

Prayer Guide for 21-Day Fast

I believe the power of fasting as it relates to prayer is the spiritual atomic bomb that our Lord has given us to destroy the strongholds of evil and usher in a great revival and spiritual harvest around the world. -Dr. Bill Bright

Dr. Bill Bright was the founder of Campus Crusade, a parachurch organization that helps students know Christ, grow in their faith, and share Him with the world. In the description of his book, *The Coming Revival: America's Call to Fast, Pray and Seek God's Face* we read this:

Our nation is in a moral free fall and the Church for the most part is spiritually impotent. What can we do to stop the tragic decline? The only answer is to "seek God's face" through fasting and prayer.

Bill Bright died in July 2003.

But the books he wrote and the messages he preached, as he fasted and prayed for revival, continue to ring in our ears today.

In looking back at the chaos, anger, dissension and ridiculous lack of truth this past year, I believe we are closer than we've ever been to experiencing God in an extraordinary release of His power on earth.

I also agree with Bill Bright that our fasting and praying somehow, marvelously and mysteriously impact the moving of God's hand.

When we pray, we are doing what Jesus did; we are humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God and agreeing that *however He works in heaven is how we want Him to work on earth.*

But why fasting? Ron Dunn said this,

Fasting is the voluntary abstinence of satisfaction from certain physical appetites for spiritual reasons.

We are spiritual beings housed in physical bodies. One day we'll be separated from our earth suits and receive new bodies that are not as contrary to our spiritual well-being.

But for now, our spiritual selves are knit together with our physical selves. This connectivity can work for us or against us.

If, through discipline and desire, we choose to "whip our bodies into shape," we can cooperate with the Spirit of God to give our spiritual selves authority to rule over our physical selves.

But if, by laziness and lack of desire, we neglect the discipline it takes to rule over our physical selves, our never-satisfied physical appetites will quench the Spirit of God and stifle our spiritual well-being.

Fasting is a way to jump start the development of discipline that allows you to connect with God by disconnecting with the world.

For a designated time, abstain from the things of this world that give you the most physical satisfaction. Replace these things with an eagerness to hear the voice of God through Bible study and prayer. So that you can align your own desires with His.

When those hunger pains start shouting, say “NO!” to their demands and “YES!” to the divine invitation from God to live (for a bit) unfettered to this world.

Fasting is incredibly powerful, and God promises to reward us when we practice this spiritual discipline. (Matthew 6:18)

This year, we are inviting you to join our leaders at Thompson Station Church as we fast and pray for 21 days, January 10-31.

We are participating in the invitation Joel declared when he wrote,

Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God and cry out to the Lord. Joel 1:14.

I hope that as you participate in this fast, you experience God in ways you’ve never experienced Him before.

To celebrate the completion of our 21-day fasting and praying experience, we will gather together at 8AM on Sunday, January 31 in the multi-purpose room and online for a BREAK FAST where we will share what God revealed to us.

I look forward to going on this journey with you! What a sacred space God is making for us.

Crying out to the LORD with you,

Leighann McCoy

Prayer Minister at Thompson Station Church

A Practical Guide to Prayer and Fasting

Planning for the Fast

Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." Joshua 3:5 (ESV)

Pray—Spend time reading the Bible before the fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your prayers. On pages 5-6, write down your faith goals, as well as your answered prayers in 2020.

Commit—Pray about the kind of fast you will participate in and commit to it ahead of time. Do not decide day-by-day. Ask God for discipline (and grace).

Act—If you plan to fast from solid food, start eating smaller portions a few days before the fast. Avoid food high in sugar and fat. Plan to limit physical and social activities during the fast. Ask someone to be your prayer partner and support throughout the fast.

Note: Consult a physician, especially if you are pregnant, nursing, or taking medication. If your situation does not allow you to do a full fast, determine what will work best for you.

Declare your fast

Decide how you will practice the fast and commit to it now.

Fasting options:

- Water only
- Liquids only
- One meal only
- Other (consider giving up something that you enjoy such as caffeine, sugar, social media, television and other forms of online entertainment)

A fast that I have had great success with (for multiple days) is to drink a protein shake in the morning followed by vegetable juices for lunch and dinner. Include plenty of water and herbal tea throughout the day. With this fast you can continue light exercise, but please consult your physician before starting.

Since we are committing to a 21-day fast, you might also consider intermittent fasting. Fast for 16 hours and eat during 8 hours of a 24-hour day. You should be able to continue your normal exercise during a fast like this.

