Israel. Israel had asked for a king like all the other nations and the Lord provided them with Saul. Saul was a head taller than all the other men and outwardly had all the signs of being a great king.

But Saul was not a man after God's own heart. Saul on multiple occasions failed the Lord. He offered the sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel (1 Samuel 13). Samuel told Saul to wait seven days and on the seventh day Saul acted out of fear and offered the sacrifice. Saul was not allowed to offer the sacrifice. This was designated by God for the priests and prophets. Saul was more afraid of man than he was of the Living God.

Saul also failed to be obedient when the Lord told Saul to wipe out all of the Amalakites. Saul allowed the livestock to remain and failed to put Agag the king to the sword. Again Saul acted in disobedience. When Samuel arrived he would take a sword and hack Agag into pieces. Because of the disobedience of Saul the kingdom was ripped from him and given to another (1 Sam 15:28). The other was David, the son of Jesse.

David was the youngest of eight sons. When Samuel arrived at the home of Jesse he first encountered his older brother Eliab. Eliab outwardly looked like a king. He looked strong and muscular and looked like a man who could not only lead Israel but also defend Israel. But he was not the one. One by one Samuel went down the line until he asked Jesse if he had any more sons. David's own father overlooked him. But God chose David because of his heart. David all his life had faithfully taken care of sheep. He had killed a lion and bear with his bare hands while protecting those sheep (1 Sam 17:34-36). David didn't know it but he was in the school of the Holy Spirit. David through being a shepherd was learning what it meant to truly be a king anointed by God.

Before God will ever entrust someone with great leadership, authority, and influence, He will teach them and mold them to be a servant. They won't know it when they are being faithful in the little things, but God is preparing them to be entrusted with great and mighty things. When God chooses anyone He doesn't look on the surface. He looks at the heart. The Lord knows those who will be faithful when entrusted with great authority and influence.

David by no means was a perfect man. There was only one who was perfect and His name was Jesus. But even in the midst of David's well known and great sin, he repented when confronted by the prophet Nathan. Today if you feel overlooked and unqualified, know that it is God who qualifies. It is the anointing of the Lord that qualifies. Even when all overlook you, know that when we are faithful in that which is little, nothing escapes the Living God.

#### *Prayer*

*Father, I thank you that you look at the heart. I know I don't deserve your grace and mercy, but I thank you that you have chosen me, called me, anointed me, and will use me. Help me to be faithful. Help me never to seek a stage or a name for myself. Keep my eyes fixed upon you and guard my heart daily from arrogance and pride. Father have your way in me. Prune away that which needs to be removed and replace it with your character and nature. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 22

### Call To Me And I Will Answer

*Jeremiah 33:2-3 (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)*

*Thus says the Lord Who made [the earth], the Lord Who formed it to establish it—the Lord is His name: Call to Me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, fenced in and hidden, which you do not know (do not distinguish and recognize, have knowledge of and understand).*

Call to me and I will answer. This is one awesome promise from the Living God. The Lord tells us that He will not only answer but He will show us great and mighty things, fenced in and hidden, which we do not know.

This is an invitation by the Living God. He is always inviting us to respond and seek Him. It is God who knocks on the door of the human heart, but it is man who must respond. The Lord tells us that those who draw near to Him, He will draw near to them. God is looking for a response on our part. He has given us freewill, we are not robots. To experience and walk in the promises God has for us we must respond rightly to His word.

The Lord begins this by stating He is the one who formed the earth and established it. He created all things by His spoken word. Without Him nothing could exist. Everything had breath because God allows it to. If He wanted to He could stop all life in a moment with a simple spoken word.

When we stop and meditate upon this truth it puts things in perspective. But it also shows us the power of prayer. As followers of Jesus we have been given authority from Christ Himself. When we begin to pray, things begin to happen and are released into the earth.

All that we see happening on the earth now is because darkness is raging. But in this hour of history the Lord is calling His people to arise and use the authority they have. Just as Jeremiah said in his day, if we will call to the Lord, He will answer. He will show us great and mighty things that are hidden and unknown.

Every day the ball is in our court. God has given us His word. His word is filled with promise after promise. He has promised us victory. He has promised us blessing. He has promised us all we need. But we must respond rightly to His word. It is obedience to His word that unlocks the power of the Living God in our lives. His grace rests upon us because of the faith we have in Jesus Christ.

But if we desire to see victory and blessing we must live according to His word. We must build our lives upon the word of God.

*Prayer*

*Father lead, guide, and direct me this day. Forgive me for my unbelief. Help me to understand the power and authority available to me as a child of God. I ask you to forgive me for being too busy to pray. To allow pursuits in this life that are meaningless next to eternity to take the place of seeking You. Father strengthen me and grow me. Take me deeper in the place of prayer. Truly teach me to trust you at all times. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 23**

### **The Entrance And Unfolding Of Your Words Give Light**

*Psalms 119:130 (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)*

*The entrance and unfolding of Your words give light; their unfolding gives understanding (discernment and comprehension) to the simple.*

It is the Holy Spirit who leads and guides us into all truth. It is the Spirit of God who enables us to understand the word of God. When the word of God is simply study for academic purposes and without the leading of the Holy Spirit, revelation will not be received and understanding will not take place. But when a person, no matter their educational level, seeks the Holy Spirit for revelation and understanding they will gain greater insight into God's word that they didn't see before.

Receiving true revelation from the Holy Spirit is life changing. Revelation not only gives us insight to understand but also teaches us how to apply what we are reading and studying to our modern day. The reason the religious leaders of Jesus day failed to understand who He was and failed to understand what He taught is because they did not have the Holy Spirit. They were blinded by their arrogance and their pride.

But today when the eyes of a person are open to salvation and they have the Holy Spirit living inside of them they have the most wonderful friend. He will lead and guide us into all truth. If we fail to understand something in scripture we simply need to begin to ask and seek the Holy Spirit. He will open our eyes and help us to understand.

The entrance and unfolding of God's word truly bring light. All of us live in darkness before coming to know Jesus Christ. But when we come to Christ we are brought out of the darkness and into the light and truth of who Christ is. It is like being in a pitch black room and someone lights a single match. That small amount of light begins to illuminate the room and give us an understanding of how to navigate the darkness. The more light that is brought in, the greater we are able to navigate and the more the darkness disappears.

We live in an age of great deception and darkness. God calls us daily to immerse our lives and hearts in the truth of God's word. The more we read, study, meditate upon scripture, and pray over God's word, the more the light and truth of who Jesus Christ is will fill us. Sadly because some Christians today don't know the scriptures, they continue to walk in darkness even though their eyes have been open to the truth of Christ.

### *Prayer*

*Father today I ask that you would help me to understand your word. I pray that you would open my spiritual eyes, ears, and heart to know and understand who you are. You have revealed yourself through your word and I pray that my life would be filled with the light and truth of who you are. Remove every area of darkness from my life. Break every stronghold of Satan. May I truly walk in the freedom I have through Jesus Christ and understand the depths of your word. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 24**

### **The Lord Is Our King**

*Isaiah 33:22 (New King James Version)*

*(For the Lord is our Judge, The Lord is our Lawgiver, The Lord is our King; He will save us);*

The Lord is all we need. He is our judge, our law giver, and He is our King. We live in a world filled with darkness and chaos. As followers of Jesus there can be many moments in the course of a day in which we feel overwhelmed by doubt, fear, temptation, and the darkness of our day. But we must remember that God is in control.

He is our Judge. He is the one who is the decision maker in our lives. He has given us His word to lead, guide, and direct us. The word judge in the Hebrew means to govern. God governs every area of our lives. When we come to Christ and make Him Lord and Savior, every part of our lives comes under His dominion and control.

Psalms 119:105 tells us His word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. He has given us His word to lead and guide us. Jesus told us that we are not left here as orphans but the Holy Spirit has been given to us to lead, guide, and direct us into all truth. This world can be dark and terrifying at times, but when we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, no matter how dark and terrifying things are we know we are not alone and that the Lord will never lead us astray.

He is our King. He is in control. He is sovereign over all creation. Depending on where we live in the world we may live in a nation where we don't have freedom. Where if it is found out we are a Christian it can mean certain death and suffering. But even in the midst of being surrounded on every side by the enemy, we know that God surrounds the enemy. He calls us to trust Him. To lean not on our understanding. To trust Him with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Today you may be overwhelmed in this current season of life. But it is so important to meditate upon the word of God. To immerse our minds in God's word. To build our lives upon God's word. We live in very difficult and hard times, but God is in control. It is in Him that perfect peace is found. May we let go of fear, unbelief, and doubt. May we embrace the truth of God's word and walk daily by faith.

*Prayer*

*Father lead and guide me this day. Help me to let go of fear and unbelief. Help me to know that you are my judge, law giver, a king. Father help me to see you in all things and to know your will for my life. Open my eyes to see and my heart to understand. Open my ears to hear your voice clearly. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 25**

### **The Lord Takes Pleasure In His People**

*Psalms 149:4 (New King James Version)*

*For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation.*

Jesus came proclaiming “repent for the kingdom is at hand”. The only way to truly repent is to humble oneself before the Living God. Our ability to come to the place of repentance is a work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and minds. The Holy Spirit opens our eyes to the depths of our sin. We see how wrong it is and we turn from it. Salvation is never an emotional response. It is always a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

What truly marks the life of a true believer in Christ is humility. We understand that without Jesus we are nothing. The longer we walk with Him we see how broken and lost we are without Him. Here it says the Lord takes pleasure in His people. We are God’s sons and daughters. If we ever want to know how much we mean to Almighty God we simply need to look at the price God paid for our salvation. Jesus gave everything so that we could be forgiven, redeemed, and restored to relationship with God the Father.

It says the Lord will beautify the humble with salvation. Beautify in the original Hebrew means to *satisfy a debt: (be) accept(-able), accomplish, set affection, approve, consent with, delight (self), enjoy, (be, have a) favour(-able), like, observe, pardon, (be, have, take) please(-ure), reconcile self*. Everything we need God provides. He has paid our debt. He has made us acceptable to Him. He has declared us righteous. Our sin has been removed, our past has been nailed to the cross. In Christ we have been given a brand new life.

May we take time each day to spend in prayer developing deep intimacy with the Lord. May we never take for granted what Jesus has done for us. Today in Jesus we have a brand new day. Every day we face challenges and battles of all kinds. Every time we do fall short it is an opportunity to learn and grow. Never listen to the voice of condemnation. Keep your heart and mind fixed upon our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*Prayer*

*Father help me never to take for granted the precious salvation I have in your Son Jesus. I pray each day that I would continue to grow in my walk and relationship with you. Remove from my life anything unpleasing to you. I pray that every thought and desire would be surrendered to your Lordship. Lead and guide me this day and my heart, mind, and all that I am be focused on all I have in you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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**Day 26**

# God's Masterpiece

*Ephesians 2:10 (New Living Translation)*

*For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

In Christ we are brand new creations. Through the cross and His suffering and death our sins have been dealt with and paid for. He has created us for His glory and His purpose. Coming to Jesus is a work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God who calls us, draws us, and opens our eyes to the truth. It is the Spirit of God who brings us to the place of repentance.

The enemy may lie to us and tell us that we are useless or we are a mistake. But that is not based on truth. If we have come to Christ and made Jesus our personal Lord and Savior, than He has things for us to do. He has specific plans and purposes for our lives.

The only way for us to truly discover and understand what Jesus has called us to do and what He has created for us to do is to come to know Him intimately. Through the study of His word and time spent in prayer, the Lord begins to reveal who He is to us. He reveals His purposes for our lives. He begins to show us that every gift He has given us, the way our physical body is designed and looks, even our personality is all part of His divine purpose for our lives.

In God's kingdom there are no throw aways or screw ups. Yes we may make mistakes and fall short, but that is part of the journey. Hopefully we are learning from our mistakes and shortcomings and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us daily. Hopefully we are surrendering to the will of God and instead of leaning on our own understanding, we are trusting the Lord with all our heart.

Today if you are believing the lies of the enemy you need to let go and stop. Stop basing your value and identity on things that are false and to know that in Christ you are a new creation. You are God's masterpiece and He has things for you to accomplish for His glory and pleasure.

*Prayer*

*Father help me to know my value in you. Help me to overcome the lies and deceptions of the enemy. Help me to see truth and I pray that every stronghold of Satan that would discourage me or try to destroy the purposes you have for my life be removed. Each day help me to grow in the knowledge of the truth of your word and who I am in Jesus. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

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## Day 27

### I Could Wish You Were Cold Or Hot

*Revelation 3:14-18 (New King James Version)*

*14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,*

*'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:*

*15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17*

*Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

Whenever I read this passage of scripture I am always convicted and challenged. Everytime I read the message to the church of Laodicea I think of the American church. I believe today if Jesus was to speak directly to the church in America, this would be the same message. We believe because we are rich, have become wealthy, that we have need for nothing. But we don't understand that when we claim to follow Christ yet continue to pursue the world and its desires that we are actually wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

The only way to have eyes to see is to ask the Lord to help us to see. But this requires that we would surrender and humble ourselves before the Living God. That we would repent of our wicked ways and understand that Jesus has called us to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. Too many have replaced true biblical christianity with the pursuit of the American dream. God has not promised us a life of comfort. God has not promised us a big house, with a picket fence, with a beautiful family and many cars. God has simply called us to deny ourselves and pick up our cross. Jesus has compared the Christian life of following Him as Lord and Savior to carrying a cross.

These words spoken are from Jesus Himself. In each of the seven messages to the seven churches Jesus gives an introduction describing things about Himself that show this message is directly from Him. Here He refers to Himself as The Amen, The Faithful and True Witness. The things that mark who Jesus is is that He is The Faithful and True Witness. During His earthly ministry He came to reveal the Father and to proclaim the truth of the Kingdom. Jesus never sinned, He never fell short, He faithful proclaimed the message through the power and might of the Holy Spirit. He is the Amen because it is by Him and through Him that all things are created and held together by His mighty power.

Jesus' message to the church is that they are neither hot nor cold. Everytime I read these words it convicts and challenges me personally because I know with the Lord there is always a deeper place to go. Those the Father loves He prunes. The Lord is continually doing a work in our heart and life. If we become content with this world and the things of this world it stifles our growth with God and we end up becoming lukewarm. Lukewarm water has no beneficial purpose and this is why the Lord says you are neither hot nor cold. Hot water is beneficial and so is cold water. But lukewarm water is stagnant and when someone drinks it they desire to spew it out of their mouth.

May we always be willing to go to a deeper place with Jesus. May we be willing to put to death the things that hinder our relationship with God and the things that would try to become an idol in our lives. Satan is always trying to take the worship that is deserving to the Lord alone and place it on other things. May we allow the word of God and the truth of scripture to confront us and challenge us. To prune us and may we willingly surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

*Prayer*

*Father I come today and ask you to examine my heart. Remove from my life anything that would hinder what you desire to do. Father forgive me if I have become lukewarm in my relationship with you. Ignite your fire in my heart and prune me according to your will. I desire to be a vessel of your glory. I desire to be used for the purposes of your kingdom. May all that I am simply belong to you in the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 28**

### **If We Live, We Live To The Lord**

*Romans 14:8 (New King James Version)*

*For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

The question is what are we living for? Or who are we living for? If we claim to be born again and a follower of Jesus Christ that means that we are living for Him. It is not simply based on a decision to raise our hand during a service and fill out a card. The decision to begin to follow Jesus is simply that, it is a beginning.

Jesus calls us to abide in Him. All of those Jesus called as disciples during His earthly ministry left all they had and followed Him. When Jesus invited Peter, James, Andrew, and John to follow Jesus

they left their nets and committed their lives to Him. They had no idea when they began the journey of following Jesus and walking with Him how their lives would change and be impacted for all eternity.

Here the apostle Paul says if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. Jesus must consume every area of our lives. To encounter and experience all that Christ has for us we must surrender. Many times there are things God is calling us to surrender and we are afraid to let go and lay them down. We may believe that some of these things are the foundation and essential to our happiness and contentment. But anything in life can become an idol when it becomes the focus and takes the place that Jesus deserves.

But if we are living and dying to the Lord that means our entire being is given over to Him. Before this verse the apostle Paul writes that none of us lives or dies to ourselves. Jesus said that we are to love the Lord thy God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. That means everything we are belongs to God. If we are holding anything back from the Lord we are robbing ourselves of all that God has for us. Often in our lives before the Lord will release greater blessing and increase, He calls for a greater measure of surrender.

The Christian life and journey is one of continual surrender. Of laying all things down for the Lord for His glory and His honor. May we let go of pursuing this world and its desires. May we simply desire to be led by the Holy Spirit in all things. Jesus paid the ultimate price so that you and I could be totally set free from our sins. May we give all that we have for His purpose and His kingdom.

*Prayer*

*Father, today I surrender all to you. I pray whether I live or die that all things are in your hands. Remove any idol from my life that would hinder my love for you and hinder what you desire to do in my life. I give you permission to fully prune me and bring forth your purposes and will in my life. Help me today to let go of controlling my life and fully give control of who I am to you. May my life simply be used to honor and glorify your name. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 29**

### **Having These Promises**

*2 Corinthians 7:1 (New King James Version)*

*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

When Paul says therefore at the beginning of this verse he points to what he has written previously. In the verses previous he wrote that we are temples of the Holy Spirit. That God has said that He will dwell with us and walk with us. He will be our God and we will be His people. He calls us to come out from them and be separate. He will be a Father to us and we shall become His sons and daughters.

These promises God has given us in His word should move us to remove all sin and wickedness from our lives. When we come to Christ we come broken and mired in sin. We are born into sin and before we come to know Jesus we are spending our lives pursuing sin. But when we come to Christ that all changes. Jesus called people to repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

Repentance means that we not only have a change of mind concerning sin and wickedness, but we have a change of behavior and action. What we think and believe affects how we live. If we still see sin as pleasurable and not as wrong or wicked, we will continue to live in it and pursue it. But if we see sin for what it truly is, we will run from it and we will run to God.

Paul says let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. If we truly have the fear of God living in our hearts we will desire to honor and glorify Him with all things. We will live lives that are consecrated unto the Lord. We will no longer live for the desires of the sinful nature. We will instead simply live to please and honor Jesus.

Today if there is an area of your life that you know needs to be surrendered, now is the day and hour to lay it down. The return of the Lord is very near. Everyday we move ever closer to His return. Seek to have the Lord examine your heart and whatever He reveals, be obedient to surrender all things to Jesus Christ.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come today and ask you to search my heart. Prune me of anything that is unworthy and unacceptable in your sight. Forgiven me for the areas that I have fallen short and any compromises I have made. Father guard my mind from the lies and deceptions of Satan. Guard my heart and deliver me from every temptation of the enemy. Father I pray that my life would honor and glorify you in all things. May the focus of my life be your kingdom and the glory and honor of your Son. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 30

### He Who Glories, Let Him Glory In The Lord

*2 Corinthians 10:17-18*

*New King James Version*

*17 But "he who glories, let him glory in the Lord." 18 For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.*

True authority and influence comes from the Lord alone. All throughout the letter of second Corinthians the apostle Paul is defending his ministry before the Lord. False apostles had come out and made false accusations concerning him. Here Paul states he who glories, let him glory in the Lord. True authority and influence is not received from man, it is received from God alone.