My fast will include: _____

While fasting

Jesus answered, It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word, that comes from the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4

Focus—Set aside time to work through the devotionals. Be ready to respond to God’s Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Pray—Join at least one other person and share prayer together. The pastors are enlisting prayer partners during the fast—perhaps you would be willing to become a prayer partner for one of our pastors or other church leaders. Pray with your spouse and your children. Feel free to make use of the Prayer Room at the church. The code to enter is 1 and 4 together, 2, 3 then enter.

Replenish—During mealtimes, read the Bible and pray instead of eating. Drink plenty of water and rest as much as you can. Be ready for temporary bouts of physical weakness and mental annoyances like impatience and irritability.

Breaking the Fast

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.' Isaiah 58:9 (ESV)

Eat—Reintroduce solid food gradually. Your body will need time to adjust to a normal diet. Start with fruits, juices, yogurt, then salad, and add more vegetables. Eat small portions throughout the day.

We will host a BREAK FAST on Sunday, January 31 at 8AM in the multi-purpose room. Be on the lookout for our registration. We will break our fast together with communion followed by a light breakfast, and spend time sharing with one another what we have heard from the LORD during the fast.

Pray—Don’t stop praying when the fast is over. Consider fasting on a routine basis (a day a week or a day a month) throughout the year. Join our ongoing Praying and Fasting team by going to the website under TSCLife.org/weareprayerpowered. Trust God’s faithfulness and timing. Know that during your fast, heaven’s gates are opening on your behalf. Carry your newfound passion for God throughout the year. Be confident that the God who hears you when you pray is the God who answers your prayers.

I am thankful to God for...

Answered prayers in 2020

List highlights, answered prayers, and lessons learned in 2020. Thank God for His faithfulness, provision, and grace this past year!

In 2021, I am believing God for...

Personal Faith Goals

Spiritual revival, Physical healing, Success in work, Rich generosity

Family

Restoration of Relationships, Salvation of loved ones

School/Career

Excellence, Advancement

Ministry

Small Group accountability and growth, Salvation of friends and neighbors, Spiritual Growth

Prayer Partner

What things does your prayer partner want you to join him/her in for prayer?

The Power of 7 Vision

7 Personal Relationships

We are asking every member of Thompson Station Church to identify 7 people who need to know Jesus personally. As you pray for these people, invite God to give you opportunities to minister to them and share God's love with them.

My 7 include:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

70 Neighborhoods

As a church, we are identifying 70 neighborhoods where we target intentional ministry neighbor-to-neighbor. We are asking that you be neighborly this year. Get to know your neighbors, contribute to the community of your neighborhood and pray for them consistently.

The neighbors whose properties touch mine are:

If you'd like to pray for your neighbors by name, become a light in our community by clicking on this link: Bless Every Home (<https://blesseveryhome.com/light/?cust=7791>) You will receive a list of 5 or 6 neighbors to pray for by name daily throughout the year.

Consider adding your children's teachers and school administrators to this list. If you'd like to participate in our God Bless Our Educators prayer and ministry emphasis throughout the rest of this school year, go to tsclife.org/prayer and sign up.

My children's teachers are:

7 Cities

We know that God wants His Church to reach into our cities. As you pray, God might put a city on your heart. This year the cities of New York, Portland and Washington D.C. have been on my mind more than before simply because they've been in the news so much. What cities has God put on your heart? Right now, we are ministering in the following places. Where might He send us next?

1. Thompson Station and Spring Hill
2. Columbia, TN
3. Cincinnati, OH
4. Las Vegas, NV
5. Hamilton, OH
6. _____
7. _____

7 Countries

We are actively engaged in partnerships in more than 7 countries already, and we want to be specific in praying for the missionaries serving in these partnerships. Please go to tsclife.org/missions and choose a missionary family to support in prayer this year. Jot their names in the space provided:

I will pray with my family for:

Serving in: _____

Use this list throughout 2021 as you seek to serve Christ in bold witness and generous love.

Spend an Hour in Prayer Every 3 days

Every 3 days of this 21-day fast, take a break from the normal daily devotions and spend an hour in prayer. If you don't have one hour to spend at one time, consider spending two 30-minute time slots or three 20-minute time slots. Use this guide and your hour will fly by!

How to Spend One Hour in Prayer

I am a person of action. It's hard for me to sit still perhaps because I wonder what I'm accomplishing when I'm not "doing" anything. So, when I was challenged to spend an hour in prayer and was taught that part of that hour would include "listening, meditating, waiting and watching" I wondered what I was "doing." But Scripture teaches the importance of those things so one summer I committed to spend an hour in prayer every morning.