When God gives someone true authority and influence the Lord examines the heart of that individual. The Lord thoroughly tests that individual. Being used greatly by God upon the earth is no easy journey and is often very hard and difficult.

It is not he who commends himself who is approved, it is who the Lord commends who is truly approved. The only opinion that truly matters is that of the Lord. We should never live for the glory or acclaim of man. The applause and approval of man is very empty. But when it is God who honors us, there is nothing that compares. May our eyes be fixed upon the Lord and the calling He has placed upon us. May we not measure ourselves against others, but may we seek to know Him and grow in Him.

*Prayer*

*Father today I come before you and ask you to search my heart. Remove from my heart any desire for the applause of acclaim of man. I pray that I would live for your pleasure alone. I pray my heart and mind would be fully yielded unto you. That you would lead, guide, and direct me. That you would prune and shape me. Remove all desire for selfish ambition and may I only seek your approval and live only for your pleasure. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 31

### To Live Is Christ, To Die Is Gain

*Philippians 1:21 (New King James Version)*

*For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

When Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians, he did so from a prison cell. In the midst of suffering Paul came to understand where true comfort and peace are found. Oftentimes we may come to believe that as long as we are comfortable, that we will be happy. But God has not actually called us to pursue happiness, He has called us to pursue Him.

The only way we can truly live out the Christian life is by fully surrendering unto the Lord. Paul writes "for to me, to live is Christ". Paul knew that to truly live it meant full surrender to Jesus. Paul was arrested on the road to Damascus as he was trying to destroy the church and pursue Christians. At that time he was known as Saul of Tarsus and he had great zeal for the Lord but did not know that Jesus did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.

But when Paul came to know that Jesus is truly the Messiah is when he came to understand what it truly means to live. Paul writes "to die is gain". If we are to truly find life and live life we must be willing to lay down our lives upon the earth for the name and glory of Jesus. Jesus said what good is it for a man to gain the world, yet forfeit his very soul. There is nothing the world offers that is worth dying for. Everything that we pursue in the world ends up being empty in the end.

This day may we pray to have the same attitude the apostle Paul had "to live is Christ and to die is gain". May we be willing to lay down all for the sake of God and His kingdom. There is nothing more valuable and greater than a relationship with Jesus. To know Him personally and to know His salvation.

*Prayer*

*Father, I come to you today and ask you to help me to have the same attitude as the apostle Paul. I pray that I would be willing to give up all to follow you Jesus. I pray that you would remove from my life anything that would hinder my walk with you. Father, have your way in everything and may I truly be willing to lay down everything for the sake of the cross. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 32

# Whoever Has The Son Has Life

*1 John 5:12 (English Standard Version)*

*Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

True abundant life is only found in Jesus Christ. The life John speaks of is not only discovered in this lifetime upon the earth, it is lived out for all eternity in the presence of the Lord. Someday as followers of Jesus we will be in the very physical presence of the Lord. God Almighty shall dwell with us.

Many on this earth pursue the world and its desire. Jesus said the road to destruction is wide and many will walk on it. The road to life is narrow and few will find it. Sadly the number of people in Hell will far outnumber those in Heaven. A person's ability to enter into Heaven is simply dependent on what they do with Jesus Christ. If we reject Jesus Christ and His sacrifice, we forfeit the precious gift of salvation. If we humble ourselves before God, admit our need for a Savior, and place our faith and trust in Christ, we receive the precious gift of eternal life.

Our salvation is not based on works. Works are naturally an outgrowth of walking with Jesus. It is impossible to abide in Christ intimately and not be changed by the work and person of the Holy Spirit in our lives. As we abide in Christ and His truth, we begin to discern the voice and leading of the Holy Spirit. In every decision the Spirit of God is directing us. It is impossible not to be changed by Jesus when we fully surrender every day.

God's desire is spiritual maturity. His desire is that just as we grow and develop physically into maturity that we would grow and develop spiritually. Everything in our lives is impacted when we simply begin to walk with Jesus every day. He truly changes everything.

True life is found in Jesus. True hope and freedom is found in Jesus. Today may we pursue His kingdom. May we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. God is in control and God is moving in the earth. Daily His word is going forth in so many ways because His desire is that none would perish but would have everlasting life. My hope for you today is that you know Jesus, you walk with Him, surrender to Him, and live for Him. For in Him only true life is found.

*Prayer*

*Father I come before you today and ask you to help me to fully surrender. Help me to let go of my fleshly, sinful desires. Help me to turn my back on this world and to pursue you alone. Remove every lie and stronghold from my heart and mind. May my mind and heart be fully surrendered to you. May you have your way in the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 33

### I Love The Lord, Because He Has Heard My Voice

*Psalm 116:1-2 (New King James Version)*

*I love the Lord, because He has heard My voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live.*

It is a great comfort to know when we pray the Lord not only hears us but He listens. He loves us with an everlasting love. His love for us is far greater than we can understand. He calls us over and over again in scripture to pray. He shows us example after example of His faithfulness when His people have prayed.

The writer of this Psalm says “He has heard my voice and my supplications”. The word supplications means earnest prayer. We are told in James that the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. When you are in the presence of someone who is praying it is a much different experience when you are listening to someone who knows they are heard by God. They know nothing is impossible, and they know God is faithful to move. Therefore they are relentless in the place of prayer crying out to God.

The writer says “He has inclined His ear to me”. This is a picture of God sitting upon His throne. Stopping all that He is doing to incline His ear to us. Sometimes we may wonder if what we are facing is worth praying about or if God even cares. Jesus tells us that our Father knows every hair that is on the top of our heads. He has numbered them. Jesus has given us the example of the lilies and the sparrows to show us how much our Father cares about us. He is calling us to pray.

Because of all this the writer says “therefore, I will call upon Him as long as I live”. The goal of every Christian should be that their very life be a house of prayer. No matter the need or situation, when we know we need help and intervention from Almighty God we should stop and cry out to Him. Too many times we look to so many other places for help. But what God is showing us in this season is the only thing we can trust is Him. He is bidding us to draw near, to pray, to know Him intimately. May we accept the invitation and draw near with confidence and without fear.

*Prayer*

*Father, today I come before you and I thank you that you hear me when I pray. Father, I thank you that you are concerned about every detail of my life. I pray your will be done and your kingdom*

come in my life. I pray that every purpose and plan that you have destined for me would be poured out in your time and according to your will. May my heart be fully surrendered to you. May you be my obsession and my desire. In the name of Jesus. Amen!

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## Day 34

### Those Who Love Your Law Have Great Peace

*Psalm 119:165 (New American Standard Bible)*

*Those who love Your Law have great peace, And nothing causes them to stumble.*

The word of God is incredible and life changing. When we take time each day to study and immerse our lives in God's word we are changed by the person of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul tells us we are transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2). The word law here means direction, instruction, law. God's word is our rule for life. It guides and directs the actions of our lives on a daily basis. Under the Old Covenant every aspect of the lives of the Jews was guided by the law. Today God has given us His word from Genesis to Revelation.

True peace can only be found when our lives are immersed in the word of God. Peace here means peace, prosperity, success, welfare, state of health. The peace of God affects every area of our lives. If we desire for God's peace to rule in our hearts it is directly connected to our time spent in His word. Those who love His word will hunger for it, spend time in it, and live according to it. Biblical Christianity requires that we live according to the word of God. His word is to be all consuming in our lives.

The result of making God's word the focus and center piece of our lives is that we will not stumble. We will not be overcome by the wiles of the enemy. Satan is a roaring lion and seeks to devour those who are distracted and disconnected from God. In the midst of every storm our greatest place of comfort is spending time in God's word. When we immerse our hearts and lives in the promises of God the end result will be peace and victory.

*Prayer*

*Father today I come before you and ask you to lead, guide, and direct my steps. Father help me to understand your word and live according to your word. Where confusion may exist concerning your*

*word I pray that you would bring clarity and understanding. I pray that my heart and mind will be fixed upon your promises for my life. Help me each day to immerse my life in your word and may your word be written upon my heart. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

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## **Day 35**

### **Many Parts In One Body**

*Romans 12:4-5 (New American Standard Bible)*

*For just as we have many parts in one body and all the body's parts do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually parts of one another.*

We are a single unit. As the body of Christ we are one body with many diverse parts. Diversity is essential in the body of Christ. Many churches today across America are divided along racial lines. We have churches that are predominately white, black, and hispanic. But God's desire is that the people of God would come together as one. What we must guard against in this age and generation is division. The enemy is trying to do all he can to divide the nation. But as the church we must walk in the love of Christ and according to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We must see our brothers and sisters as the Lord sees them.

Paul tells us that there are many parts but they do not all have the same function. That word function means act, doing, function. All of us have an active role to play in the body of Christ. Many have relegated themselves to the sidelines and have treated Christianity like a spectator sport. They sit and watch the pastor each week bring forth the word of God, feed on it, but sadly do nothing with it. A person who feeds on the word of God and does nothing with it is like an individual who sits upon the couch day after day eating large amounts of food, but failing to ever exercise or expend any energy. Just in the physical it can lead to premature death, it can lead to being spiritually dead even though we claim to be in Christ. Biblical faith requires continual action. James tells us faith without works is dead. It is impossible to claim true biblical faith in Jesus and not be impacted through our actions or behavior.

Paul continues that we who are many and we who are individual are all part of one body. The body of Christ is called to be a unified spiritual unit. When we look at the US military we see that the military has soldiers who have all different jobs and ranks. But if the military doesn't act as a single

unit they will not be effective and in the end they will be defeated by the enemy. But if the military acts as a single unit with everyone fulfilling their role, it will be highly effective and will march victoriously.

When we examine the body of Christ we have oftentimes fallen very short of what God has called us to do. To be the bride He has called us to be. But thank God every day we have an opportunity to walk in the newness of fellowship with Him. Yes we may have screwed up royally, but if we are willing to humble ourselves and confess our sins, the Lord is faithful to forgive us.

*Prayer*

*Father, today I thank you for your grace and mercy. I thank you for your patience and your love. Help me to walk according to your spirit. Help me to learn from my mistakes and be the person you have called me to be. Father, today I pray for your people. I pray that we would be unified, that our focus would be upon Jesus. That we would seek you with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Father, today I pray have your way in our hearts and lives in the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 36**

### **You Are All One In Christ Jesus**

*Galatians 3:28 (New American Standard Bible)*

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

For you are all one in Christ Jesus. These words written by the apostle Paul demonstrate to us as followers of Jesus our standing, identity, and value is found in Christ alone. Regardless of a person's race or gender, in Jesus Christ all of us are valuable in the eyes of Almighty God. When Jesus came and died upon the cross, He didn't come to simply only save a select group of people. He came and offered salvation to all people.

Today our world is divided and as we continue to move forward it will become divided and fractured even more. God is removing and shaking every foundation that man has built his life upon that is not connected to God and His kingdom. God's desire is for people to come to salvation. His desire is that none perish but all come to everlasting life.

The message of the gospel is going forth through the earth. The reason the gospel is called good news is because the offer of salvation God gives is not received through behavior or performance. It is not based on the works of man, it is based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ. This is why no matter where a person comes from, regardless of race, background, gender, or sexuality, that salvation is available to them.

For us to come to salvation we must place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. Paul writes those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:13). Paul also writes if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord you shall be saved (Romans 10:9).

When Paul wrote these words to believers in Galatia, he was writing to a group of people who were being deceived into thinking that you needed to follow and hold to the law to be righteous in the eyes of God. But our righteousness is not based upon keeping the law, it is based upon the finished work of Christ. In Him we are one. In Him our value and identity is based on who Jesus is and what He has done. For those of us with a past that is shameful and dreadful this is wonderful news. Because our sin has been nailed to the cross.

#### *Prayer*

*Father, today I ask you to help me to understand my identity and value in you. Help me to keep my eyes fixed upon Jesus. Help me to let go of the shame of my sin and my past. Open my eyes to the depths of your love for me. Lead, guide, and direct me into your plans and purposes. Help me to see my brothers and sisters in Christ as you see them. Father give me the strength and endurance to live for you each day. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 37**

### **Lord; Teach me Your Statues**

*Psalms 119:64 (New American Standard Bible)*

*The earth is full of Your goodness, Lord; Teach me Your statutes.*

The earth is full of God's goodness. There are many things that we take for granted on this earth. There are so many things that God provides for us on a daily basis. The word of God tells us that we enter His gates with thanksgiving and praise. When we come before the Lord with thanksgiving

it prepares our heart to fellowship with Him. Too many in this generation are simply focused on self and what they want. Some believe the secret of life is coming to understand self. But it is self that destroys us. We are called to be led by the Holy Spirit in all things.

As we grow in Christ our desire is for the Lord to teach us His word. It is the Holy Spirit who leads and guides us into all truth. The Holy Spirit will never teach us anything or lead us to do anything that is outside the word of God or contrary to scripture. The word of God must become our obsession and our priority. The more we study the scriptures, the more we come to understand God in a deeper way.

We are bombarded daily with lies and deceptions from the enemy. Satan desires to capture our minds and influence us with lies and deception. But the truth of God's word is sharper than any two edged sword. It destroys the lies of the enemy. As we come to know God and understand how good He truly is, the cry of our heart will be teach me Your statutes. When our hearts and lives are fully yielded to Christ is when we will see His life and character produced within us.

*Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and ask you to search me and know me. Teach me to walk in your ways. Teach me to live on a daily basis according to your word. Father I pray that your will would be done in every area of my life. That you would prune and remove anything that would hinder what you desire to do. I pray this in Jesus name!*

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## **Day 38**

### **Hold On To The Example of Sound Words**

*2 Timothy 1:13-14 (New American Standard Bible)*

*Hold on to the example of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Protect, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.*

Timothy was Paul's spiritual son. Paul spent his life pouring himself into Timothy. Paul had demonstrated through his life how to handle the word of God and how to proclaim the truth of scripture. To hold fast to the truth of scripture and not compromise requires sacrifice. Many will

reject the message of the gospel and the truth of God's word. Many would rather determine what is right and wrong for themselves and embrace preaching that is compromised and pleasing to the ear.

Paul writes to hold on to the example of sound words you have heard from me. Paul was used by God to write a majority of what we know as the New Testament. Paul's life is a picture of God's grace. God took a man who was trying to destroy the church and hinder the work of the gospel and turn him around as one of the greatest servants of Almighty God.

Faith and love are found in Jesus Christ. Salvation is by faith alone in Jesus Christ and true love is only found when we walk daily with Jesus. The more we walk with Him, the more His love becomes a reality in every area of our lives. God desires to immerse our lives with His presence and His power, this is only possible as we abide and walk with Christ daily.

It is the Holy Spirit who dwells within us who makes possible the ability for us to do anything for God and His kingdom. Paul says to protect the treasure that has been entrusted to you. The true treasure in this world is the truth of God's word. The enemy desires to corrupt the preaching and teaching of God's word. It is when God's word is taught rightly and soundly that people come to salvation, are set free from the bondage of sin and hell, they are redeemed for God's glory. This is why Paul's instruction was to guard. The enemy will stop at nothing to try to get the minister of God's word to compromise.

But great rewards await those in God's kingdom. Yes we may be rejected on this earth, hated, and called to suffer because of the name of Jesus. But great is the reward that awaits us in God's kingdom. Our focus must always be Jesus and His soon return. This world is not our home and may we simply live to bring glory and honor unto the Lord.

#### *Prayer*

*Father today I come and ask you to help me to hold fast to your word. When I have opportunity to share, teach, and proclaim your truth, may I never compromise and may your strength and power fill my life. Father give me eyes to see and ears to hear. Guard and protect my heart from every scheme of the enemy. Deliver me this day from every trap that is set for me. May I protect the truth of your word and may I be a faithful steward of all you have given unto me. In the mighty name of Jesus.*

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## Day 39

### Therefore, Go and Make Disciples of All the Nations

*Matthew 28:18-20 (New Living Translation)*

*Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

Jesus has risen from the dead. He will soon be returning to the Father. The words a person gives as they are about to leave those they have invested in for a period of time are extremely important. These words are the mission statement of the Body of Christ. We are not called to build social clubs that entertain the masses and fit what we selfishly desire for the name of Jesus. We are called to go forth and make disciples of all nations.

This word nations means groups of people linked by kinship, land, and culture. Jesus is not focused on the countries that are listed on a map that designate an area of land, Jesus is focused on the people within these nations. He is focused on every tribe, tongue, and people. The heart of Jesus is to simply reach the lost. He came to seek and save those who are lost. Sometimes in the body of Christ we can become distracted by things that have nothing to do with the mission that Jesus gave us.

Jesus not only calls us to disciple but to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Baptism is not a requirement of salvation, but it is extremely important in the life of the believer. It is a public declaration that we are a disciple of Jesus Christ. That we have died with Christ and we have risen with Him to new life. Everything Jesus has done for us points to restoration and healing. Before we met Jesus we were lost. But once we come to know Jesus, things will never be the same.

An important part of discipling people is teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded us. God's word should determine the way we live our lives. It is the lens through which we view life. The only way to live victoriously as a Christian is according to the word of God. Without the word of God, transformation and change are impossible. For Paul tells us we are transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2).

The greatest promise Jesus has given us is that He will be with us always. There is not a time on this earth when we walk with Jesus that the Lord is not with us and He is not guiding us. The Holy Spirit lives inside of us. He leads and guides us into all truth. He empowers and equips us for service. The key to living victoriously and accomplishing all that God has planned is surrendering fully to the work and person of the Holy Spirit.

Today may we take these words of Jesus seriously. May they determine the course of our lives and how we attack life every day. As Christians we are on mission daily. Everywhere we are is a mission field because lost people are found there. May the heart of Jesus be produced within us and our desire be to seek and save the lost. We have the honor to introduce and lead people to Jesus Christ.

### *Prayer*

*Father, today I come and ask you to forgive me for failing to live on mission. I ask you to forgive me for allowing things that have nothing to do with your kingdom and eternity to distract me. Help me each day to live on mission. I pray that Matthew 28:18-20 would be the driving force in all that I do. I pray my heart would be fully surrendered to your work and leading. May my life truly be a vessel of your glory. May you give me the courage and boldness needed to share the truth of who Jesus is with those who are lost and in darkness. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 40**

### **If Anyone Loves Me, He Will Follow My Word**

*John 14:23 (New American Standard Bible)*

*Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him.*

Jesus desires to make His home with us. He desires for us to walk intimately with Him through out the course of the entire day. Jesus is calling us to live according to His word. When it says to keep His word it means that His word is the foundation of everything. His word is the playbook for our lives. His word is the lens by which we view the world and make every decision.

It is important to understand when we come to Christ our lives no longer belong to us. When Jesus calls anyone, He calls them to lay down everything for the sake of Him and His kingdom. As long as we try to hold onto our old lives or anything in this world, we will simply hinder what God desires to do inside of us.