At first it was hard to listen, meditate, wait and watch. I wanted to praise, sing, intercede, petition and give thanksgiving. But nevertheless, my prayer guide told me to intersperse listening, meditation, waiting and watching in between those other things so I stuck to the plan. For a little while I didn't really notice any difference in my life. But gradually, about three weeks into my prayer experiment I realized that I was calmer, I was learning to rest. My confidence in God's ability to speak to me was growing and powerful spiritual truths were penetrating the deep parts of me. I became a believer in the importance of spending an hour in prayer that includes these minutes of doing "nothing." For it was the "nothing" minutes that triggered the greater things God had for me to learn!

I created this prayer guide as a tool to use to spend an hour in prayer. Invite God to transform your life as you commit to this time with Him. Spending an hour in prayer is easier when you break it down into 5-minute segments. Here are 12 five-minute segments with Scripture guides. Read the Scripture and do the activity (praise, watching, confession, etc.) for the entire five minutes. Move on to the next activity when five minutes are done.

1st 5 minutes: Praise God for His Attributes

- Proverbs 18:10
- Psalm 7:17, 145:17 and 63:3

2nd 5 minutes: Wait in silence

- Psalm 46:10
- Psalm 27:14

- HINT: Keep a notepad handy, if your mind wanders to your “to do” list, just jot it down then concentrate on clearing your mind.

3rd 5 minutes: Confess your faults

- Psalm 51
- Psalm 139:23-24
- Confession is agreeing with God regarding your attitudes and behavior; asking sincerely for forgiveness and recognizing that He wipes your slate clean.

4th 5 minutes: Pray Scripture

- Jeremiah 23:29
- 2 Corinthians 1:20
- Choose Scripture that applies to whatever comes to mind and pray those Scriptures to God.

5th 5 minutes: Watch

- Colossians 4:2
- Hint: Ask God to heighten your awareness of evidence of His presence in your life. That summer I sat on the back porch and listened to the birds sing, the wind blow—I watched the clouds, the trees and the grass. Just be still and watch.

6th 5 minutes: Intercession (praying for others)

- I Timothy 2:1-2
- I am not normally a “list” prayer but this is where a list is handy. Pray for people you love, for leaders in your church, for people in positions of influence and for missionaries.

7th 5 minutes: Petition (personal needs)

- John 15:7
- I Peter 3:12

8th 5 minutes: Thanksgiving

- Ephesians 5:20
- I Thessalonians 5:18
- Be specific and fresh each day. (don’t just rehash the same list over and over again)

9th 5 minutes: Singing

- Psalm 100:2



- Belt it out; this is music for God's ears only using the voice He gave you. Even if you can't carry a tune, He will enjoy it. If you can carry a tune sing all the more!

10th 5 minutes: Meditate on Scripture

- Psalm 104:34
- If you're reading through the Bible this is a good place to do that. If not, this is a good time to read a passage of Scripture slowly asking God to speak to you through His Word.
- Record certain verses or what you are hearing God say.

11th 5 minutes: Listen for instruction

- I Samuel 3:9
- God speaks to you in the way He knows you think. Invite Him to speak to you in this time. Record what you hear. Learn to trust your ability to hear God's voice. As you are seeking Him know that He is also seeking you.
- Luke 19:10

12th 5 minutes: Praise God for the experience of your time together

- I John 5:14-15
- Psalm 113:3

It's as simple as that! An entire hour spent in prayer. At first it might seem regimented and disciplined but as you grow in your experience of prayer you will forget the 5-minute limits and move from one thing to the next. You might camp out longer in thanksgiving or meditating. God will bless your efforts and reward you with spiritual wisdom and insight.

Day 1: Jesus prayed daily

Read Luke 22:39-46

*And He came out and proceeded **as was His custom** to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him.*

I love that it was Jesus' custom to go to the Mount of Olives to pray. The day Jesus prayed this prayer was an ordinary day in Jesus' life and in the lives of His disciples.

Nobody wondered where they were headed after dinner.

No one suspected that anything out of the ordinary was about to happen because it *was normal* for them to go to the garden to pray!

If Jesus, who had limited time to accomplish His world impacting ministry, was committed to the routine/habit of prayer, why aren't we?

What did Jesus experience in prayer that we are missing?

Later in verse 45 we find out that if we're not all that excited about prayer, we're actually in good company. Jesus' closest friends fell asleep during the prayer time.

I love the honesty of Scripture. I love that Luke didn't leave this bit out.

If you've not yet discovered how to engage with God through prayer in a way that is exciting, interesting, dynamic and well...*engaging*...

You're going to love this 21-day journey!

When we get together at our BREAK FAST in a few weeks, it's my prayer that you have found prayer to be as vital to your life as the food you eat and the air you breathe.

Jesus had a daily habit of prayer. Let's discover what He knew.

Apply

- Is prayer a daily habit that you enjoy? If not, why not? What do you hope to learn during these next few weeks?
-

- As great as fasting is, it loses its effectiveness when we do not pray. And although it's clear in Scripture that God loves for us to start our day with Him, any time you set aside in your day for prayer is better than no time. What time every day do you hope to pray? How long do you hope to pray during these times?
-

Day 2: A Place and Posture for Prayer

Before you read the Scripture passages below, ask the Holy Spirit to help you grasp what He is saying to you so that you can apply it to your life. I also recommend that you read the passages aloud and slowly. Open your journal and get ready to write down your impressions and thoughts.

Read Luke 22:40-41

*On reaching the **place**, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation. And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He **knelt down** and began to pray."*

As we begin this journey of prayer and fasting, we learn from Jesus that he had a designated place where he prayed.

I would post a picture here if I thought it would affect you the way being there does...but it won't. When we take our trips to Israel, we visit the Mt. of Olives and because olive trees live practically forever; there is a tree in that garden that very well could've been there when Jesus went to the garden to pray.

How cool is that?!

I can actually envision Jesus looking over at Jerusalem, perched on the hillside outside the city gates, praying under the olive trees.

It seems to me that Jesus chose a very special place to pray.

If you want to experience what Jesus experienced, consider your praying place.

Perhaps it might be a place where you can glance over at the people and work that are important to you. When our son TJ was young, he enjoyed finding high places where he would go to think. One night we got a call from the sheriff's department calling Tom to come down to the church for they had found a teenager perched on the apex of the drive under just outside the worship center and he claimed to be Tom's son!

Tom assured them that it was most likely his boy; and when he got to the church TJ was in deep conversation with one of the sheriff's deputies, inviting him to worship on Sunday.

There are some good places that you might find to pray! And perhaps all your prayer life lacks is a good place!

OR a good chair.

A few years ago we invested in a good, comfy, “marshmallow” chair that became my praying place. A few months after we purchased the first chair we added another so that we could enjoy this stage of life and “Papa and Nana” could have matching marshmallow chairs.

(And to think we used to have matching running shoes!)

All that to say, the place where you pray ought to be a special place.

Choose it.

Equip it—I keep my Bible, a journal, a pen that writes, and a coaster (for my coffee) at my praying place. Round up your Bible and journal, a pen that writes and anything else you might need that will fully equip your praying place. You don’t want to miss meeting with God simply because your pen won’t write!

But not only did Jesus have a place to pray; He also took on a posture for prayer.

He knelt down and began praying...

Someone told me the other day that when we participate in yoga, the moves we do open our bodies up so that we release tension and replace it with the breath of life.

The yogis of the world know that our bodies are mysteriously capable of releasing and receiving.

Jesus must’ve known this too. For he knelt down to pray.

When you pray consider slowing down enough to get up out of that marshmallow chair and kneel down.

But don’t just kneel there—breathe.

With each inhale focus your mind on that breath being life; the very life that God breathed into Adam and Eve.

Exhale. And as you do, let go of all your worries, burdens, troubles; people and circumstances who cause you to be worried, burdened and troubled.

Apply

There is an app that I highly recommend. You can get it in the App store. It’s called PAUSE.

The PAUSE app goes with a study I completed recently of John Eldredge’s book *Get Your Life Back*.

In the app, Eldredge teaches you how to slow down long enough to enter the presence of God.

Download the PAUSE app and experience it for yourself.

Pray

- If you are physically able, kneel.
- Breathe in and concentrate on the life that is in your breath. Thank God for life.
- Exhale and release anything or anyone who's occupying space that is heavy in your heart and your mind.
- As you release your breath, consider laying down prostrate with your face to the floor and your arms outstretched.
- With your next breath, consider Who God is and what He knows. Now consider who you are and what you know.
- Profess your understanding of the vast difference between Him and you.
- Continue on from here...

Record any pertinent thoughts, Scriptures, or impressions you receive from the Holy Spirit.

Day 3: Spend an Hour in Prayer

Use the prayer guide on pp. 9-11 of this guide.

Day 4: Specific Prayers Get Specific Answers

Read Luke 22:42

Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.