Every single one of us has a calling and an anointing. God has a specific plan and destiny for us. He is calling us to daily surrender. May we be willing to fully let go and let Him have His way. May our desire be to simply spend time with our Lord and Savior.

If we will live according to the word of God and keep His word, the promise for us is that The Father and The Son will make their home with us. Our lives will be filled with God's peace and presence. Every blessing in God's kingdom is directly connected to keeping and living according to the word of God.

*Prayer*

*Father today lead and guide me according to your word. Search my heart and remove any way within me that is wicked and against your word. I pray my life would honor you in everything. I pray you would bless the work of my hands that I would be able to give honor and glory back to you. May the focus of my life become your kingdom and the glory of your Son Jesus. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 41**

### **We May Present Every Person Complete in Christ**

*Colossians 1:28 (New American Standard Bible)*

*We proclaim Him, admonishing every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete in Christ.*

The word complete in the Greek means perfect, mature, complete, fully developed. Paul is speaking about the truth of scripture and its effect on an individual when it is preached without compromise. Too many times today the word of God is compromised because people desire to build kingdoms for themselves and the glory of their own names. Too many times they compromise truth and it is pleasing to the ear, but fails to impact the individual for the kingdom of Heaven.

Paul understood the power of God's word. Paul understood that true wisdom comes from God alone. It is the renewing of our minds that leads to transformation. When we come to Christ, we

enter into a lifelong process of being shaped and transformed by the Holy Spirit. As we study the scriptures the word of God begins to crumble and destroy every stronghold of Satan.

Strongholds are systems of thought that act as a fortress around the individual. It is through these strongholds that the individual sees the world around them. But when the word of God is preached and the wisdom of God goes forth, it plants seeds in the heart of the individual. As we pray over those seeds the Holy Spirit begins to move inside that individual impacting them from the inside out. People are changed and transformed by God from the inside. This is why the word of God is so powerful and why the enemy does all that he can to tempt any individual to compromise it.

The word admonish means to advise someone about avoiding wrongdoings. People are sinful and self-centered by nature. I am convinced a major reason why believers fail to live rightly is they have a wrong understanding of God's word. When we have a wrong understanding of God's word, it will affect the way we understand God and it will affect the way we live. When a person sits under solid bible teaching they will begin to be transformed because the Holy Spirit will work in the heart of that individual. To build the kingdom of God correctly takes time and patience. But when our focus is simply being faithful to the scriptures, we will see a great and mighty harvest in time.

#### *Prayer*

*Father, I pray that you would help me to handle your word correctly. When I am given the opportunity to teach or preach your word, may I be found faithful to hold fast to the truth of scripture. Father remove all desire to compromise your word. Remove all fear from my heart. May my focus and aim simply be the glory of Jesus and faithfulness to your word. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 42**

### **Not Returning Evil For Evil or Insult for insult**

*1 Peter 3:8-9*

*8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble; 9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you would inherit a blessing.*

The conduct of our lives is key for our witness for Jesus Christ. We can claim to follow Christ and be a disciple of Jesus, but if our lives don't reflect the character and nature of Jesus, we need to examine our hearts. The result of walking with Jesus is becoming like Him. In this passage Paul uses the words harmonious, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble. All of these words demonstrate the character in the nature of Jesus Christ. None of us can do this in ourselves because if we rely on ourselves then we are simply trying to look to live in the flesh. But if we continually look to Christ and abide in his word and his truth, will be transformed into His character in his nature. The key to Holiness in the life of the believer is abiding in Christ daily. When we abide in Christ, we abide in the truth of God's word and become more like him.

Peter says not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead. This again points to the character and the nature of who Jesus says. When Jesus was persecuted, when he was called to suffer, he did not cry out, he did not fight back. He simply laid down his life willingly because that was the father's will. When we are simply willing to forgive and to love especially those who hate us and persecute us, we truly manifest the character and the nature of Christ. Being a true witness for Jesus Christ is not simply about the words we speak, it is about the life we live.

In Christ we are called. In Jesus we have a destiny and we have a purpose. There's a great blessing that awaits us. We live this life every day for God and his kingdom. The key to the Christian Life is remembering that this life and this world is not our home. At times Christians get caught up and seeking after things that have no eternal value. It is so easy in this age to fall prey to idolatry because we fail to understand that Idols are not merely statues that men worship. Too many times today the things that we pursue and have nothing to do with God's kingdom become idols. Anything can become an idol that takes the rightful place that Jesus deserves.

May we desire to glorify and honor Jesus Christ in all things. Those who are lost in this world and walking in darkness will find it strange that we claim to follow Jesus as our Lord and savior. Those who live in darkness often see the Bible as a book of fables or man-made stories. But it's not until you come to know the one named Jesus that you truly understand the power of God's word. When God's word becomes the centerpiece of our Lives that is when we truly become the people that God has called us to be. This is when very ordinary people are used by God to do the extraordinary for the honor and the glory of Jesus Christ.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and I ask you to lead, guide, and direct me in all things. That you would give me the strength to be the person that you've called me to be. Help me to walk in humility. Help me in all things to be harmonious. To be sympathetic. To be loving. To be compassionate. Father I understand my weaknesses and I understand my shortcomings and I come to you today confessing these things before you. I simply pray that you would empower me by your Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit*

would fill my life everyday to overflowing and that you would use me truly as the hands and the feet of Jesus. Me and my life glorify and honor Jesus and all things. In the matchless and mighty name of Jesus Christ, Amen!

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## Day 43

### The Secret of The Lord is for Those Who Fear Him

*Psalm 25:14-15 (New American Standard Bible 1995)*

*The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him, And He will make them know His covenant. My eyes are continually toward the Lord, For He will pluck my feet out of the net.*

The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him. What does it mean to fear the Lord? Does it mean that we simply live in terror of the Lord and are unable to move or do anything in life? What it means is that we have a right understanding of who God is. We live in reverence of who God is and understand our lives are worship to the Lord.

We are called to be living sacrifices unto the Lord. If we truly fear the Lord we understand every decision and choice we make impacts our relationship with God. If we truly fear the Lord we will not do anything to tarnish or destroy our relationship with God. Even if we sin we know that if we confess our sin that He is faithful and just to forgive us. But if we are living in habitual sin and it has overtaken our lifestyle, then the conviction of the Holy Spirit will grip us and we will turn from our sin.

But it is important to see that God shares His secrets with those who truly fear Him. God desires to share the depths of His heart with us. He desires to share the deep things of His kingdom with us. The more we come to know of Him and the truth of His kingdom and His word, the more we come to reflect His very character and nature. The journey with Him is one of being transformed on a daily basis.

Those who fear the Lord He makes His covenant known to them. They come to understand all they have in Him and experience the blessing of being in right relationship with Almighty God. Jesus said that He came to give life abundantly. Jesus also said those who love me will obey my commands. If we are truly to experience all that God has for us it requires us to live according to His word on a daily basis. If we have any area of our lives that are lived in rebellion or disobedience

we must be willing to surrender it to the Lord, and allow our Father in Heaven to prune us of that which is hindering His work in our lives.

The writer of the Psalm shows us one of the great important principles of walking with God. He says my eyes are continually toward the Lord. Whatever our eyes are fixed on is the direction we are walking in. He says the Lord will pluck his feet from the net. The devil continually sets traps and snares before us. The way he does this is through temptation and deception. But when our eyes are continually fixed upon the Lord and Jesus is our sole pursuit, we will be protected and guarded from every snare and scheme of the enemy.

Today may we fix our hearts upon the Lord. May we truly pursue to know Him in a greater way. He desires to bring great blessing into our lives, but if we are not walking according to His ways and His word, this is impossible. If we truly fear the Lord it will impact every area of our lives. Nothing will remain untouched by Almighty God. Our lives will simply be surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Prayer*

*Father I come today and ask you to search my heart. Examine my heart and mind and reveal any area that needs to be surrendered to you. I want to give all that I have for the greatness and honor of your name. May my life truly be a living sacrifice. I pray that you would help me to walk in obedience in all your ways. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 44**

### **I Would Have Despaired Unless I Had Believed That I Would See The Goodness Of The Lord**

*Psalm 27:13-14*

*13 I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord  
In the land of the living.*

*14 Wait for the Lord;*

*Be strong and let your heart take courage;*

*Yes, wait for the Lord.*

There are moments when we experience true despair. We may feel or believe God has abandoned us or forsaken us. There are hard and difficult seasons that we experience while following Jesus. Jesus never said this journey would be easy. But He calls us to trust Him in all things. He has given us His word that is filled with continual promises. But our lives must become immersed in the word of God. We must not only read His word, we must meditate upon it day and night.

The land of the living not only speaks to present life, but it speaks to life in eternity. God is a good God. There are times when we find ourselves on the mountain top and there are times when we find ourselves down in the valley. But no matter what we face it does not change the goodness of God. Some will blame God for things and become bitter at God. But the greatest tactic of the enemy is to turn our hearts away from the Lord. Satan understands that if he can isolate us from God that he can cause incredible damage and destruction in our lives.

The Psalmist tells us to wait for the Lord, to be strong and let our hearts take courage. When despair desires to take hold and paralyze us, we must trust the Living God. When we feel like throwing in the towel, we must trust the Living God. Taking courage and being encouraged is the opposite of discouragement. Satan loves to try to overwhelm us with discouragement, but everything the enemy assaults us with is based and grounded in lie and deception. This is why the word of God is so important. The word of God will not only renew our minds and lead to transformation, it will also strengthen us and help us to navigate the journey we are on with Jesus.

His final word to us is to wait for the Lord. I have found that waiting on the Lord is probably one of the most difficult things as a Christian. Continually in the place of waiting the Lord tells us to be still and know that He is God. The Lord calls us to trust Him at all times. But the enemy will try to fill our hearts with lie and deception. In the place of waiting the enemy will try to convince us that God has abandoned us and that which we are waiting on the Lord for will never come to pass.

Today hold fast my friends to the promises of God. Know that as we trust the Lord and seek His face, that He is working to accomplish His good and perfect plans in our lives. He tells us if we seek Him we will find Him, if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. The secret to walking with Jesus and waiting on the Lord is seeking and drawing near to Him. Even in our most difficult moments the Lord will strengthen us and lift us up.

*Prayer*

*Father I come today and ask you to strengthen me in my time of waiting. Help me to fix my heart on the promises of your word. May your word be written upon my heart, and may you carry me in this season. Father there are moments when I feel like giving up. There are moments when it seems the voice of the enemy is overwhelming. But Father through it all I know you are working. I*

*know that you are God and your ways and thoughts are higher and different than our own. May you simply have your way in my life and may my heart be surrendered to you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 45**

### **Delight Yourself In The Lord**

*Psalm 37:4 (New American Standard Bible 1995)*

*Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart.*

What does it mean to delight one's self in the Lord? It means to take pleasure in our relationship with the Lord. It means that the sole focus of our lives as we serve and follow the Lord is Him. There are many things that desire our time and attention. During the time that these words were written by the Psalmist, idols continually tried to draw the people of Israel away from the one true God to worship false gods who were no gods at all.

But when we pursue the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and remove all things from our lives that would hinder our relationship with Him, He will give us the desires of our heart. But the question is what desires? Will God simply grant us anything we want because we are seeking Him? What if those desires are contrary to His word and His character?

There is something supernatural that happens in the life of a person as they begin to seek and pursue the Lord on a daily basis. The Lord tells us if we seek Him we will find Him, if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us (Jeremiah 29:13). When we begin to truly seek after the Lord on a daily basis and draw near, the sole desire of our lives become Him. He begins to change the desires within us from selfish, self-centered desires, to desires that align with His will and purpose in our lives.

God is continually leading and guiding us as we seek Him with all our heart. I have found that one of the ways that God directs us toward His purpose and His will is Godly desires that align with His purpose and plans for our lives. I have found that when it is a desire that God has put inside us it is something we cannot escape. We continue to pursue it and the more we pursue it, our desire for it grows. This is a way the Holy Spirit draws us toward the will and purpose He has for our lives.

Some have taken this verse and tried to use it to gain selfish desires that exist within them. They think that if I delight myself in the Lord, God will bless me in the way I desire. But if the things we desire do not align with His will and they are contrary to His word and character, He will not pour them out in our lives. If He did that would make God a liar and not a loving Father. But because He truly loves us, as we seek Him, He will prune the desires that destroy us and replace them with desires that will point us to Him and His kingdom.

### Prayer

*Father today I pray that you would lead and guide me. Remove any desire in my life that is contrary to you and your kingdom. May everything I desire simply be surrendered to your will for my life. May my heart and mind become one with yours. May I simply live for the pleasure of your presence. Father my desire is to delight in you every moment of every day. Help me in my weakness and my limitation. In the name of Jesus, Amen*

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## Day 46

### The Fear Of The Lord Is The Beginning Of Wisdom

*Proverbs 9:10 (New American Standard Bible 1995)*

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

What is the fear of the Lord? Does it mean that we live in holy terror of the Living God and we live in fear to draw near to Him? That we live in continual fear that somehow God is going to strike us with His angry hand? I believe the answer to this question is no.

From scripture we see the character and nature of God. We come to understand that He is a loving Father. He desires the very best for His children. He has created His children with specific purpose and destiny. Nothing in our lives happens by accident. We have a true enemy who desires to destroy the purposes of God, but God will always use every thing we face for our good and our purpose if we truly love Him and seek His face.

But to fear the Lord means to live in holy reverence of who God is. Every decision we make in life must be made with Him and His kingdom in mind. How is what we are deciding to do going

to impact our relationship with Him. In coming into relationship with Him all of our lives belong to Him. The mistake many make is they want to separate the secular and the sacred and believe only certain things belong to the Lord. But everything in our lives if we are truly a child of God belongs to the Lord. If we seek first His kingdom and righteousness, we will see His hand move mightily in our lives.

The beginning of wisdom is to fear the Lord. The beginning of understanding is the knowledge of the Holy One. This doesn't simply speak of head knowledge, but to know Him personally. We have the great honor and privilege to walk in intimacy with the Lord every day. Jesus has made it possible that our sin no longer separates us from our Father in Heaven. He is bidding us to come to the throne of grace with confidence, without fear,

If we will simply surrender all things to Him, we will see His hand move in our lives in a mighty way. Every battle we face will be given to Him, and we will see victory and breakthrough on a daily basis. Oftentimes what the Lord is waiting for is for us to surrender all things to Him. To lay down all things at His feet. Today may our lives be fully surrendered to Him.

Prayer

*Father today help me to rightly understand my relationship with you. Help me to understand what it means to not only properly live in fear of who you are, but to have a right understanding of who you are. Father remove from my life anything that is displeasing to you. May the meditations of my heart and the words of mouth be pleasing to you. Guard my heart against the temptations and wiles of the devil. Father may my heart solely be fixed upon you. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

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## Day 47

# Speaking To One Another In Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs

*Ephesians 5:19-20 (New American Standard Bible 1995)*

*speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;*

Our lives as followers of Jesus should be filled with praise and worship from our lips. Paul here says "singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to God". When we reflect on our lives and all the ways that God has blessed us and provided, it is impossible to live each day without simply praising and thanking Him.

There may be seasons in life in which we are going through something very difficult and hard. We may feel very overwhelmed and discouraged because of what we are facing on a daily basis. But what I have learned is that praise and worship is a decision of our will. We have to choose to worship God. I have heard people comment when they enter a church and experience a worship service that sometimes they don't like the style of music or the songs that are being played.

But is the focus of worship and praise us. If we choose not to worship based on feelings, emotions, or how we feel about a song it has become about us and no longer is focused on the Lord. But if our trust focus and desire is to simply worship God it won't matter the type of music we sing. We will simply be focused on who Jesus is and what He has done with us. I believe one of the marks of a mature Christian is they will choose to worship God no matter what. No matter what they are going through they still know that God is good and He will work all things together for our good.

This journey with Jesus is not an easy one. But the more we walk with Him, the more we know Him, the more we come to love Him. The more we come to know Jesus we simply know that no matter what we are facing the Lord walks with us through the fire. We will never be burned or consumed, But through it all we will be refined, simply becoming more and more like Him.

Prayer

*Father I pray today that you would help me to see. Give me a right perspective concerning all things. Help me to know you and that no matter what I face that your praise will continually be upon my lips. Help me not to be motivated by my feelings and emotions. Help me to simply praise you on both the mountain top and down in the valley.*

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# But You Are A Chosen Race

1 Peter 2:9 (New American Standard Bible 1995)

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

We have been chosen and called by God. I am always amazed when I reflect on this truth. We have done nothing to deserve Him either calling or choosing us. There is nothing within ourselves that is significant or good. But God in His mercy calls us. He has called us out of darkness. When we claim to walk with Christ but continue to pursue the things of the flesh, we rob ourselves of all that God truly has for us.

Experiencing the blessing of the Lord in all areas of our lives requires surrender on our part and obedience. We never earn anything from God but the Lord is never going to pour out His goodness, increase, and blessing in our lives if we continue to live in rebellion. If we are pursuing and partaking of the things of the flesh that is exactly what we are doing. We are living in rebellion to Almighty God.

When we come to Jesus, God the Father becomes our Father. We are adopted into His family. We have been chosen and we have been called. We now have an awesome opportunity on a daily basis to proclaim how awesome God is. To proclaim the change and impact He has made in our lives. Many will say that God doesn't exist and that the bible is a bunch of fairy tales. But Billy Graham used to say you can't see the wind, but you can see the effects of the wind. May our lives be lived in such a way as to bring glory and honor to Jesus in all things.

*Prayer*

*Father we come today asking you to help us to live for you moment by moment. Father deliver us from every temptation and lie of the enemy. Help us in our weakness to live in such a way that in all that we say and do we bring glory and honor to you. Thank you for your love, grace, and mercy. Thank you for your patience. Thank you that you do not give up on us, do not forsake us, and do not abandon us. Your love for us is far greater than we understand. Help us to simply live for you each day. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 49

### But My Words Will Not Pass Away

*Matthew 24:35*

*New American Standard Bible 1995*

*35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.*

Everything that Jesus has spoken will come to pass. As Christ spoke about His second coming, everything He laid out for the disciples would take place. Currently we wait in this period of time where we look daily to the second coming of Christ. As we wait the Lord has simply called us to live for Him each day. To continue to surrender every day and every decision to Him.

He has incredible plans for our lives. There are times we may struggle, but even in the midst of the struggle God is with us. God has a plan in all things. Our Father wastes nothing in our lives, but everything is used to shape and mold us.

He is more concerned with our character and maturity than anything else. Through Jesus we have been reconciled and brought into right relationship with Him. Every day we can draw near to the throne of grace without fear. There is never a moment in which His hand is removed from our lives or that we are forsaken. He simply calls us to trust Him.

Heaven and earth will one day pass away. There will come a time in which God creates a new Heaven and new earth. But we can build our lives upon the promises of His word. His word is unchanging and through His word He has revealed who He is and how He works in the lives of those He has called and chosen. Let us never forget we have been chosen by God. Not because we have done anything to deserve it, but because of His goodness, grace, and mercy.

*Prayer*

*Father I thank you that you have chosen me. Help me each day to fix my heart upon the return of your Son Jesus. May my life simply glorify and honor you in all things. Prune me as you desire. I pray that my heart would be fully surrendered to you in all things. I thank you for your kindness, goodness, and love. Father be with me this day through every trial and temptation. Deliver me from every wicked snare and scheme of the enemy. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 50**

### **Two Foundations**

*Matthew 7:24-27 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall."*

Jesus speaks of acting on His words. All of us have been given freewill. The moment we begin to make the decision to follow Jesus we begin a journey that last for an eternity. God is not going to force us to walk in obedience to His word. It is a choice on our behalf. If we are not careful it is easy to become distracted or simply too busy to spend time with the Lord. When we begin to fail to spend intimate moments with Him, not only will our relationship with Him begin to suffer, but our lives will become very vulnerable to the destruction of the enemy.

We determine what foundation we will build our lives upon. Those who build their foundation upon the word of God, build their lives upon a foundation that is unshakable. There will always be trials and storms as long as we live upon this earth. Sometimes people think that if I follow Jesus everything is now going to be easy and I can simply sit back and relax. But the moment we come to Christ we are not only marked by God, we are marked by the enemy. The enemy will do all that he can to try to disrupt and destroy the purposes of God in our lives. But abiding and building our lives upon Jesus and the word of God is vital to weather any storm.

There is nothing we will face in this life that is greater than God's grace and power. Yes the Lord will allow storms and trials to come, but there is a purpose in every storm. Through every trial we are tested and impurities are removed. We are refined and as we are refined we become the person God has destined us to be. Our lives when we begin with Christ is simply like a slab of granite. Within that slab exist a master piece. Every storm and trial we face is like a hammer and chisel in the hand of a master artist. God is continually pruning and removing anything that would hinder His purpose and destiny in our lives.

Jesus is always drawing us to a deeper place. He is always calling us to walk in obedience to His word. Those who fail to act upon the word of God and build their lives upon the word of God will see everything around them crumble when the storms of life come. When Jesus is our refuge and our strong tower, no matter what we face, we can run to Him and find safety. Our Father holds us in the palm of His hand and has provided His Son to reconcile us to Him. Everything He does in our lives and allow is for our good and His purposes. May we trust Him today and simply build our lives upon His word. Not only being hearers but also doers.

#### *Prayer*

*Father today I come and ask you to help me to act upon your word. Help me to build my life upon the truth of your word. Help me to abide in you and your word. Your word is precious and life changing. Help me not to become too busy or too distracted. Guard and protect my heart and life from every temptation and trap of the enemy. Simply have your way in me and may your purposes and plans come to pass. May I simply be surrendered upon you. In the name of Jesus. Amen.*

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## **Day 51**

### **He Is A Rewarder Of Those Who Seek Him**

*Hebrews 11:6 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*

There is something very supernatural that happens in a person as they begin to make the decision to seek God on a daily basis. Seeking the Lord cannot take place in the place of distraction or busyness. We must set appointments to get alone with God in the place of solitude. If the voice

and leading of the Holy Spirit is indeed a still small voice that speaks to us in our heart and mind, then we must create an atmosphere and setting where anything that would distract or hinder must be removed.

True reward comes from seeking the Lord. As we seek Him, the very desires within us change. We move from being driven by selfish sinful desire, to kingdom driven desires. The desires that begin to fill our heart actually begin to move us toward our destiny and purpose in God. They begin to shape the very person we are. We are transformed as we seek Him and spend time in His presence.

The reason many Christians today in America feel like something is missing in their relationship with God is because they have allowed idols to take His place. We often chase after the American dream instead of chasing after the kingdom. Following Jesus is not comfortable and there is a continually pruning that takes place in our lives. God is continually removing anything that would hinder His work in our heart and life.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. We will never please God with our self-effort or our accomplishments. We must simply believe that He is exactly who He says He is. The greatest reward that we receive when we truly begin to seek the Lord, is to know Him and to know His heart. Our hearts and minds become one with His. We are truly transformed into His character and image. We move from manifesting the Adamic nature that is fallen and self-centered to manifesting the nature and character of the Kingdom that is Christ centered and simply lives to glorify Him.

#### *Prayer*

*Father today I come and ask that you would produce within me your character and nature. May I live my life to please and honor you in all things. I pray that you would be my sole desire. That you would remove anything that would try to take your place. Remove every idol and remove every relationship that tries to pull me away from you. Forgive me in areas that I have fallen short and help me each day by your power and grace to simply live for you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 52**

### **He Must Increase, But I Must Decrease**

*John 3:30*

*New American Standard Bible 1995*

*30 He must increase, but I must decrease.*

The question is who are you? No really who are you? Not who you are when everything is going well and things are comfortable. But who are you when you are called to suffer. When you experience testing and trial. The purpose of testing and trials are to refine and reveal things that need to be pruned from our lives.

Our walk with Christ is a continual process of decreasing as He increases. We are called to deny ourselves and pick up our cross. Jesus compared our life on this earth of following Him to a cross. A cross was an instrument of death, suffering, and torture. But in the hands of God it is an instrument of life, restoration, and displaying the glory of Almighty God.

Sometimes we may feel like God has abandoned and forsaken us. We may feel like in our current season that even when I cry out to God my words simply hit the ceiling and fall to the floor. But every time we cry out to our Father He hears us. He not only hears us but as we draw near, He draws near to us. As we seek Him, we find Him.

We have an incredible privilege in prayer. We have an audience with Almighty God. The moment we begin to draw near and cry out, He stops and draws near to us. He is every where at all times, there is not a moment when we are apart from Him and there is not a moment that if we are drawing near, that He is not drawing near to us in return.

May we each day simply desire to die. Desire to die to self, to this world, to the things this world glorifies, to everything that is against God's word and His kingdom. May we never forget this world is not our home. Our home and citizenship is Heaven. Each day as we grow in Him we are being prepared for all that we will be entrusted to do in His kingdom. Heaven will be far greater than we can comprehend. But until we are there may we simply decrease as He increases and is glorified through us.

*Prayer*

*Father I come before you and ask you to help me. Help me to lay down and die to everything that would hinder my walk with you. Father have your way in every area of my life. May every thought and every word I speak align with your will. May you direct my steps. May I walk in unbroken fellowship with you. May I pray without ceasing and may my heart always be open and drawn unto you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 53

### **If Anyone Is In Christ, He Is A New Creation**

*2 Corinthians 5:17 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

Have you ever desired a fresh start? This is exactly what we have in Jesus every day. When we first come to Christ all of our sins are nailed to the cross. Everything is forgiven and all is washed clean by His precious blood. But as we walk with Jesus there will be short comings. No matter how hard we try, there will be things we struggle with at times. But thankful the Lord tells us in His word that if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us.

One of the weapons of the enemy to paralyze us in our growth with Christ is condemnation. The enemy will remind us of our past and what we have done. Satan will play things over and over again in our minds like a broken record. The problem is if we pay attention to it and begin to believe it, it will place us in bondage and steal the freedom we enjoy in Jesus.

But if we will build our lives upon the truth of scripture and will daily renew our minds, we will be transformed. We will become the person that God has called us to become. Understanding the truth of scripture is paramount for walking and experiencing all that God has for us. Jesus has purchased our freedom but for us to experience that freedom on a daily basis we must have a right understanding of God's word.

Here it is very clear that in Christ we are a brand new creation. It doesn't mean that our life is an improvement on what it was previously but we are an entire new person and creation. We are no longer self-centered, we are now Christ centered. The more we walk with Him and spend time with Him, the more we see all things as He does. This includes every tactic and scheme that Satan tries to destroy our lives with. Today let go of the past, let go of the shame, let go of the condemnation and let God simply have His way.

*Prayer*

*Father I come today and confess that at times I struggle with condemnation and the lies of the enemy. I ask you to protect my mind and heart. Father I pray that you would deliver me from every scheme and lie of Satan. Father fix my mind upon truth and help me to fully understand what it*

*means to be a new creation in Christ. Break every stronghold of Satan and may I truly walk in your freedom on a daily basis. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 54**

### **God Causes All Things To Work Together For Good**

*Romans 8:28 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

The question is do we really believe this. There have been many moments and seasons in my personal life where I have felt abandoned and forgotten by God. I have felt like what I was facing was simply going to destroy me and that my life was over. But this is the journey of faith. This is where true deep and mature faith is built.

One thing I have learned in my life is that following Jesus is hard. It is not easy and it truly requires that we rely fully upon the Lord each step at a time. God promises that He will work all things together for our good. I am sure there were many moments in the life of the apostle Paul in the midst of his own suffering that he may have wondered how God would work through it. But through each trial and storm the Lord demonstrated His faithfulness and the kingdom was increased a little bit more in the life of the apostle Paul.

The Lord says here those who love God and are called according to His purposes. If we are in relationship with Jesus we have been chosen by God. No one is able to come to Jesus unless the Father draws them. When we are chosen by Almighty God that means His hand is upon our lives. He is working in every situation. Even in the times when we don't understand what God is doing and we are going through a lot of pain and heart ache, we can still trust God and know that He is working all things together for our good.

For those of you reading this today who are discouraged by your present circumstances, know that you are not alone. There have been many moments in my life that I have felt like throwing in the towel and simply forgotten by God. But as I look back now I see His faithfulness in everything.

Yesterday I stopped by my parents and picked up all my old yearbooks from middle and high school. I thought at one time I had simply thrown them away, but thankfully my father held on to them. As I scanned through some of them I saw a picture of a young man who was young and thought he had life all figured out. But little did he know the hardships that would stand before him. But I thank God at that point in my life He didn't reveal all that I would go through as I moved on toward becoming a man. I can honestly say that I would not be who I am today without the trial and the struggle. God truly works all things together for our good.

Be encouraged today because the Lord is doing a very deep work in your life. He is walking with you through the fire and is refining and pruning you for what He has planned ahead. Don't focus on your present circumstances, but instead simply focus on the Lord and continue to grow in Him. Let go of trying to understand and control, and simply surrender all things to God.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and thank you for the trial and hardship. I may not fully understand all that I am facing in this season, but I thank you that you are faithful. That you walk with me. That you are doing a work in my heart and life. Jesus you never said this would be easy and I thank you that you are my King and my God. Father help me in my weakness. I confess at moments I feel like giving up and throwing in the towel. But I thank you that this isn't about my strength or understanding. This is simply about trusting you and relying upon you. I thank you that it is in the place of hardship and trial that the greatest servants of your kingdom are formed. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 55**

### **What Are We Building Our House On**

*Matthew 7:26 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*26 Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.*

What are you building your life on? Whatever foundation we are building our lives on will determine our life will stand or fall when the storms of life come. Many today simply have the

philosophy: YOLO (You Only Live Once). The foolishness of this is that they will pursue anything they perceive makes them happy or they believe they bring fulfillment. The deception in this is yes you only live once on this earth, but once your time on this earth is done, you will spend eternity somewhere.

To build one's life upon Jesus Christ is an unshakable foundation. But what does it mean to truly build one's life on Jesus. It means that we are not only hearers of God's word, but we are doers. In this verse the Lord speaks of acting or doing His words or command. Jesus points out that the fool is the one who hears His commands, but fails to live by them.

If we call ourselves a follower of Jesus but fail to build our lives on the word of God, we are missing out on all that God has for us. There is a principle in God's kingdom that His blessing is poured out as a result of obedience. We see this in Deuteronomy chapter 28. Now I know some today would say we no longer live under the law and this doesn't apply to the Christian. But I truly believe to believe that is foolishness. Yes we are no longer under the law as it has to do with dietary restriction, different Jewish holy days, and having to make an animal sacrifice when we have sinned. We know that Jesus death on the cross atoned for our sins once and for all.

But when we examine God's moral law and especially the principles of His kingdom, we understand that the character and nature of God does not change. Obedience to the Lord and His word is essential for living for the Lord. If we would call ourselves a Christian, yet fail to live according to God's word the question we need to ask ourselves are we truly a follower of Jesus. But if we will build our lives upon Jesus and His word, live according to it, we will build our lives on an unshakable foundation.

#### *Prayer*

*Father I pray today that you would lead and guide me to build my life upon your word and kingdom. Father reveal to me the areas of my life that need to be pruned and refined. Father continue to lead and guide me in all things. I pray that my heart and mind would be surrendered to you. That every blessing you have in my life would be poured out. Father I pray today that you would simply have your way and your will be done. In the name of Jesus.*

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## **Day 56**

# Let Us Not Lose Heart In Doing Good

*Galatians 6:9 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.*

Have you ever felt tired? Have you ever felt exhausted and like you want to throw in the towel? My guess is if you are human and following Christ, you have experienced this at different points in your journey.

One of the weapons Satan uses to hinder what God is doing in us and through us is discouragement. The enemy will lie to us continually and tell us that we are not accomplishing anything. That we are not making an impact. That our efforts are for nothing. Satan will try to get us to focus on others around us and even compare ourselves to others.

I have learned in my life that comparison is truly the thief of joy. If we continually compare ourselves to others we will either fall into two traps: we will become filled with pride as we look down on some and we will become filled with discouragement when we feel like we don't measure up to others.

This is why we must focus our hearts on Jesus alone. His word must become the foundation of our lives and we must immerse our mind and heart in the word of God. We are bombarded daily with lies and deception. Everything the enemy speaks is a lie. His purpose through temptation, lie, and deception is to hinder God's work in our lives.

When we come to Christ we are set free from the power and authority of Satan. But it doesn't mean that Satan is going to stop coming after us. He is going to plan and devise well laid schemes to place us back in bondage. This is why we are called to be vigilant and understand the enemy is like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. It doesn't mean that we are called to live in fear, but we must be mindful we are in the middle of a spiritual war.

Paul tells us here not to grow weary while doing good. It is very easy when we are serving the Lord to become discouraged because we may not see anything happening right away. But Paul also tells us in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. There is a season for everything. A season for planting and a season for reaping. God tells us the key here and it is simply not to give up.

I encourage you today that if you feel like throwing in the towel don't. We never know how close we are to reaping a harvest of what we have sown. Many have gone before us and experienced the same things we have. Keep pressing on today with your heart and mind fixed on Jesus and you life immersed in the word of God.

*Prayer*

*Father help me today not to give up. Help me to continue to press on in your strength and power. Father help me to overcome every lie and temptation of the enemy. Guard my heart against the wiles of Satan. Father I pray that all you desire to do in my life would be accomplish in your time and according to your will. Thank you for your patience and your grace. Thank you that you never give up on us. Thank you that ever battle belongs to you. Help me to trust you today and simply rest in who you are.*

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## **Day 57**

### **You Will Receive Power**

*Acts 1:8 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."*

Have you ever felt empty? Have you ever felt powerless? This can be the experience for anyone who fails to rely and trust fully in the Holy Spirit. When we come to Christ the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. But what the Holy Spirit desires to do is fill us with His power and His presence.

How does this happen? What I have come to understand in my life that in all that we receive from God it is a result of surrender on our part. When we come to Christ for salvation, we receive the gift of salvation by surrendering our lives to Jesus. We no longer are in control of our lives and it is not our selfish desire and will that is dictating our lives. What begins to take over our lives is the will of Almighty God.

The same stands if our desire is to be an effective witness for Jesus Christ. Being a witness for Jesus is not possible in ourselves. If we try to accomplish anything in ourselves we will fail every time. We will come to find out how limited our strength and power truly is. But there is something supernatural that happens when we begin to desire to be a witness for Jesus and then cry out to the Lord for His power and might to fill our lives.

The Lord tells us we have not because we ask not. God's desire is for us to be vocal about our faith. To live out this faith journey with Him on a daily basis. He will supply everything we need. What I

have found is it begins with asking the Father to simply fill us with His Spirit and His power. As we ask, the power of God is released into our lives.

The purpose of the power of the Holy Spirit is not so we can have cool experiences and continually live on a spiritual high. The purpose of the power of the Holy Spirit is to be a witness on the earth for Jesus Christ. When we recognize our insufficiency apart from God and simply begin to cry out to Him in the place of prayer, we will see God move in mighty ways in our life.

### *Prayer*

*Father today I come and ask you to fill me with your power and your presence. Holy Spirit I pray that you would fill every part of my being and that my mind and heart would be fully surrendered to you. Father continue to prune and refine and remove anything that would hinder my walk with you. Help me on this earth to be an effective witness for you and your kingdom. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

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## **Day 58**

### **Open My Eyes**

*Psalm 119:18 (New American Standard Bible 1995)*

*Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law.*

If our desire is to know and understand the word of God we must come before the Lord in prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who leads and guides us into all truth. God has not made His word so complicated that we cannot understand. But He has made it so the only way we can truly understand is by seeking the Holy Spirit for help and guidance.

When we cry out to our Father to understand His word, it is the person of the Holy Spirit who lives within us that begins to open our eyes to see, our mind to know, and our heart to understand. We are told that the word of God is Living and Active. We could spend our entire lives in one passage of scripture and the Lord would speak to us in new and wonderful ways every day.

We must set aside time in our lives to spend in the scriptures. Yes life can get very busy and we can all kind of challenges that we deal with. But when we set aside time to seek the Lord, He will help

us to not only understand what His word says, but He will teach us how to apply it to our lives. True transformation happens when we begin to apply His word on a daily basis to our lives.

### Prayer

*Father help me today to understand your word. Help me to know your voice and your leading. Father open my eyes to see, my mind to know, and my heart to understand. Father remove anything that would hinder not only my ability to understand but also anything that would hinder how to properly apply your word. I thank you for your patience and goodness. I thank you that you lead and direct me one step at a time. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

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## Day 59

### Taming The Tongue

*James 3:8-10*

*8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.*

Jesus tells us that we will be accountable for every word we speak. The words we speak either carry life or death. When we speak in accordance with God's word by the leading of the Holy Spirit, the very words we speak carry life. When they are sown into those who they are intended for, the Holy Spirit plants a seed and as we pray and seek the Lord, those seeds are watered.

But if our tongue is not under the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit, our words carry the power of death. The saying goes: sticks and stones may break my bones, but your words will never hurt me. This statement is false. There has been more damage done in the lives of people over words spoken and sown into the hearts of people that have been from the leading of the enemy and out of the sinful nature of a person.

Before we come to Christ we are ruled by the nature of Adam. When Adam sinned in the garden his nature changed. He went from being God centered, to self-centered. When people are self-

centered they will simply destroy and step on anyone who stands in the way of what they want. They will carelessly use their tongue to tear down the lives of others.

But if we are truly in Christ everything in our lives must be fully surrendered to God. This includes our tongues. David prayed that the words of his mouth and meditations of his heart would be pleasing to the Lord. What is truly in our hearts will proceed out of our mouths. Our lives must be bathed in scripture on a daily basis and we must continually meditate upon the word of God. For it is when our minds are renewed by God's word that our lives will be transformed.