When Jesus prayed, He didn't worry over methods or acrostics.

He simply opened His heart wide and let it pour out.

In this prayer, Jesus knew He was asking God to consider changing the plan. It was a plan that required excruciating pain and enormous suffering for Him.

So, in the dread of approaching events, Jesus honestly and transparently begged His Father to find another way.

Is it just me, or do you also feel like we've tiptoed into a private conversation between two obviously intimate companions?

This particular glance into Jesus' practice of prayer illustrates for us how to experience and participate in a very real, dynamic and personal relationship with God.

When Jesus begged God to "take this cup from me" He was not just asking to avoid the suffering of His physical death. The agony of His soul was related to the spiritual death He was about to experience.

Consider this. Before "in the beginning, God created," Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit existed together in perfect harmonious unity.

They were 3 in 1.

How the Trinity works exactly is simply beyond our understanding. But harmony, and unity, and living together in one-ness of mind and spirit and soul, are things that we not only understand, but also yearn to experience.

Jesus **knew** this kind of harmonious existence. And in the next few minutes He was about to be separated from His intimate connection with the Trinity.

When our sin was put on Jesus, Jesus became sin for us. Only once was the perfect harmonious relationship of our triune God broken and this was that time.

The sin Jesus bore was repulsive to God. And in the garden when He prayed this prayer, that sin was just as repulsive to Jesus.

"Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine, be done." Jesus said as He yielded to His Father's plan.

And this is where our salvation was anchored forever.

Jesus aligned His will to the will of His Father and stepped up to drink of the cup of suffering that was offered from the Father who loved Him.

Jesus's specific prayer received God's specific answer.

"Remove this cup from me,"

No.

"Yet not My will but Thine be done."

Yes.

Apply

I hope that you are being impacted by the honest and specific way that Jesus prayed.

If you're not sure how to talk to God about your concerns, do what Jesus did. Pour your heart out to your heavenly Father. Stop worrying about doing it right and just start talking.

Jesus might've gotten a "no" to His prayer, but He got a great big YES to being strengthened so that He could drink from the cup He was offered.

Pray

Specific prayers receive specific answers.

- What is bothering you most?
- What exactly do you want God to do for you in that situation or relationship?
- I have a "God's Got This!" box that sits next to my praying place. I place the "big stuff" in that box as a reminder that when I give it to God, He's got it and I need to let it stay in His capable hands. Consider making yourself a box!
- Now that God's got the big stuff, pause a minute. Give yourself to God and invite Him to use you to love and share Jesus with someone you know. Who comes to mind?
- Use the space below to record what you have heard God say to you today.

Day 5: The Secret to Making Prayer Work

Read Luke 22:42

Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.

There are ironies in the Christian life and one of the biggest is this: those who have the most faith are those who will most likely wrestle most with unanswered prayers.

We have several examples of prayers Jesus prayed chronicled throughout the gospels. There's not a single time that Jesus didn't get what He asked for--until we come to this prayer.

Jesus told us why it worked this way for Him.

So, Jesus explained, *I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. John 5:19*

And again, in John 5:30,

I can do nothing by Myself; I judge only as I hear. And My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Here, nestled in John chapter 5 we discover the secret to making prayer work: Seeing and doing what the Father does; as well as aligning our minds (judgement) and hearts (will) with our Father's mind and heart.

When we agree with God with our minds and our hearts...our prayers will work.

Doesn't John 5:30 sound an awful lot like Luke 22:42?

I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Yet not My will, but Thine be done.

I may be the only scoffer I'm writing to this morning, but if I'm completely honest with you I have to confess that a part of me wants to harumph and exclaim, "Well of course it works that way! And if God's going to do what God wants to do anyway, what's the point in praying?!"

Let's take an analytical look at my "harumph."

"If God's going to do what God wants to do anyway..."

1. Is God going to do what God wants to do even if we don't pray? (I googled Scripture that proves God answers prayer, and the first article to come up was MINE! 😊 Read these 20 verses and you decide.)

<https://www.leighannmccoy.com/blog/20-bible-verses-that-assure-you-god-answers-prayer>

2. When you pray, are you trying to get God to do what He doesn't want to do? If so, have you decided that you know better than Him? Check out Isaiah 40 and Job 38.)

Jesus gave us the secret to making prayer work: Ask according to His will.

The prayer Jesus prayed asking His Father to take the cup away was answered “no.” But it wasn’t a “NO!” with a stern rebuke and righteous indignation that Jesus would even hint as such a thing!