If this is an area that you personally struggle in I would encourage you to bring it before the Lord and ask for help. You will not be able to bridle your tongue in your own strength. But if you begin to abide in Christ and your focus is growing in Him daily, you will find that supernaturally your tongue is bridle and your heart and words will reflect that of Jesus.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come today and confess I need your help. Father I struggle with my tongue at times and even the thoughts that invade my mind and heart. I ask you to help me to not only bridle my tongue but that what I speak would glorify you and would bring forth life. Father I know I am created in your image and through your word you brought forth life. I pray that my tongue would be used to bring forth life. That every part of my being would simply be surrendered to you. Prune me as you desire and according to your will in the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 60**

### **Wise Men Store Up Knowledge**

*Proverbs 10:14 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*14 Wise men store up knowledge, But with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand.*

Do we desire to be wise? The word of God tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. All true kingdom wisdom is found with God alone. Those who are truly wise seek after God with all their heart. When it speaks of storing up knowledge it is not speaking of worldly knowledge or simply information. But as we grow and mature in God there are things we come to learn and understand about the kingdom.

God has built His kingdom upon principles. The more time we spend with Him and in His word, the more we come to understand these principles. An example is you reap what you sow. If we sow to the things of God's kingdom, we will reap the things of God's kingdom. But if we sow to the things of this world, we will reap destruction.

Those who are foolish by the bible's definition are those who say in their heart there is no God. Our generation and age is marked by foolishness. People in their pride reject the existence of God and who He is. In the absence of God all a person is left with is darkness. Though a fool may have a mouth that is filled with many words, all of their words mean nothing and fail to carry any truth. A perfect example is many of the godless college professors that continually sow this foolishness into the youth of our nation.

May our desire be to walk in wisdom. God tells us if we lack wisdom to simply ask. God's desire is that our lives would be filled with wisdom. But true wisdom can only be found from Him. My challenge to you today is that in every decision and circumstance seek God for wisdom. Stop relying on your understanding, let go of control of your life and fully give control over to the Lord.

#### *Prayer*

*Father I come before you and thank you for wisdom. I pray that you would fill my heart with wisdom and understanding. May my mouth be filled with your word and may my life be a vessel of your glory. Help me not to rely on my own understanding but in everything may my heart and mind simply be surrendered to you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 61**

### **Where The Spirit Of The Lord Is, There Is Liberty**

*2 Corinthians 3:17 New American Standard Bible 1995*

*17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

True freedom and liberty is only found in Christ. It is only the Holy Spirit who can heal the human soul. All of us born into this world are born into sin and therefore we are born into spiritual bondage and slavery. Whether we know it or not before we come to Jesus we are a slave of sin. But the moment we come to saving faith in Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit comes to live within us.

Paul tells us wherever the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom. Paul understood the Old Covenant better than anyone else. The purpose of the law was to reveal man's need of a savior. God gave the law to the nation of Israel to govern their lives and their nation. They are a people set apart for His purposes and His plans. But today in Christ we no longer live under that covenant. We live under the new covenant that is based on the precious blood of Jesus. We are called to be led by the Holy Spirit in all things.

Today if you find yourself struggle in an area of life with temptation I would encourage you to spend more time alone with the Lord in prayer and His word. Often God will use the assaults of the enemy to bring us to a deeper place with Him. When we struggle in any area of temptation we come to understand that we truly can't do this in our own strength. But that is the purpose to reveal our insufficiency and understand that our reliance fully upon God is key. Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is there indeed is freedom. May every area of our lives be fully surrendered to Him.

### *Prayer*

*Father search my heart and reveal any area of my life that is not fully yielded to you. I pray that my life would be in your hands and that on a daily basis I would experience your freedom in all things. Father take my life and use it for your glory. May I truly be an extension of you in the earth. Help me to see all things as you see them. Prepare my heart for your coming kingdom. Remove anything that would hinder who I am called to be in you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 62**

### **Let Us Sing To The Lord**

*Psalm 95:1-2 (New Living Translation)*

*Come, let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come to him with thanksgiving. Let us sing psalms of praise to him.*

The Lord is our Rock of our salvation. It is only through Him that we can find forgiveness and healing. We are saved by His grace. Chosen by Him, drawn by Him, our eyes are open by Him, we are saved from ourselves by Him.

It is only in Him that true hope is found. The writer of the Psalm speaks of singing and bringing thanksgiving to the Lord. We do these things because of what the Lord has done for us. When we examine the word of God what we find is that He is always faithful. Even in the most difficult seasons, God is faithful. There is not a moment that He is not in control and there is not a moment that He is not providing every need.

In this world people look to different things for their comfort and safety. Some look to money, others like to human leaders or military might, but next to the Living God all of these things are nothing. All of them will pass away. But the Lord shall remain forever. Those who know Him personally know that our lives are in His hands. We know that He protects and watches over us. There are moments when the enemy will try to overwhelm us with fear and doubt, but when we recognize every word from the mouth of the enemy is a lie, we simply stop listening and paying attention.

May we remember that God has created all things. He holds all things together by His mighty power. He holds every heart beat in His hand. He provides the very air we breath. He holds every molecule in place. By His word all things were created and with one word He could destroy all things. This is the awesome God that we serve. In Christ we know Him personally and no matter how dark things become we have nothing to fear. For we are simply being prepared for His soon return and His coming Kingdom.

#### *Prayer*

*Father help me this day to trust you. Help me to let go of the fear, the worry, the doubt, and unbelief. Father help me to fix my heart upon you and know that in you my salvation is found. Thank you for saving me and bringing me into right relationship with you. Thank you for sending your Son Jesus to die in my place and take the punishment I deserve. Thank you for removing all of my sins and declaring me righteous before you. Father you are truly awesome and I thank you for how much you love me. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 63**

### **As I Was With Moses, So I Will Be With You**

*Joshua 1:5-9*

*5 No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. 6 Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.*

*7 "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. 8 Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*

This is a monumental transition in leadership. Israel is moving from leadership under Moses to leadership under Joshua. Ultimately Joshua would face incredible challenges not only in leading the amount of people he is called to lead, but having to deal with following the leadership of Moses.

Every person who follows someone in leadership faces comparisons by those they are leading. I am sure at times Joshua dealt with fear and insecurity, wondering if he was matching up to his mentor and spiritual father Moses. But in this passage the Lord on multiple times says to Joshua be strong and courageous. God said this ahead of time because the Lord knew the challenges Joshua would face. God knew what the enemy would throw at Joshua to try to paralyze and destabilize the nation as they took the promised land.

But it is key here to see that God told Joshua to be strong and courageous because the Lord promised to never leave nor forsake him. The Lord promised to go before him and give him the land that God had promised. It is important to see when we are following God and we are surrendered to Him and His will that it is not our plan we are following, it is His. If it is His plan than He will equip, empower, and enable us to overcome and accomplish whatever He has put in front of us.

Another important thing to see is that God told Joshua to never allow the law to depart from his lips, but he is called to meditate on it day and night, not turning to the right or the left. God's word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. If as leaders we will hold to the word of God and live according to it, the blessing of the Lord will always follow obedience and faithfulness. God's word is to be our guide for all things.

The bottom line is that God is with us. Yes there are moments when we feel overwhelmed. There are moments when we feel like throwing in the towel. There are moments when we feel like that which God has promised us seems impossible. But this is the journey we have with Jesus. It is a journey that is impossible if we try to accomplish it ourselves. But we are called to walk and abide

with Him and in Him. We need to let go of the fear and unbelief. We need to take it one step at a time. We simply need to trust God at His word. He is faithful. He is faithful. He is faithful.

### *Prayer*

*Father, I come to you today and ask you to lead and guide me in all things. Reveal your will and purpose for my life. Help me to trust you. Help me to meditate upon your word day and night. Help me not to turn from it but to live by it. Father today I give all that I am into your hands. I pray that you would empower me and equip me for every good purpose. Father today remove all fear and doubt. Guard my heart from every assault of the enemy and deliver me from every snare and temptation. I pray that the hand of Satan be bound against my life and every purpose you have for me be poured out in the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 64**

### **He Is My Refuge**

*Psalm 91:2 (New International Version)*

*2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."*

We live in scary and uncertain times. Every day when we look at the news violence is escalating, people are hating each more and more, division continues to grow and it is a direct result of darkness growing in the earth. As Christians and followers of Jesus the question is how are we to respond? Are we called to hide in our churches and homes and simply watch the world around us burn? I believe the answer to that is no.

The Lord is our refuge, our fortress, and the one in whom I trust. Life changes when we come to know God personally. We have an opportunity because of what Jesus did on the cross that our sins can be forgiven and be able to approach God without fear. Those who don't know God don't understand Him. There are many misconceptions about who God is. But the only way we can truly come to know Him is by first placing our faith and trust in Jesus Christ and then beginning to walk with Him every day through time spent in prayer and reading His word.

What we find as we walk with Jesus is that God is our protector and provider. Even in times of great darkness, uncertainty, and confusion, there is hope. His name is Jesus. In times of great

hatred and division there is hope and His name is Jesus. Life changes when we trust Jesus with all of our life. When we abandon all control, want, and desire and simply surrender to God. Many today live in fear because they personally don't know the Living God and don't know how much He truly loves them. Let us choose as followers of Jesus to truly be His ambassadors wherever God has planted us. Around us daily are people who are lost and hurting. May we truly be His hands and His feet.

### *Prayer*

*Father in a time of great darkness I pray that your light and glory would shine through my life. I pray your love and compassion would fill me. Help me to see those around me who are hurting. Help me to reach out and live in the power of the Holy Spirit. Father help me to be the witness for you that you have called me to be. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 65**

### **Enter His Gates With Thanksgiving and His Courts With Praise**

*Psalms 100:4-5 (New International Version)*

*Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.*

We live in a time where many are overwhelmed with fear and discouragement. This even includes those in the Christian community. Too often we fix our eyes on present circumstances instead of fixing our eyes upon the Lord and knowing that He is fully in control.

It is so important that we go daily to the Lord in prayer. Our time of prayer and fellowship with the Lord should begin with praying and thanksgiving. The purpose of prayer is not to twist God's arm or manipulate Him into getting what we want. It is actually a place of meeting where we surrender to His will and purpose and the cry of our hearts align with His will.

From these two verses we find that God is good, His love endures, and that He is faithful. To have a right understanding of who God is we must look to His word. We cannot base what we understand or believe about God based on our own thoughts. We live in a time of great deception and those

who daily spend time in God's word will not only be protected from the lies of the enemy, but they will have eyes to see clearly what God is doing.

God is fully in control of every circumstance we are personally facing and all that is happening throughout the world. There are things that personally I don't fully understand right now, but what I do know is that I can trust the Lord and know that He is working all things according to His will. There is not a single moment that God is not fully in control.

Today I would encourage you if you are struggle with doubt or discouragement to get alone with the Lord in the secret place. Begin your time with Him with praise and thanksgiving. So many times we take so many things for granted. The greatest thing that God has done for us that we can continually praise Him for is giving us His Son Jesus. If God never did anything else in our lives, Jesus is enough. Because of Jesus we know that this world is not our home and one day we will spend all eternity with the Lord in His kingdom.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and ask you to simply help me navigate life. Help me in my discouragement and doubt. Help me to fix my heart and mind upon you and your purposes. Help me to let go of the fear and unbelief. Father show me your will and help me to walk in your will. Open my eyes to all that you desire for me to see.*

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## **Day 66**

### **Rooted And Grounded In Christ**

*Colossians 2:6-7 (Amplified Bible)*

*6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in [union with] Him [reflecting His character in the things you do and say—living lives that lead others away from sin], 7 having been deeply rooted [in Him] and now being continually built up in Him and [becoming increasingly more] established in your faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing in it with gratitude.*

What does it mean to walk in Christ? It means we are called to abide in Him and live in Him. When we come to Christ, He becomes the place where we abide. Everything we have and all that we are

belongs to Him. We have been chosen by God, we have been called by God, He has designed our lives with specific purpose.

When we understand that coming to Christ is not by accident and chance, but instead by divine design, it causes us to live for Him. We have done nothing to warrant or merit salvation. There is nothing in us that God would look at and say they surely deserve salvation. But it is simply a work of His grace. He in His love has lavished His mercy upon us and as we begin our journey with Christ may we live in a way in which we hold nothing back but are willing to surrender all things.

We have received Jesus as we receive a gift. Jesus has paid the price that we deserve and has removed everything that causes us to be separated from God the Father. Paul calls us to be rooted and grounded in Christ. Like a mighty Oak Tree may our roots go down deep in Christ and as we receive life from Him, may His life be manifested in us. The ability to represent Christ in all things is not dependent on our strength or ability, it is solely dependent on abiding in Him. Understanding that He indeed is the life source.

We are called to be built up in Him and established in our faith. The enemy will do all that He can to try to pull us back into the world. Satan desires to paralyze our faith through lies, deceptions, and temptations. Every lie is born out of the heart of Satan and is contrary to the word and promises of God. He is called the father of lies and we must guard our hearts daily from every assault and flaming arrow.

May our lives simply be marked by thanksgiving and gratitude. In this thanksgiving season we may meditate upon the many things we are thankful for. But the greatest of all of them is Jesus and what He has done. When we understand the depths of our sin and depravity, it is simply amazing that Jesus has chosen to take the wrath we deserve. He chose to take our place not because we deserve it, but because He loves us. It is His love that held Him to the cross.

#### *Prayer*

*Father thank you this day for Jesus. Jesus thank you for taking the punishment and wrath that we deserve. May my life be rooted and grounded in you. May my faith be established. Father I pray that you would produce within me an unshakable faith. I pray that every area of my life would simply be surrendered to you. Father may my heart be fixed upon your truth and your word. Thank you for being the good and gracious Father you are. Thank you for choosing and using me in spite of all my failures and shortcomings. Father thank you for your love and grace. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 67

### Do It All In The Name Of The Lord Jesus

*Colossians 3:17 (New International Version)*

*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Every area of our life belongs to Jesus. Paul calls us to be a living sacrifice to the Lord. That means in all that we do it is worship unto the Lord. Whether it is our marriage, our job, raising our children, whatever we do if it is done to the glory of Jesus, it is worship unto the Lord.

We are called to give thanks unto God. On this Thanksgiving day we set aside an entire day for thanksgiving. If we look at the world today we may wonder what do we have to be thankful for. It seems the world is in chaos and it is growing more chaotic by the day.

Sadly because of the sin of humanity, darkness and deception continues to fill the earth at an ever increasing rate. But in the midst of ever increasing darkness, God is working greatly. God is working in the hearts of His children. He is preparing a bride for His soon return. Every day that we are on this earth we have the wonderful privilege and responsibility to bring glory and honor to Jesus.

What I truly believe God is showing us is that true hope is only found in Him. Many of the things we may have built our lives on in the past are being shown for what they are. Today if discouragement and doubt tries to grip your heart I would encourage you to take time and simply thank the Lord. Thank Him for so many things we often take for granted. More than anything thank Him for the salvation found through His Son Jesus.

*Prayer*

*Father thank you today for your love, grace, and mercy. Thank you for saving us when we didn't deserve it. Thank you that you provide every need and protect our lives on a daily basis. Father deliver me this day from every snare and temptation of the enemy. Father be with those today who for them Thanksgiving is a very hard and difficult day. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 68

### Since We Are Receiving A Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken

*Hebrews 12:28-29 (NIV)*

*28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our "God is a consuming fire."*

There are two kingdoms and cultures that exist. There is the kingdom and culture of Heaven. It is based upon God and all that He desires. He has given us His word to produce within us His character and His nature. The Lord has told us that we are in this world but we are not of this world.

The other culture and kingdom is that of darkness and hell. All of us are born into sin and the culture of hell is built upon the lies and deceptions of Satan. Those who reject Jesus Christ and His gift of salvation choose to live for themselves. But what they don't understand is they are enslaved to darkness and the culture of hell. The more a person engages and takes part in temptation and the things of darkness, the more that the kingdom of darkness is produced within them.

The Lord tell us that He is a consuming fire. Nothing is hidden from Him and He cannot be in the presence of sin. Because God loves us He is continually refining and pruning us. He is removing from our lives that things that would hinder His purpose and desire within us. A tangible effect of fully surrendering to the Lordship of Christ is that our desire for this world and the things of sin continually dies. We are still tempted, but what we truly desire is the kingdom of God.

God's kingdom will not be shaken. To build one's life upon Jesus is to build one's life upon an unshakable foundation. Everything we have in Christ is a gift. We have been saved by the grace of God. We are kept by the grace of God. Every gift and ability we have is given to us from God. Every resource we have is provided by our Father in Heaven. This is why thanksgiving should fill our lives on a daily basis. Not merely once a year where we sit with friends and family and consume a large meal. But on a daily basis.

There is so much we can be thankful for. There are so many things that we simply take for granted. May our focus be upon God and His kingdom. In all that we do may we desire to honor and glorify Jesus Christ. The more we simply walk with Him and abide in Him, the more His nature is produced within us. The more our hearts and minds align with His. The more His kingdom is produced in us and manifested through us. God doesn't exist in buildings made of wood and stone. God lives in the hearts of His people and impacts the world through them. May we choose to be a vessel of His glory.

*Prayer*

*Father help me to be a person of thanksgiving. When I feel like complaining, may you remind me of all that you have done for me. Silence the lies of the enemy. Produce within my life your character and nature. Produce within my life your kingdom. May I die daily to self and may I know you more intimately. May all of my brothers and sisters come to the full knowledge of who you are. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 69**

### **Let The Message Of Christ Dwell Among You Richly**

*Colossians 3:16 (New International Version)*

*Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.*

Paul tells us to let the message of Christ dwell among you richly. The gospel and all that Jesus is is supposed to consume us. It is suppose to immerse our minds and our hearts. Many things in this world desire to influence us. We are bombarded daily with the lies of the enemy. But we must draw near to the Lord if the message of Christ is going to dwell within us richly.

But here Paul says as we teach and admonish one another. For some Christianity is simply a spectator sport. People have reserved themselves to simply stand by and watch things happen. But God wants us to be engaged. Everyone of us has a gift. Everyone of us has an anointing. The goal and desire of every Christian should be to move beyond the infancy of Christianity to the deeper mature life. We should desire to move from being a spiritual infant to that of a spiritual parent.

When we as God's people actually put the word of God into practice and live according to it, the abundant life that Jesus spoke about becomes a reality on a daily basis. We go from merely existing to live with purpose on a daily basis. The abundant life that Jesus speaks of is to know Him and know Him intimately. It impacts every area of life.

The Christian life is not meant to simply be reserved for a few hours one day a week, it is suppose to immerse every area of our lives. Psalms, Hymns, and songs from the Spirit all take place when we are singing praise unto God. This becomes the reality in our lives when Christ is the priority. No

matter what we face and no matter what God allows us to go through we understand that all of it is for His glory. No matter if we find ourselves on the mountain top or down in the valley, we live in a constant place of praising and worshiping the Lord.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and ask you to lead, guide, and direct my every thought and desire. Father help me to move from the place of spiritual infancy and childhood to that of being a spiritual parent and discipling others to walk in your purposes and plans. Father may every desire be surrendered to you. I pray that my life would be a living sacrifice to you. That the praise of who you are would always be upon my lips. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 70**

### **Give Praise To The Lord, Proclaim His Name**

*1 Chronicles 16:8 (New International Version)*

*Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done.*

Why do we praise the Lord? People who have no relationship with Jesus may find it strange that Christians are called to praise the living God. But when we examine the word of God we find that we praise Him for who He is and what He has done.

Have you ever taken time in your life to sit back and do an inventory of all the ways that God has showed Himself faithful to you. It is pretty incredible when you spend time in the Lord's presence, instead of asking for anything, you spend time praising Him and thanking Him for what He has done.

There is not one moment in our lives in which God is not in control and there is not one moment or circumstance that He is not concerned or doesn't care. He knows every hair that is upon our heads. He knows every intimate detail of our lives. He knows every short coming and every failure. He has chosen us and He has known us before the foundations of the world were created.

We may get caught up in the nonsense of this world. The world is chaotic and it is broken because of sin in humanity. We live in a world that is made up of two groups of people: those who love and follow Jesus and those who do not. Those who love and follow Jesus are children of God. They are

pursuing God and His kingdom. They are living for Him on a daily basis and they are being prepared to rule and reign with Christ in eternity.

The other group are those who are lost. Those who do not know Jesus. Those who are deceived by the devil and simply living for themselves. They have made themselves and their desires the priority of their lives and have rejected God and His ways.

As followers of Jesus our lives should be filled with praise and thanksgiving. No matter what we face we know that He works all things together for our good because we love Him and are called according to His purpose. We have been chosen by God. Let me say that again, we have been chosen by God. We have not come to Him on accident. He has pursued us and He has chosen us. May our minds and hearts be fixed upon Him daily and may we grow deeper in our walk with Christ.

*Prayer*

*Father thank you for loving me. Thank you for your grace. Thank you for your provision and knowing my every need. Thank you for being concerned with everything in my life. Help me to trust you each day and simply be a person who praises and glorifies your name. Remove from my life all things that are displeasing to you. May my life truly be a living sacrifice unto you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 71**

### **His Love Endures Forever**

*Psalm 136:1 New International Version*

*1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever.*

When we take time to simply meditate upon the truth of scripture it is life changing. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, His love endures forever. The love of God is unconditional. He loves us regardless of our behavior or our performance. Because He loves us He disciplines us. Because He loves us He brings correction. Because He loves us He is far more patient with us than we understanding.

Having a right understanding of who God is and His love for us is paramount for us living rightly as a Christian. If for one moment I believe that His love is conditional or somehow His love changes based on my behavior or performance, my journey with God can become incredible demanding and any joy that I am have will be drained away.

Satan is always trying to fill our hearts with deceptions and lies. One of the greatest ways He does this is by attacking the character and nature of God. Satan is the accuser and he will speak false accusations about God into the hearts of people. But if we are to truly have a write understanding of who God is, it is directly connected with having a right understanding of His word.

God has given us His word to communicate and reveal to us His character and nature. The more time we spend in scripture, the greater we come to understand God. As our understanding of God deepens and the word of God gets deep in our hearts, it begins to transform us by the power and leading of the Holy Spirit.

Understanding that His love endures forever means that even if I fail miserably and fall short, He still loves me. Even if I walk away for a period of time, He doesn't stop pursuing me. Israel's history and God's dealing with them is a picture of the grace of God. Israel's history is one that is filled with continual rebellion. But God never abandoned or forsook Israel. God did indeed discipline them because He loved them, but He never abandoned them. He never stopped providing, He never stopped watching over them.

We can be thankful today because of God's love for us. Our focus should never be our love for Him, but it should always be His love for us. When we truly understand how much He loves us we will desire to simply live for Him knowing that in everything He has good and perfect things planned. Even in the hard things God is always working it together for our good.

#### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and thank you for your love. I thank you that you never abandon me, never give up on me, never forsake me, and never leave me. You are always with me. You provided every need. Father I thank you that your love is unconditional. Help me to understand your love and help me to understand you. Help me to love others as you love me. I pray that my life would be marked by your love. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 72

### In The Beginning Was The Word

*John 1:1-2, 14 (New International Version)*

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*

Jesus is God. This is the point of John's gospel. He wrote his gospel, guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit so that those who would read it would come to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and He is God Almighty.

The Father so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. There is nothing humanity has done or demonstrated that God should lavish His love and mercy upon us. But we know from the word that God is love (1 John 4:16). The very nature of God is perfect love. He is righteous, holy, and just but more than anything He is love.

This love was displayed through the sending of His Son Jesus. There are some on this earth who believe they are unworthy of God's love. In truth we are all unworthy of God's love. But there is nothing we can do to make ourselves worthy. There isn't enough good works that we can accomplish that God would look at us and say this person deserves my love or that person deserves my love.

But in coming to know Jesus we come to know the Living God. Jesus Himself is not only God, but Jesus is the door between sinful humanity and an intimate relationship with God the Father. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. It is through faith in Him alone that our sins are forgiven and we are brought into right standing with God.

When Jesus cried "it is finished" it meant that every debt concerning sin and wickedness had been dealt with. Through Jesus broken body and shed blood, He made a way for sinful, fallen humanity to be forgiven and draw near to God without fear. Some today would scoff the name of Jesus. Some view the bible and Jesus as simply fairy tales made up by man. But the truth is that Jesus is our only hope. Every day God is showing us how corrupt and wicked man is. God is reveals the depths of corruption and wickedness that sit in the halls of leadership.

If we are looking to man or government as our hope, we will be greatly disappointed. But if we have placed our trust in Jesus Christ we will not only have hope, we will come to know true love and our sins will be completely forgiven. Today Jesus stands with His arms open wide calling out to all who are weary and heavy laden, He simply says that He will give us rest if we will come and surrender all to Him.

*Prayer*

Father thank you for your love. Thank you for sending your Son Jesus to die in our place. Father today we believe that Jesus is not only your Son but that He is God. We believe that He died on a cross and rose again on the third day. Father forgive us when we fall short and help us to glorify your name in all things. Help us to simply live for you and to die to self. Father have your way and your will in our hearts and lives in the name of Jesus.

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## Day 73

### **But In These Last Days He Has Spoken To Us By His Son**

*Hebrews 1:1-2 (New International Version)*

*In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.*

The writer of Hebrews is unknown. Many people have many theories on who they think the author is. But one thing that is unmistakable is the purpose of the book of Hebrews. The Holy Spirit inspired the writer to show the supremacy of Jesus over the law and everything that was found in the old covenant.

The audience were Jewish Christians who were being pressured to abandon their faith in Christ alone and return to the requirements of the law. It is impossible to be declared righteous before God by living according to the law. Our righteousness will never be achieved through the law. The purpose of the law ultimately is to show man's need of a savior. If we break one jot or tittle of the law we are considered a law breaker in the eyes of God.

Because we are all born of Adam, we are born with a sin nature that dominates us. But thankfully God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whoever would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. Because of Jesus we can be set free from the curse of sin and death. Because of Jesus we can be transformed on a daily basis by the leading and work of the Holy Spirit.

In the past God spoke through the prophets of old. The prophets were the mouth piece of the Living God to the nation of Israel. Today we have the wonderful privilege of having the scriptures before us. But during the days of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets the scriptures were being

written. The true test of a prophet was to see if what they said had come to pass. Today we have many who claim to be prophets, but the prophets of old were at a level and class that was much different.

But now the Father has sent His Son to speak to us. God has sent His Son to reveal who He is to humanity. If one were to read the Old Testament only they may come to different conclusions of who they believe God to be. Some often only see God as vengeful and different. But when we study the life of Jesus and come to know who He is, we understand how truly loving and compassionate God is. Our Father loves us so much and simply desires the best for us. Because He loves us, He will discipline us.

Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father. Jesus has been made heir and king of all things. All things were created through Him and He holds all things together by His mighty power. Jesus is God. When we come to Jesus we come into relationship with Almighty God. Because of how awesome God is and how unapproachable He is in all His majesty, He sent His Son to this earth to fully become man so that we could approach the throne of grace with confidence and without fear.

My encouragement to you today is to build your life upon Jesus. There are many things in this world that desire our time and attention but there is only one who is worthy of it all. All of us have failed, messed up, screwed up, and simply fallen short. But through it all His grace is sufficient and Jesus is all that we need. Even if we lose everything and we still have Jesus. May we simply fall in love with Him more and more and never take for granted this relationship we have with Him.

#### *Prayer*

*Father I come today and thank you for Jesus. I thank you that all I need is found in Jesus. That my salvation is a gift and based on faith in Jesus alone. I am thankful that you love me even though I have failed you many times and have fallen short. I thank you that your grace is not dependent on my effort. Help me to live this life for your glory. Help my mind to be fixed upon Jesus. May your character and nature be produced within me. Father may my heart and mind be one with yours. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 74**

### **I Am The Bread Of Life**

*John 6:35 (New Living Translation)*

*Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."*

What is it that you pursue? So many in this world pursue so many different things believing if they somehow get a hold of that which they pursue, they believe they will be satisfied and content. God has intentionally created us in a way that the only way we can truly be complete is to be in relationship with Him.

Jesus has made it possible for us to be in right relationship with God. Jesus is the bread of life. He has laid down His life so that you and I can have an opportunity to not only find forgiveness of our sins but to be brought back into right relationship with the Father.

It is sin that separates us from God. When we are born into this world we are born with a sin nature that dominates us from day one. Our sin nature causes us to be self-centered and we believe that which we selfishly desire will fulfill us if we get it. Oftentimes we will step on whoever it takes to get what we desire. The way Satan keeps us in bondage and further destroys our lives is through temptation.

But thankfully God has made a way. Jesus is the Bread of life. Those who come to faith in Christ will never hunger again nor thirst again. In Jesus we find all that we need and the more we grow in Him, the more we come to understand this. The more we come to know Him, the less we desire this world and the things the devil presents to us.

Today I would encourage you to take an inventory and think about what you are truly pursuing in life. Is what you are pursuing will glorify and strengthen your relationship with Jesus? Or is that what you are pursuing simply steeped in selfish desire. The only way to truly be complete and content on this earth is to be fully surrendered to Jesus.

*Prayer*

*Father please remove from my life anything that would hinder my walk with you. Remove anything from my life that would destroy the purposes and plans you have for me. Help me each day to fall more and more in love with you. Increase my desire for your word. Increase my desire for your presence. Increase my desire for prayer. I pray that you would be the only thing I desire. I pray that you would prune me of anything that is displeasing to you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 75

### I Am The Light Of The World

*John 8:12 (New Living Translation)*

*Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."*

Jesus is the light of the world. We are told in God's word that His word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. The world we live in is filled with darkness, lies, and deceptions. When we come to know Jesus our hearts and minds are open to see and understand truth.

This Christmas season we have the opportunity to allow His light to shine through us. Words are very cheap when not backed up by action. Many may claim they love God and follow Jesus. But the question is do they really? Do they really love the one who manifested and personified pure love? In all that Jesus did, in every decision, in every word, in every action, He did all things because He simply loved us. The question is can we love like Jesus loved?

Some may say it is impossible. But I truly believe the key is abiding daily in Him. Reorganizing our lives so we have time in which we spend in His presence in prayer and time in His word reading and meditating upon His word. He desires to change and impact our lives. He desires to take the brokenness we come with and transform it into the beauty of who He is. It is not impossible, but it is indeed supernaturally.

When we love like Jesus love and we walk in His love in all things, His light shine through us. Jesus said that in the last days the love of most would grow cold because of the increase of wickedness. The only way we can truly walk in love is our lives becoming immersed in Jesus more and more.

Every day the invitation is extended to us. Every day He sets a table before us. There is so much He desires to share with us and teach us. May we not be too busy. May we remove any idols that would stand in the way. May we simply desire Him above all else.

*Prayer*

*Father I pray that the light and glory of who you are would fill my life. Help me to love like you love and to be the person you have called and destined me to be. Father help me to have eyes to see and ears to hear. Help me in my weakness and my shortcomings. Forgive me when I fall short and fill me with your strength and power. Father help me to simply love as you have loved me. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 76

### I Am The Good Shepherd

*John 10:14-15 (New Living Translation)*

*14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, 15 just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep.*

Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He lays down His life for us. He has already proved this at Calvary. Everything that Satan means to kill, steal, and destroy our lives, Jesus is able to step in and supernaturally use it for our good and His purposes. We must remember that Jesus is Almighty God. That means He is sovereign, He is all powerful, He is all knowing, He holds all things together by His mighty power.

But there is something Jesus says here that is very very important. He says "I know my sheep, and they know me". No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws them. Those who come to follow Christ, don't simply follow Him from a distance, but they actually know Him intimately. They have made the decision to deny themselves and pick up their cross.

Jesus will meet our every need. The role of a real shepherd was many. He would lay across the opening of the sheep pen at night to protect the sheep from any predators. There was only one entrance. The walls of the sheep pen were high enough to protect from predators. But the shepherd would not only protect the sheep, he would lead them to green pastures to eat and to rest. He would lead them to still waters to drink and be refreshed. The problem for sheep if they are led to rushing water and they try to drink, they will fall in. If they fall in, their coat becomes so heavy that they ultimately drown.

Sheep are helpless animals that cannot protect themselves. They have no claws or sharp teeth. They require a shepherd for safety and survival. Using this example teaches us much in our relationship with Jesus. We need Him daily. We need to follow Him. If we get away from the Good Shepherd we are placed in a very dangerous position. Jesus will provide every need, will protect, lead, and guide us. All we need is found in Jesus.

*Prayer*

*Father I thank you for sending your Son Jesus. I thank you for your goodness and your love. Jesus I thank you that you continually protect me and provide for me. I thank you that there is nothing I have to fear. Lead me this day and use my life to glorify and honor you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 77**

### **I Am The Resurrection and The Life**

*John 11:25 (New Living Translation)*

*Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.*

The fear of death for many is at the top of the list of all fears. Those who do not know Jesus have many unknown when it comes to death. But when we come to know Jesus we no longer fear death because we understand that when this life ends is when life truly begins.

Eternal life begins the moment we come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. The moment we decide to follow Him and make Him Lord and Savior, is the moment that eternal life begins. Jesus said that He came to give life and give it abundantly. Abundant life is knowing Him personally.

He is the resurrection and the life. All of us have areas of our lives that are broken and mired by sin. But when we come to Christ, His life and His power touches every area of our lives. He is simply calling people to surrender and to give all that they are over to Him. When we decide to finally surrender all to Him is when we begin to truly live.

Every day is a new day in Christ. The old has past away, the new has come. Many live in bondage because they live in the past. Jesus wants us to stop living in the past, and to simply live for Him today. We need to give all the shame, discouragement, doubt, unbelief, wickedness, and anything else that would hinder what He wants to do over to Him. In exchange He will give us peace, joy, brand new life, brand new path, a new identity in Him.

Because Jesus is the resurrection and the life we have a brand new life. Everything we have done has been nailed to the cross. Let go of the condemnation of the enemy and embrace the new life you have in Jesus. We will never know the full measure of the impact Christ can make in our lives until we finally come to fully surrender to Him.

## Prayer

*Father today I come and thank you for the new life I have in Jesus. Jesus I thank you that you are the resurrection and the life. That old things have passed away and new things have come. I thank you Lord Jesus in you I have a brand new life and a brand new identity. I thank you that every day is new and my every moment is in your hands. I pray that my new life in your would glorify and honor you in all things. I pray this all in the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 78

### **I Am The Way, The Truth, and The Life**

*John 14:6 (New Living Translation)*

*Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.*

What is truth? We live in a world of subjective thinking. Today we will hear people say the phrase "my truth" or "your truth". The arrogance and pride of man in this time in history demonstrates that man believes he is the one who determines what is truth. Many have rejected God in this day and have rejected the truth of the bible.

But when we examine scripture we find number one that there is indeed a God. He is the one who determines truth. He is the one who created all things. He has created man in His image and given man freewill. But God has never stopped being God and is in control of all things.

Sadly, there will be many who will stand before Jesus Christ and hear the words "away from me I never knew you". They are not rejected by Jesus Christ simply based on their wickedness and their sin or because they are not good enough to get into Heaven. The reason the Lord will speak these words to them because they have rejected Him.

God stands with His arms open wide and day after day He calls out to humanity. Through so many vehicles of information today God is speaking to the hearts of people. But sadly man loves this world more than he loves God. Man rejects God because he loves self and the selfish sinful desires that exist within him.

The only way we can truly find life is finding Jesus. The life that Jesus speaks of is eternal life. Eternal life begins the moment we come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. No one can draw near to God nor enter into God's kingdom without faith in Jesus Christ. It is not my personal opinion that I have created, but it is what the Living God has said. What separates us from God is our sin. What reconciles us to God is the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

As Christians we have the most important and vital message anyone needs to hear. May we walk in love. May we be filled with the Holy Spirit and each day as we have opportunity share the good news of Jesus. May we live our lives to glorify and honor Him and may we prepare daily for the one who is returning to establish His kingdom upon the earth.

He truly is the way, the truth, and the life. He has demonstrated He is exactly who He claims to be through His resurrection. Because He has overcome death and the grave, we no longer have to fear death and we have an answer for the sin that destroys us on a daily basis. May we run to Jesus. May we surrender to Him as Lord. May our lives be placed in His hands. May we simply desire to glorify Him in everything.

#### *Prayer*

*Father I thank you today for salvation. I thank you for the gift of salvation. I thank you that everything we have in you is given to us as a gift by you. I thank you that we don't have to earn our salvation and I thank you that true life is found in Jesus alone. Jesus in everything my our lives glorify and honor you. May we be one as you and the Father are one. Father help us in our weakness and forgive us when we fall short. Fill us with your love and Spirit, have your way today in our hearts and minds. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 79**

### **Those Who Remain In Me**

*John 15:5-8 (New Living Translation)*

*5 "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. 6 Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. 7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be*

*granted! 8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.*

Jesus calls us to remain in Him or abide in Him. The question is what does this mean. For some in America Christianity is a one day a week thing or something that takes place in their lives for only a few hours. But is this truly what Jesus refers to as following Him? Is this true discipleship? The answer I believe is no.

If we are truly following Jesus as He lays out in scripture we see that we are called to deny ourselves and pick up our cross. This means we have made the decision to give all of our lives over to Him. Not simply a few hours a week or even one day a week. We give every day and every moment over to the Lord.

Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father. During this dialogue Jesus is having with the disciples before going to the cross He has spoken to them about going to prepare a place for them and that He needed to return to the Father. The disciples are perplexed and confused as to what Jesus is talking about, because they believe He has come to establish His kingdom right now.

But Jesus has also said that He would not leave them or us as orphan. The promise of the Father would come. Jesus desires that we would walk with Him every day. Through the person of the Holy Spirit we are able to walk in continual fellowship with the Lord.

There are some church traditions that never speak of the person of the Holy Spirit. When people fail to understand who the Holy Spirit is and fail to develop deep intimacy with Him, there is something they feel is missing. But when we understand that the third person of the trinity is indeed a person and that we can build a relationship with Him, we develop a level of intimacy with Him in which we truly begin to abide and remain in Christ every moment of every day.