It was answered with an agonizing, deeply suffering nod of His divine head that held Jesus’ gaze in His compassionate eyes and embraced His tear-stained cheeks in His capable and loving hands.

The prayer Jesus prayed, “not my will but Thine be done” was answered “yes.” Not with a glad back-slapping *atta-boy* exclamation! But with tremendous tenderness in His eyes that reflected on the harmonious one-ness they’d shared from before the beginning, I picture Jesus’ loving heavenly Father with a tear sliding down His cheek, slightly nodding His head then bowing it in resolve that said, “For what we have to gain; I am willing to send You forth.”

I picture 10,000 angels held at bay with their swords unsheathed postured ready to rush. And then just a few, dearly trusted angel warriors handpicked to minister strengthening to Jesus for a precious few minutes before even they would be called back and forced to keep their distance as the cup of divine suffering poured out.

And ever since that moment in time, all of heaven and earth has been affected by the tremendous answer to Jesus’ perfect prayer.

The secret to making prayer work is to ask for and accept whatever is in the mind and heart of our Lord God Almighty.

Apply

Praying in the Spirit is as easy as breathing:

Because I’ve had cancer, I’m familiar with the CT scan. When you have a CT scan, you lay on a shelf, and ride in and out of a circle of cameras that scan your innards. As you ride through the circle, the machine speaks aloud (in words that you can understand),

“Breathe in”

“Hold your breath”

And just when you begin wondering if you might pass out, the machine then says, “Breathe.”

Prayer in the Spirit, is like spiritual breathing. Paul and Jude encouraged believers to pray in the Spirit. They were inviting them to heighten their awareness of the Spirit’s nudge to take the time to pray. And they were exhorting them to pay heed to the Spirit’s direction in their prayers. In other words, quiet yourself when you enter your prayer closet and let the Spirit of God tell you when to breathe.

“Breathe in” thoughts focused on the majesty, power, love and wonder of God.

“Hold your breath.” As you ponder those thoughts let them adjust your perspective on whatever concerns you have.

Then, “breathe.” Exhale your praise and worship for your Mighty God.

“Breathe in” His heart and mind. Remember that the best way to know the heart and mind of God is by reading His Word.

“Breathe.” Exhale your requests as you allow the Word of God to adjust your petitions to line up with His best.

“Breathe in” the assurance that God hears you when you pray.

“Hold your breath.” Let the Spirit immerse you in peace.

“Breathe” knowing that whatever you’ve prayed is now secure in His hands.

Whether you breathe in a language with words that you understand, or in a language indiscernible to your human ears isn’t nearly as important as whether you have yielded your limited understanding to God’s magnificent knowledge and have submitted your lesser agenda to His much better ideas.

If you would like some help praying through to God’s answers, visit us at the Prayer Clinic! You can come by the prayer room on campus on Sunday mornings or submit your prayer request online [HERE](#).

Pray

Ask God to pray through you the things that His heart desires as you consider the situations that cause you the most concern.

Pray for the family members and friends who don’t know Jesus as intimately as you know Him. Ask for God to give you boldness, discernment and opportunity to share your faith with them.

Pray for the Pastor who leads the ministry you serve.

How is your fast going? Prayerfully consider joining our Prayer and Fasting team who continue to fast and pray a day a week/month to focus on the private prayer requests of our pastors. You can join our ongoing Prayer and Fasting team here: <https://tsc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/200336>

Record what you hear God saying to you today:

Day 6: Spend an Hour in Prayer

Use the prayer guide on pp. 9-11 of this guide.

Day 7: Is Your Faith Maturing?

Read Colossians 1:3-8

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints. Colossians 1:3-4

Paul was greeting the church at Colossae with this tremendous praise. If he were to walk into your home today and share dinner around the table with your family, would his greeting be the same?

What if he showed up at your next group gathering, would Paul be delighted with how well you've loved on each other this year?

What if he were to come annually? Would he praise the progress you've made in your faith? Would he note significant advance in your spiritual maturity?

When you hear the sermon today, you're going to hear this definition of faith:

faith (pis-tis): conviction, confidence, trust, belief. In the NT setting, pistis is the divinely implanted principle of inward confidence, assurance, trust, and reliance in God and all that God says.

Today is a great day to ask this question: Am I growing in my faith?