Our ability to walk in unbroken fellowship with Jesus is not dependent on our performance or behavior. Will there be times when we fail the Lord, the answer is yes. I have learned many lessons in my life from many of my short comings. I am more aware than anyone how truly flawed I am. But thankfully my ability and your ability to draw near to Jesus is based upon His finished work and our faith in Him.

Remain in Christ means to simply walk with Him each day and throughout the day. Every moment of every day is an opportunity to learn and grow with Him. I have learned many things from the Lord when doing ordinary tasks like washing the dishes, mowing the law, and cleaning around the house. Some of the greatest lessons I have learned about God and His kingdom is simply playing with my daughter and being sensitive to the leading and voice of the Holy Spirit.

Incredible and awesome things await those who will remain and abide in Christ on a daily basis. Don't treat your relationship with Jesus like it is a one day a week or a few hours a week thing. It is

to be all consuming and when we simply live according to the word of God that is where the abundant life Jesus spoke about is found. It is only found when we truly abide in Him.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and I thank you for your goodness and your love. Jesus I thank you that you have made a way for me to remain and abide in you every moment of every day. I thank you Holy Spirit that through all things in our lives you desire to teach us about who you are, about your Kingdom, and use the things we go through to refine us. Father have your way in me today. Prune away anything that would hinder what you want to do and simply prepare me for your glory. May my heart, mind, strength, and all that I am simply be surrendered to you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 80**

### **She Will Call His Name Immanuel**

*Isaiah 7:14 (New American Standard Bible 1995)*

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.*

The sign of Immanuel is our greatest hope. God's promise to the nation of Israel is that a Messiah would come from the line of David. This Messiah would rule and reign and establish His kingdom. But what the people failed to understand when He walked the earth is that for them to truly be free, they had to be set free from their sins.

The Messiah is Jesus. Jesus came born of the virgin Mary. Mary when she became pregnant had not yet known a man and it was when the Holy Spirit came upon her that she became pregnant with child. The Holy Spirit would use the physical egg in Mary's body and therefore when Jesus walked the earth He was fully God and fully man.

But in everything Jesus did, He relied fully upon the Holy Spirit. Every miracle was the work of the Holy Spirit through Him. We see in Jesus' life that His life was immersed in prayer. Early in the morning Jesus would go off to a solitary place to pray. When choosing the disciples and after major miracles Jesus would get alone with His Father.

But the Son of God came to this earth and fully became man. He is our hope. No matter what we face today, nor who sits in the seat of human authority we know that Jesus is fully in control. There is coming a day when He shall return and establish His kingdom. Until that day may we simply keep our hearts fixed upon Him and share the good news of who He is with those who do not know Him. But no matter what we face, we have hope because of Immanuel.

### *Prayer*

*Father I thank you today for your Son Jesus. Father I thank you that always fulfill your every plan and purpose. Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah spoke these words under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It was always your plan to send Jesus and I thank you today for not only His first coming, but His soon return. May we keep our hearts and minds fixed upon Him and may everything in our lives bring you glory.*

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## **Day 81**

### **My Soul Exalts The Lord**

*Luke 1:46-49*

*New American Standard Bible 1995*

*46 And Mary said:*

*"My soul exalts the Lord,*

*47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*

*48 "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondslave;*

*For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.*

*49 "For the Mighty One has done great things for me;*

*And holy is His name.*

God chose Mary, a poor girl from Nazareth, to impact the very course of history. Before Mary came to be with child through the power of the Holy Spirit there were probably who were not aware of who Mary was. But after she encountered the angel Gabriel all of that would change.

Mary would go on to carry the baby Jesus to full term and deliver. Jesus would grow up in the house of Joseph and Mary. Joseph was a simple carpenter by trade and Jesus would spend many days and moments with Joseph in his carpenter shop. We are told from scripture that Joseph was a righteous man which means he lived by the law and built his life upon it. We don't know when Joseph died, but we do know that before Jesus began his public ministry that Joseph was no longer alive.

But throughout Jesus life on the earth Mary was alive. She was even one of the 120 who were in the upper room on the day of pentecost. Jesus entrusted the care of Mary to John the apostle as He hung upon the cross. Mary would go on to have several children after Jesus was born and we know that two of them were writers of two books of the New Testament in James and Jude.

But Mary understood that God had chosen her. She didn't fully understand the gravity of everything she was called to do, but she knew that the grace of Almighty God was upon her. Upon hearing of being chosen to carry and mother the Son of God, Mary would be filled with both joy and awe of who and what God had done.

But the other thing I think about when I think about Mary is having to watch her baby boy be crucified. Now being a father of a little girl who is going to be turning three this has become much more real to me in my life. I have watched my own daughter continue to grow and being a father is truly the thing I love and treasure most on this earth.

But as I think about Mary and her willingness to be obedient I know it also meant she had to watch her Son go through a level of pain and agony that we cannot comprehend. Each time they whipped Him, each time they humiliated Him, each time they drove the nails in His hands and feet, I am sure it pierced the soul of Mary. I am sure there were many moments during that crucifixion in which Mary desired to scream out with everything within her to have them stop but she knew this was why He came.

During this Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, never let us forget that the reason He came was to take the punishment and wrath we deserve. All of us are sinners. There is not one who has not sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But thank God He loved us so much He sent His Son. Thank God that Jesus loved us so much that He said yes to the Father's will. And I am thankful that a poor girl from Nazareth that nobody noticed said yes when the Lord called her to carry and mother the Son of God.

We are not called to worship Mary. She would even tell anyone who is worshipping her to stop. But may we honor her for her willingness and obedience. Being called by God to do anything is not easy and Mary had one of the greatest callings of all and that was to be the earthly mother to the Son of God.

*Prayer*

*Father I pray that all of us would simply say yes. We would say yes to the hard things you call us to. Father give us strength and endurance to do what you have planned and purposed. Father I thank you today for Mary and her heart to simply be your maidservant. I pray for all of us that we would desire to lay down our lives, our will, our dreams, and our desires, and that all you desire, want, and dream would become the driving force in our lives. Father lead us today to become the people you have called us to be. Thank you for your Son Jesus. During this Christmas season may our hearts be fixed upon Jesus alone. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 82**

# **The Earth Will Be Filled With The Knowledge of The Glory of The Lord**

*Habakkuk 2:14 NKJV*

*For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.*

We live in hard and difficult days and it seems that darkness is filling the earth at an ever increasing rate. As humanity rejects God more and more and gives themselves over to sin and temptation, the hearts of many become calloused and cold and the wickedness they are capable is astounding.

But as followers of Jesus we have hope. There is a day coming in which our Lord and Savior shall return. He shall place His feet on the Mount of Olives and He shall establish His kingdom on the earth. He shall rule from Jerusalem and this verse will become a reality. For when the Lord establishes His kingdom, He will bind Satan in the abyss for a thousand years.

The key to navigating this journey with Christ at this time in history is intimacy with Him. The more intimate we walk with Him, the more our hearts and minds will become fixed and focused on Him and His kingdom and not this world.

Because of technology we are bombarded with lies and deceptions. We are bombarded with what Satan is doing throughout the earth. But God makes it very clear that we are called to fix our eyes upon the author and finisher of our faith. We are victorious today because of what Jesus has done. We are saved by God's grace and we are kept by God's grace.

No matter what the enemy has planned and purposed, God will use it for our good and for His glory. There is nothing that Satan does that God doesn't allow. There is nothing that happens in our world that God is not fully in control of. We may not understand all that God is doing and many times His plans and purposes make no sense to us.

But He has called us to trust Him and lean not on our own understanding. We must set aside our rational, logical mind and understand that God is God and we are not. Why He allows certain leaders to arise to power we will not understand on this side of eternity. But it is far better to know the Him personally who is control of the future and of all life itself. For He holds all things together by His mighty power.

### *Prayer*

*Father I thank you that you are in control. I thank you that you are working greatly in the earth. I thank you that Jesus you are returning soon and this world is not our home. Help us each day to live for you, to grow in you, to be fully surrendered to you, and to live lives that are holy and pleasing unto you. Father remove from us anything that would hinder your plans and may every word we speak and all that we do simply bring honor and glory unto you. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen.*

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## **Day 83**

### **He Will Save His People From Their Sins**

*Matthew 1:21 (NIV)*

*She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*

Jesus has come to save us from our sins. So many times people are paralyzed by their past. Whatever they have done, they can't get beyond. They believe it is beyond the forgiveness of God. But God knew when He created Adam and Eve that they would sin. God knew when He created humanity how far they would fall into wickedness and darkness, yet He still chose to send His Son.

During the Christmas season there are many things that try to become the focus. Some focus on Santa Clause. Some focus on lights and getting together with family. Some focus on seeing if they

will receive the gift they have been waiting for. But as followers of Christ the things we focus on is Jesus. He is God's greatest gift. He is the greatest gift because none of us have done anything to warrant a relationship with Him. None of us can do anything that would be good enough to earn His love. He loves us because He chooses to love us by His grace.

During this Christmas season may we take time to fix our hearts upon Jesus. The world around us becomes more chaotic by the day. But truthfully the world only makes sense when you know Jesus. Until we come to know Jesus we may think that life is simply a random group of events and can't understand why things are as crazy as they are. But when we come to know Jesus we see how truly lost and broken humanity is without Him and it isn't until we begin to follow Him and know Him, that true healing and transformation can happen.

### *Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and thank you for your Son Jesus. I thank you for saving my life and forgiving my sins. I thank you in the craziness of this world that you are fully in control and we have nothing to fear. Father lead and guide us today to know you more deeply and to be the sons and daughters you have called us to be. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 84**

### **Will Call Him Immanuel**

*Isaiah 7:14 (NIV)*

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

Immanuel means God with us. No matter what we go through or what we face, if Jesus is our Lord and Savior, God is with us. He is with us always. There is nothing that can separate us from His love. There is nothing that can separate us from Him. There is no one who can snatch us out of His hand. We are saved by His grace and we are kept by His grace.

Everyday as we learn of His word and learn of His kingdom, we are transformed. We are transformed as we come to know Him in a more intimate way. As our minds and hearts are

immersed in His word and His presence, we come to understand the depths of His love for us and become more aware of His presence in all things.

God is with us. This should give us hope under the leadership of wicked people. It should give us hope in the midst of a failing economy and disease and sickness. When we know Jesus we know the one who holds all things together by His mighty power. He holds our every moment and provides our every breath. When we know Him we will not leave this earth until He says our days are done on this earth. No matter how many surround us on every day, if God is with us we have nothing to fear.

Today if your life is filled with fear and discouragement, remember that God is with us. Stop focusing on this world and the wickedness in this world. This world is mired in sin and it is sin that is the root and foundation of all wickedness we see on the earth. But in Christ we have true hope and we know His kingdom is coming soon because He is returning very soon.

In this Christmas season the focus should never be on gifts, lights, or Santa Clause. But it should always be fixed upon the one who loves us unconditionally and is truly in control of all that is happening in the world today. God is with us. Let our hearts be fixed upon that truth.

#### *Prayer*

*Father today I thank you that you loved us so much you sent your Son Jesus to die upon the cross for our sins. I thank you that Jesus came to this earth, was born, lived His life without sin, and finally gave up all for us. Father may our lives honor you in all things, may we follow you every step of the way, and may our hearts be fixed upon you. Thank you for the greatest gift in your Son Jesus. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 85**

### **They Opened Their Treasures and Presented Him With Gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh**

*Matthew 2:10-11 (NIV)*

*When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*

The wise men were guided to Jesus by the star. In the dark of night as they traveled many miles to find the one who was said to be the King of the Jews. Jesus was born into very humble circumstances. He was born into a very poor family. Often times we may believe to do great things for God we need to be born into a wonderful family or be a person of privilege. But often with God it is quite opposite.

These wise men were gentiles and they were royalty. To many it would seem foolish that grown men would humble themselves and bow down before a baby. But this simply pointed to who Jesus really was. He wasn't merely the Son of Joseph and Mary, He was the Son of God.

The three gifts brought to Jesus have meaning and purpose when it relates to revealing who He truly is. The gold speaks of His royalty and Him truly being king. The frankincense speaks to Jesus deity and Jesus being fully God. The myrrh speaks to Jesus humanity and His future suffering. Myrrh was used as part of the embalming process.

Everything that happened during the course of Jesus life happened with purpose and according to the Father's will. Today for those of us who are born again and saved by the grace of God, we have the greatest gift anyone could have. So many focus on empty, earthly gifts that in time will fade away and no longer exist. But in knowing Christ our lives are forever changed. Not only are our sins forgiven and some day we will rule and reign with Him in eternity, but eternal life begins now and while we have breath in our lungs we can walk closely with Him every day.

Let us never forget that the one we call Lord and Savior is truly a King. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We may get focused on who sits in the seat of authority on this earth, but let us never forget that over all the nations and over all the kings, there is one who sits with true power and authority and His name is Jesus. To know Jesus is to know the one who holds all things together by His mighty power. To know Jesus is to know the one who controls the future and holds every breath and heart beat in His hands. To know Jesus is to know the Son of God and to be reconciled to God the Father in right relationship.

Let us stop focusing on this world and how broken it is. No matter what earthly person sits in power they will be flawed because they themselves are human and broken. But let us seek the one whose throne is built upon the pillars of justice and righteousness and who is perfect in every way. May our hearts simply be surrendered to Him today and may the focus of our lives every minute of every day simply be King Jesus!

*Prayer*

*Father forgive me for focusing on things that I should not. Help me to focus my heart and mind upon your Son Jesus. Father remove every fear and discouragement. Help me to simply keep my heart and mind focused on your kingdom and know that the return of Jesus is very soon. Father I thank you for every challenge and for holding my every moment in your hands. I thank you for forgiven me and using even the mistakes in my life to mold and shape me. Father I thank you for choosing to use a broken person for your glory and your honor. Father today in all things be magnified and may the name of Jesus be honored in all that I do. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 86**

### **Peace To Those on Whom His Favor Rests**

*Luke 2:14 NIV*

*"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

God's favor and peace rest upon those who are in right relationship with Him. Because of His love for humanity, God so loved the world that He sent His only Son to it. He sent Jesus to this earth to become fully human and to humble Himself becoming a servant and taking the sins of the world upon Himself.

There is nothing we have done to deserve salvation. Many times we pray for God to do many things, but when we meditate on what He has done for us through salvation, it is amazing how much He truly loves us. If God never did anything else in our lives but send forth His Son Jesus to die in our place, it would be enough.

God's peace is beyond human understanding. People in their rational thinking believe peace only exist in the absence of conflict. But with God, His peace is present at all times no matter what we are facing. Things on this earth are becoming much more difficult by the day. Things are escalating spiritually and the main reason is because of the second coming of Jesus.

God's grace is His unmerited favor upon us. It is not earned but it rest upon us because of faith in Jesus Christ and His mercy extended towards us. What I am always personally amazed by is that in having a relationship with Jesus the full measure of God's kingdom is available to us. As we seek the Lord and draw near and truly come to know Him, it is truly amazing because of Jesus what is made available to us.

The times we live in are hard and difficult for many. The Christmas message we have as Christians is the good news that so many need to hear. God has created a dynamic on the earth in which many are being brought to a place to be prepared to hear and receive the truth of Jesus Christ. Nothing is happening by accident and the return of our Lord and Savior is very near. Today I would encourage you to fix your eyes upon Jesus on a daily basis. There are many voices and a whole lot of noise that surrounds us daily that is focused on darkness and deception. But when we focus on the truth of the gospel, His peace will truly rest upon us and our minds will be united with His.

*Prayer*

*Father guard my heart today from the lies and deceptions of Satan. Guard my heart from the discouragement of the enemy. Father help me to understand the depths of your love for me and to understand how powerful your peace is. Father I thank you that because of Jesus your favor rests upon my life and I pray that every day I would simply walk in the promises you have established for my life. Father I thank you for your Son Jesus and I pray that my life would honor and glorify Him.*

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## **Day 87**

### **Your Word Is A Lamp For My Feet**

*Psalms 119:105 NIV*

*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*

God's word is so very precious to us in our lives. We live in a world that is filled with darkness and deception. Without God's word, we would wander aimless not understanding who He is and what He has called us to do. We are called to be led by the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit of God will simply lead and guide us into all truth. He will never call us to do anything that would contradict God and His word.

We live in a day and age in which many are abandoning truth and sound doctrine. They are chasing after demonic and deceptive doctrines. They chase after that which tingles the ear and makes them feel very comfortable in their sin. The more our world and cultures becomes self-centered, the more the enemy has an opportunity to influence the hearts and minds of many. Through media and entertainment we are continually lied to and the voice of the enemy tries to find ways into our heart and mind.

But what will truly guard our hearts and minds in this hour is the truth of God's word. Time spent daily in God's word, immersing our minds and hearts in the truth of scripture will not only help us to understand and know God in a greater way, but we will also come to know the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Again the Holy Spirit will lead and guide us into all truth. He is the one who transforms us from the inside out. But for transformation to take place we must renew our minds continually with scriptures.

Spending time in the truth of God's word will enable us to recognize the lies and deceptions of this age. The only way to recognize a counterfeit is to know what the real looks like. Satan's lies are often packaged as half truths. They have an aspect of truth, but when you begin to truly examine them you find out deceptive they are.

The reason lie and deception is so powerful is because when we begin to believe a lie, it shapes the way we think and it shapes the way we live. If we come to believe that we are the one's who ultimately determine our gender or sexuality, we will reject the truth of how God has designed us and instead embrace the lie of Satan. We will be robbed of all that God has planned and purposed for us simply because we have believed the lie and we have embraced.

May the word of God truly be the lamp unto our feet and the light unto our path. May every day we have on this earth be committed to the daily study of God's word. May we be found as one who rightly divides truth and rightly handles truth. The Holy Spirit is our guide upon this earth. We have not been left as orphans. He desires to pour great and mighty revelation into our hearts. But we must draw near. We must ask. We must seek Him.

#### *Prayer*

*Father I pray today that you would lead and guide me into all truth. May your word immerse my mind and heart. May you guard me from every lie and deception of the enemy. Father I pray that I would treasure your word and that Holy Spirit you would pour forth great and mighty revelation into my mind and heart. Help me to understand the scriptures in a greater way. Help me to simply know you more intimately. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 88**

### **Do Not Be Anxious About Anything**

*Philippians 4:6 NASB2020*

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

Paul calls us to not be anxious about anything. Many today are bound in fear. They constantly live in fear. Every decision they make is based on fear. But this should never be the case for the follower of Jesus.

Paul shows us the key to overcoming anxiety: to simply bring everything before God in prayer. Daily we find ourselves in the midst of a spiritual war and our minds and hearts are bombarded by the lies of the enemy. Every where we look the voice of the enemy is present. It is present in the media, it is present in entertainment, it is present through the leaders of our nation who continually pump fear into our society and world. When people are consumed with fear every decision they make is based on self-preservation and therefore love is not present.

But as followers of Jesus we are called to walk in love. We are called to live by faith. We are told that we have not been given a Spirit of fear, but of love, power, and sound mind. No matter what we are facing in this life we can always come to God with thanksgiving. The number one reason is the salvation found through Jesus. It is a gift, it is not earned. We don't deserve it, but God in His mercy extends forgiveness if we will simply place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. Jesus paid it all so we can be set free. So we can be forgiven. So we can have brand new life in Him.