Apply

Today is Sunday. When you participate in worship today, take notes on the message. Jot down anything you sense the Holy Spirit saying to you during this time:

If you haven't already done so, join our ongoing Prayer and Fasting team today! Throughout this year we will keep you updated with the Pastor's private prayer list. Join the Prayer and Fasting team by clicking on this link: <https://tsc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/200336>

Pray

What are some specific things you can do in 2021 to grow in your faith? How might you express your faith better in your home? At your work? As a participating member of our church? Jot down what you hear God saying to you:

Day 8: Love in action is faith expressed

Read Colossians 1:4-5 and Hebrews 11:1

because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints, the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel. Colossians 1:4-5

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1

The world is watching us. And as they watch, they make observations regarding our claims that each of us has our own personal relationship with God.

They interpret the value of this unique relationship we have with God by paying close attention to the way we treat each other.

When they see us exercising the fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) they see that the relationship we profess to have with God actually *makes a profound difference* in our lives.

When they don't see us exercising the fruits of the Spirit, they don't see that the relationship we profess to have with God makes any difference at all!

Love in action is faith expressed.

In other words, your love for one another is a testimony!

The love you demonstrate with people *in our church*, illustrates the gospel at work in your life. Forgiving a fellow believer who claims to follow Jesus IS witnessing.

Restoring fellowship with a family member or friend who shares faith in Jesus IS an expression of your faith in Christ.

For this reason, work hard to be at peace with every other believer you know.

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Romans 12:18

Apply

Does anyone come to your mind as you read this devotion? Is there any reason why you might not connect with that person today and do whatever you can to invite peace in your relationship with them?

Pray

The very best starting point for living in peace with everyone is to pray specifically for anyone you're not "at peace" with. Ask God to bless them in their relationships, in their finances and in their spiritual, emotional and physical well-being.

Pray for whomever comes to your mind right now. Write down what you are hearing God say regarding the way you're loving the people who share your faith.

Day 9: Spend an Hour in Prayer

Use the prayer guide on pp. 9-11.

Day 10: Bearing Fruit in Every Good Work

Read Colossians 1:10

And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Just as love in action is faith expressed, so bearing fruit in every good work is the path to growing in your knowledge of God.

What you DO impacts the ongoing development of your spiritual maturity.

You might say to me, “Isn’t my faith about what I believe?”

And I would respond that it is! And what you believe will impact the way you think.

The way you think will impact the way you feel.

And the way you feel will impact what you do.

THEN, to complete the circle, what you do will lead you toward growing in your knowledge of God.

The Christian faith journey is a walk-through life accompanied by the presence and authority of God. As you yield your independence to His instructions (the ones that are written in the Bible), you grow to know God *in your experiences*.

When we go about our daily lives, doing good, upright and honorable things, doing whatever we do at work, at home, or at the ballpark, we are to be bearing fruit for the Lord.

Sharing Christ's love,

encouraging the discouraged,

ministering to the hurting,

and witnessing to the lost.

These are good fruits that will pave the way for your experiential knowledge of God to increase. If you want to be more mature next year than you are today, bear fruit in every good work.

Apply

How often are you reading the Bible?

When you have decisions to make, where do you look for direction?

Do you know how to hear the voice of God?

Pray

Ask God what adjustments He would like you to make in your life so that you are bearing fruit in every good work. What do you hear Him saying?

At Thompson Station Church we believe that you are on your healthiest spiritual journey when you worship, connect and serve each week. Just as proper nutrition, consistent exercise and good sleep are the components to your physical well-being; so then are the disciplines that pave the way for your most abundant life.

- worshipping together
- connecting with other believers through groups
- and serving both in and beyond the church

Do you worship, connect and serve weekly? If not, will you start now? What goal(s) do you have for your spiritual growth?

Day 11: Power in Prayer

Read Colossians 1:10-11

being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience...

Have you ever spent time with someone who was so positive, so encouraging, so full of faith and confidence that you would literally go with them anywhere?!

I had a friend like that. At a particularly low point in my life, she literally walked into the room and I broke down in tears I was so glad to see her.

Until that moment I didn't realize how much *the power of Christ in her* impacted me!

When you spend time with positive, encouraging and faith-filled people your faith increases and your strength expands. There's exchange of power in the relationship!

Prayer is drawing near to God and soaking in His power.

When your sin separated you from God, you were powerless; cut off from the generous flow of His glorious riches.

You were weak and utterly defeated.

But with Jesus as your Savior, you've been born again!

And in this new life that you have in Christ, you have a personal relationship with Him and full access to the power that He is eager to share with you!

Say this out loud: "I AM A CHILD OF GOD!"

Everything that is in Christ is now available to you.

If you are a believer; a follower of Jesus Christ, and you are living a struggling, defeated life, it is because you have not appropriated the power of Christ that already resides in you by virtue of the fact that you are a child of God.