Today if you are bound in fear, worry, and anxiety, whatever is overwhelming your soul I would encourage you to give to Jesus. Every time we go to God in prayer we place the battle in His hands. God is undefeated and there is none greater than the Living God. But Satan's strategy is to always overwhelm us with lies and deception and manipulate our emotions and feelings. Stop living in fear and simply walk by faith, trusting Jesus each step of the way.

*Prayer*

*Heavenly Father I come today and ask you to remove all fear. Help me to walk according to your word, trusting you each step of the way. Help me to not rely upon my emotions and feelings, but I pray that my life would be built upon the truth of your word. Father I thank you for your goodness and your love. I thank you that today my sins are forgiven and no matter what happens my life is in your hands. I thank you that I know the one who controls all things. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 89

### Arise, Shine, For Your Light Has Come

Isaiah 60:1 NASB2020

“Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

There is always hope with Jesus. So many today live without hope. So many look at what is happening with the world and feel like everything is falling apart and there aren't any answers. But God has so designed it this way. God is not the author of wickedness, disease, or destruction. but God allows things to happen to draw the hearts of many to Him.

God is bringing people to a place when all that will matter is having Jesus. For those who run to Jesus and build their lives upon Him, no matter how difficult or hard things get, they will have hope and peace that is supernatural. They will personally know the Living God. But for those who reject Jesus Christ they will fail to find peace and hope. Their lives will be overwhelmed by worry, discouragement, depression, and darkness. To reject Jesus is to reject light and truth. Many in this generation will claim that truth is subjective, but it is not. There is absolute truth and it is only found in Jesus Christ.

The light that has come is Jesus Christ. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. Those who place their faith and trust in Jesus have their sins forgiven. Those who cling to Jesus will have eternal life in His kingdom. The only way we can be forgiven is by placing our faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Someday we shall rule and reign with Christ. The world we live in today is passing away. This has always been God's plan. God knew that when He created Adam and Eve that they would sin in the garden. But it was always the plan that the Son would come and give His life for all humanity. To know Jesus is to know the Living God. In all that we say and do may our focus be to glorify and honor Jesus Christ. May we share Jesus with those who need Him and those who are hurting. Broken and hurt people surround us every day. May our hearts be fixed upon the hope we have in Christ and live lives surrendered to Jesus.

#### *Prayer*

*Father today I pray that my heart and mind would be surrendered to your will. I pray that the hope I have in Jesus would fill my life and touch those around me. Father I pray that you would open my eyes to see all those who are broken around me. Father may your love fill my life and touch every person that I meet. May my life simply be lived for your pleasure and glory. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 90

### For You Are All Sons of God Through Father in Christ Jesus

*Galatians 3:26-28 (New American Standard Bible 1995)*

*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

Through faith in Jesus Christ we are adopted into God's family. Because of our sin, we are separated from God. Some today will doubt they have sin and don't even believe in God. But the understanding of who God is and that we are truly lost only comes as the Holy Spirit reveals truth to us.

Because we are separated from God at birth many times we are driven and mastered by desires that are contrary to God and His kingdom. The only way we are transformed is by the renewing of our minds. Our minds must be renewed by the word of God. It is only the Holy Spirit who can reveal truth and help us to understand the scriptures. But the Holy Spirit desires to reveal truth to us and He is simply waiting for us to ask.

Because of Jesus, we are all one in Him. The body of Christ across the earth is a diverse group of individuals who come from a variety of backgrounds. All of us have weaknesses in our life. All of us have a variety of different skin colors. But all of us bleed red and all of us are covered by the blood of Jesus. Jesus is what unites us and His prayer before going to the cross is that we would be one as He and the Father are one.

Everyday may we clothe ourselves with Christ. May we spend time in God's presence and allow the Holy Spirit to have the freedom to change and mold us as He desires. We must surrender to the work and person of the Holy Spirit. For God to change us we must be willing to surrender. Many are very comfortable with the concept of Jesus as Savior, but few embrace the truth that Jesus must be Lord. For when Jesus is Lord we lay down everything that we desire for His will and His kingdom.

*Prayer*

*Father I come to you today and ask you to help me surrender to the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Help me to understand the truth of your word and help me to understand who I am in Christ. I thank you that my sins are forgiven and that I have been adopted into your family. Continue to lead and guide me each day and may my will and desires be surrendered to your purpose in my life. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 91**

### **We Do It To Get A Crown That Will Last Forever**

*1 Corinthians 9:25 NIV*

*Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.*

The Christian journey is a lot like training to be an athlete. An athlete in any sport understands that whatever they invest in their sport and training will directly result in what happens when they step on the field of competition. If an athlete fails to properly train through not only strength and conditioning, but also diet that they will not be fully prepared to compete at the highest level.

The same exist in our walk with Christ. Our personal time spent in God's word and prayer is our personal training. The more we feed on God's word and the more we spend time in His presence we come to know His voice and His leading clearly. The enemy who desires to destroy us will continual lie to us and try to deceive us, but the key to victory in the Christian walk is being a person of God's word and presence.

It is amazing how hard athletes will train for a crown that will not last, but often Christians treat their walk with Christ no different than some second rate habit. What we put into our walk with Christ is what we will get out of it.

If we claim to be in Christ, yet live in sin, it will destroy the plans and purposes God has for us and rob us of God's blessings. Be willing to commit all you have to your walk with Christ. Remove from your life anything that would hinder your walk with Christ.

*Prayer*

*Father lead and guide me today to be the person you have called me to be. Help me to recognize the things that are hindering what you desire to do. I pray you would remove from my life anything that would rob me of all that you have for me. May my life be consecrated unto you.*

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## **Day 92**

### **Do Not Be Ashamed**

*1 Peter 4:16 (NIV)*

*However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.*

Suffering is a part of our Christian journey. Suffering can come in many forms. For some it is physical persecution at the hands of others. We have brothers and sisters all over the world who are suffering in ways that we cannot comprehend. We should be praying for them daily and especially pray for the boldness and strength to stand in the Lord and continue to proclaim the gospel.

Besides physical persecution we can suffer mentally, emotionally, and even spiritually for following Jesus. We have an enemy that we cannot see who desires to kill, steal, and destroy. He will scheme and purpose ways to try to stop and hinder what God desires to accomplish in us. But we must draw near to the Lord and place the battle in His hands.

When we do face suffering we should never be ashamed. No matter how we suffer or how much we suffer, it does not compare to what awaits us in eternity. Today if you feel like throwing in the towel or giving up, know that God is in control and as you turn to Him more and more, He will strengthen you for everything you will face on the this earth. His hand is upon your life and as you trust Him, He will work all things together for your good.

*Prayer*

*Father help me in my weakness. Help me in the moments when I feel like throwing in the towel. Help me to keep my eyes fixed upon you. To rely fully upon your strength and power. Help me to be fully surrendered to your will and in the face of suffering, help me to hold fast to the faith I have in you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 93**

### **Stay Here and Keep Watch With Me**

*Matthew 26:38 (NIV)*

*Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."*

Jesus in this verse is calling His disciples to watch and pray. He is going to go and spend hours praying in the garden of Gethsemane as He prepares for what He is about to face at Calvary.

Everything Jesus did was to fulfill the will of the Father. His life was fully surrendered. Though He prayed three times that the cup would pass from Him, He concluded by saying not my will but yours be done. We see the humanity at work, but we also see a Son who is fully surrendered to the Father's will.

There is much we can learn from the life of Jesus, but one of the greatest lessons is here. He lived a life surrendered because of His commitment to draw near to His Father in prayer and to seek Him at all times. In no way is the Christian journey an easy one, but the importance of prayer cannot be overstated.

Just as Jesus life was surrendered, ours must be as well. We must keep watch with Him and now we look toward His return on a daily basis. He has overcome death, sin, and the grave and because of this our salvation is a gift and it is through Him that we have brand new life. May our lives be built upon seeking Him and drawing near.

*Prayer*

*Father help me to draw near to you each day. Help me to seek you with my whole heart. Guard my heart against the lies and deceptions of Satan. Father I pray that my heart and mind would be*

*surrendered to your will. Not desiring my will, but yours to be done. No matter the trial or challenge, I pray that all of me would be surrendered to you.*

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## **Day 94**

### **For This Is How God Loved The World**

*John 3:16 NLT*

*"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.*

Why did God save us? Why did He send His Son? None of us have done anything that would warrant or merit that God would save us. If we are truly honest with ourselves, we don't deserve what Jesus has done or what He was willing to endure.

But everything God has done for us is because of His love for us. In everything God does in our lives is because of the love He has for us. His love is so much greater than we can understand. His love for us causes Him to pursue us at all costs. He will go to any length to reach us with His love and His truth.

This puts in perspective how truly sad it is when a person rejects what Christ has done. When a person hears what Jesus has done and in their own freewill and pride make the decision that they don't need it and they don't want it. In themselves they don't believe they are a sinner and often would label themselves as a good person. But it is one of the great deceptions of Satan that if believed will cause a person to spend all eternity in Hell separated from God.

But He desires that we would not only receive what Christ has done, but we would surrender our lives to Him. That our lives would be used for His glory and purpose. When we have a right understanding of His love for us, we will lay down all for the sake of Jesus and His glory.

## Prayer

*Father thank you for saving me. Thank you for sending your Son Jesus. Thank you for making a way for me to be forgiven. I know I don't deserve your love or your forgiveness, but I thank you for saving me. Jesus take my life and use it for your glory. May you lead me by the Holy Spirit and Holy Spirit may you fill me, empower me, and equip me for the service of your kingdom. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## Day 95

### All Of Us, Like Sheep, Have Strayed Away

*Isaiah 53:6 NLT*

*All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.*

All of us are lost. All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There isn't one person born on this earth after Adam and Eve who has not been born into sin.

Our sin nature is evident in our lives. It causes us to be self-centered and not God centered. We desire what we want and before coming to know Christ, we desire the world and the things it offers.

Satan has blinded the minds and hearts of people and God knows this. God knows how lost people are without Him. Jesus was sent on a rescue mission. The mission included Him fully becoming man, moving in the might and power of the Holy Spirit, and then ultimately giving His life to repay a debt that humanity could not pay.

It is our sin that separates us from God, but it is the blood of Christ that washes us clean. Through faith in Christ we are forgiven, we are born again, and it is as if we have never sinned. Our

righteousness is based solely on what Christ has done and having a right understanding of this will lead to living rightly.

Today as we reflect on what Jesus has done on Good Friday and we find ourselves on the day before His resurrection, may we take time to reflect on all we have been forgiven of. May our focus be the new life we have in Jesus. May we look to His soon return and prepare our hearts daily for the trumpet sound. The King is returning and He is returning for a bride that is prepared and ready. May we be a people who seek after Him with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. May He be our priority and our obsession.

### *Prayer*

*Father thank you for sending your Son Jesus. Thank you for providing a way for us to be forgiven and set free. I thank you today our sins are forgiven and that we have been set free from the dominion and power of the devil. Father continue to lead and guide us and may all things in our lives be surrendered to your will. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 96**

### **He Is Not Here, For He Has Risen**

*Matthew 28:6 AMP*

*He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said [He would]. Come! See the place where He was lying.*

This is why we have hope. We live in a world that is chaotic, uncertain, filled with confusion and darkness. So many have come to find out that the leaders they believed they could once trust in, they can no longer trust. Many today live in a place of hopelessness and fear.

But when we come to know Jesus everything changes. He has overcome sin, death, and the grave. He has proved it by the empty tomb. The stone was rolled away not so He could get out, but so that those who came to the tomb would be witnesses that indeed it was empty.

He appeared to over 500 eye witnesses after His resurrection. He talked and even ate with the disciples. Jesus has overcome all and there is nothing in this world and all of hell that is greater than Jesus Christ.

Today He stands with His arms open wide and the gift of salvation is available to all those who will receive. He calls us to come and lay down everything at the foot of the cross. He calls us to believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths that He is Lord.

The tomb is empty. This is where our hope is found. This is where our joy is found. This is where eternal life is found. We no longer have to fear death or tomorrow because He has risen.

#### *Prayer*

*Father thank you. Thank you for sending Jesus. Thank you for saving us. Father thank you for providing a way that we can be forgiven. Jesus thank you for giving your life. Thank you for taking the punishment we deserve. Thank you for the empty tomb. Thank you that we no longer have to fear anything. In the name of Jesus, Amen.*

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## **Day 97**

### **For Everyone Who Calls Upon The Name Of The Lord**

*Romans 10:13 AMPC*

*"For everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord [invoking Him as Lord] will be saved. [Joel 2:32.]"*

Salvation is by calling on the name of Jesus. It is not based on our works or efforts. Many today would claim they are a good person and believe that good people go to heaven. But the truth is all have sinned. None are good. Because of sin we are separated from God.

But what is it that we are saved from? We are saved from an eternity being separated from God. We are saved from an eternity suffering in darkness and torment. The suffering that will be experienced by those who die in their sins who have not come to faith in Jesus Christ is beyond anything we can understand.

But thankful God in His grace has provided salvation as a gift. Christ has done all the work. We receive what He has done by faith. When we come to faith our sins are forgiven and we become a child of God. Every blessing we have that is found in Christ are released into our lives by faith.

*Prayer*

*Father thank you for saving me. Thank you for making salvation and forgiveness a gift. Not something I work for but something I simply receive. Help me each day to abide in you, to grow and surrender all things to you. In the name of Jesus, Amen!*

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## **Day 98**

# **All Have Sinned And Are Falling Short Of The Honor And Glory Which God Bestows and Receives**

*Romans 3:23-24 AMPC*

*"Since all have sinned and are falling short of the honor and glory which God bestows and receives. [All] are justified and made upright and in right standing with God, freely and gratuitously by His grace (His unmerited favor and mercy), through the redemption which is [provided] in Christ Jesus,"*

All have sinned. I have sinned. You have sinned. Every issue humanity faces at its foundation is because of sin. Our sin nature causes us to be self-centered and run from God. But it must be crucified on a daily basis.

Jesus said for any man to come after me He must deny himself and pick up his cross. Life with Jesus is about pursuing Him. It isn't about trying to manipulate God into giving us what we want.

We are justified and placed in right standing through faith alone. Not because of works or performance. One of the keys to growth in Christ is accountability and responsibility. As long as we make excuses, we will never grow and actually remain in prison. But let us rightly understand what Jesus has set us free from.

### *Prayer*

*Father thank you for saving me. Thank you for your grace. Thank you that everything I have in you is a gift. Thank you, my sins are washed away, and you see me as righteous. May my heart, mind, will, and all that I am be surrendered to you. In Jesus name, Amen.*

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## **Day 99**

### **Consider It Nothing But Joy Whenever You Fall Into Various Trials**

*James 1:2-3*

*2 Consider it nothing but joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various trials. 3 Be assured that the testing of your faith [through experience] produces endurance [leading to spiritual maturity, and inner peace].*

It seems crazy that someone would speak about joy and trials in the same sentence. But this is the understanding that comes when we walk with Jesus. It is the trials we face that God uses as the hammer and chisel in His hand to shape and mold us. Jesus never promised this would be easy and comfortable. He actually said that for someone to follow Him, they must deny themselves and pick up their cross.

There are things that we face on this earth, in the midst of them that we don't fully understand why or what God is trying to accomplish. The Lord tells us to rely not on our own understanding. If our go to in life is to simply rely on our own wisdom and understanding, we will struggle greatly in our walk with God. But if we have learned to simply let go and trust the Lord, then in not matter what we face, we will experience the peace and presence of God.

James says when you fall into various trails. Trials can come in many forms. Some can face financial testing. Some can face physical persecution. Some can face pain and suffering that is either mental, emotional, or spiritual. But through it all the key I have learned is drawing near to Christ. Abiding in Him. The problem for some is that when they do face trials, they disengage instead of drawing near to Christ.

There is great blessing that is received from going through trials. Endurance is produced within our lives that eventually leads to great levels of maturity. As we mature in Christ we will be trusted with greater authority and greater responsibility. Those who are used greatly by God will be thoroughly tested and tried by the Lord. When gold is being refined it is placed in the furnace for a period of time. Once the impurities have come to the surface, the gold is pulled out, the impurities removed, and it is placed back in the furnace. This is the case with every believer in Christ. God is simply committed to refining us, shaping us, molding us, and accomplishing His purposes in our lives. Trials are an essential part of our journey with Christ.

#### *Prayer*

*Father today help me to understand what I am facing. Help me to stand fast upon the faith I have in you and the trust I have in your word. Bring to my heart and mind through the Holy Spirit the promises you have given me. Help me to overcome every lie of the enemy and know in my heart that you will never leave me nor forsake me. Father thank you for your love, grace, and mercy. Thank you that you never abandon me or give up on me, but in all things you have a purpose and plan.*

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## **Day 100**

### **You Ought To Wash One Another's Feet**

*John 13:14 AMPC*

*If I then, your Lord and Teacher (Master), have washed your feet, you ought [it is your duty, you are under obligation, you owe it] to wash one another's feet.*

Jesus has given us the example of what it truly means to be a servant. Christ didn't simply call us to humble ourselves and deny ourselves, He demonstrated this daily before the disciples. Jesus came to this earth and empty Himself of His heavenly glory. He humble Himself fully becoming a servant and fully becoming human. In all that Jesus did He relied on the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus even told us that we would not only do the same things He has done, but we would do greater things (John 14:12).

Before Jesus was to go to Calvary and give His life and fulfill the Father's will, He gave us one of the greatest examples of what it means to be a servant. The disciples were arguing among themselves who would be the greatest in the kingdom. As they are arguing, the Lord puts on the same garment of a servant and gets down and begins to wash their feet.

I am sure in the room it became very silent that you could almost hear a pin drop. The disciples began to take their eyes off themselves and simply began to focus on what Jesus was doing. Peter even told Jesus not to wash his feet, but Jesus told him unless He wash his feet that he could have no part with him. Peter being Peter then asks Jesus to not only wash his feet, but his entire body. But the purpose of this was not to bathe the disciples, but to teach them a lasting lesson on the importance of humility and service.

God has not called us to seek after titles, fame, influence, or recognition. The greatest thing we can seek after as a follower of Christ is to simply be a servant. To be willing to lay down all for the sake of the cross and to give all things to Jesus. Our aim and goal should be to bring all praise and honor to Jesus. Jesus told us in this world we would be hated, and we would have trouble but to fear not He has overcome the world. If we are simply seeking fame, influence, or title we will not be driven by our love for Jesus, but instead will be driven by our love for self. May we desire to be the servants God has called us to be and to lay down everything for the glory of the name of Jesus.

#### *Prayer*

*Father guard my heart from arrogance and pride. Guard my heart from desiring to make my name great at the expense of your name. I pray that the desire of my heart would simply be humility and service. Father shape and mold my life and prune from my life anything that would hinder your work. Lead and guide me by your Spirit. Father have your way and in everything may the name of Jesus be glorified. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!*

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