You appropriate this power through prayer.

This...is the truth the devil doesn't want you to know!

Apply:

There's a meme I love. It's the picture of a little kitten with the caption, "Going into my prayer room." Just below the kitten there is a picture of a lion with the caption, "Coming out of my prayer room."

If you don't feel this way when you leave your prayer room, try adding this to your prayer time.

Confession.

Confession is simply agreeing with God that He’s always right and that you desire to yield your mind and heart to His wisdom, authority and love in every situation you face.

Pray:

Pray something like this:

LORD, I trust You.

I choose to give everyone and everything to You. (I learned this prayer phrase from John Eldredge in his book Get Your Life Back. I highly recommend that you download his free app called Pause.)

Whatever You choose to do (or not do), I choose to rest in the confident understanding that You are in control, and that You are working.

Even when I don’t see You, You are working.

I confess that I’ve demonstrated a lack of trust by ...

Please forgive me for behaving as if I know better than You.

Thank You for the truth of Your Word.

Thank You that even now I am being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that I may have great endurance and patience.

What is God saying to you now?

Day 12: Spend an Hour in Prayer

Use the prayer guide on pp. 9-11.

Day 13: Prayer is Warfare

Content of this devotion is taken from pp. 66-70 in Ron Dunn's book *Don't Just Stand There, Pray Something!*

Read Ephesians 6:13-17

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Ephesians 6:13

When I think of power, I think of victory. And when I think of victory, I think of the victory we have when we pray.

Paul tells us what we need to live power FULL lives in these verses.

Now let's follow Paul closely. First, he tells us that there really is a war, a spiritual war, requiring spiritual equipment.

Then he tells us to suit up for the fight—put on the whole armor of God (so that we show up on the battlefield confident and ready), then arm ourselves with (the only offensive weapon we need) the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God (Bible)!

All right, here I am, Paul; I'm dressed and ready to go.

I have on the helmet of salvation; I'm holding this big body shield of faith; the belt of truth is buckled tightly to support me and hold the other pieces of armor in place. My feet are shod with the readiness to obey God; I've got the sword.

Now where's the war? I'm ready to fight; point me in the direction of the battle.

And he does: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication" (verse 18).

Is he serious? I've made intense preparation, I'm wearing an iron suit that weighs a ton and am wielding this giant sword, and what does Paul tell me to do?

Pray.

Go back to verse 14. It begins with the command, "stand," which is the key word in the whole passage. After the command to "stand," the rest of verse 14 and all of verses 15 through 17 are parenthetical. We come back to the main track at verse 18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication." Drop everything between the "therefore" of verse 14 and the "praying" of verse 18, and you have:

"Stand, therefore, praying with all prayer and supplication."

Prayer is the warfare.

It is the battlefield upon which the spiritual war is waged.

The battle is won or lost here.

Apply

In the movie *War Room*, Miss Clara fought her battles in a tiny room that looked a lot like an ordinary closet. In that room she went to battle for the people who came into her life. And she proved to be a mighty victor in those battles!

Do you have a war room? Is there a specific place where you go to do battle?

Do you have tools in your war room?

Get yourself a package of sticky notes and begin to practice post-it-note warfare. Find promises in the Bible that pertain to your circumstances and print those promises on those notes.

Now take those notes and place them where you will see them often. Some suggested places might be: your bathroom mirror, refrigerator, steering wheel, or remote.

Don't forget that we have a literal war room at the church. The Prayer Room is open and accessible 24-7. You are welcome to go there anytime day or night. The entrance is on the Thompson Station Road, side of the B (worship center) building. You can use this code to enter the room from the outside entrance. 1 / 4 (press at the same time), 2, 3 then ENTER.

Pray

Pray on your armor like this:

Father God, Lord of heaven's armies, and supreme Ruler of all creation,

I choose to serve as a faithful soldier in Your army today.

As I prepare to enter the battlefield, I put on the helmet of salvation.

Thank You Jesus for making the way for me to be in a personal relationship with the Almighty LORD of the universe. With this helmet I am protected from false teaching, deception and other attempted invasions of my mind from the enemy.

I am wrapping the belt of truth around my waist and buckling the breastplate of righteousness to my chest.

Jesus, thank You again for cleansing me of all unrighteousness so that I can stand approved in the presence of a holy and righteous King. With the belt of truth, I will march out onto the battlefield today being guided and directed by Truth in my "knower." My "gut-instinct" is surrendered to Your Lordship so I know I can trust it.

I am ready! My feet are shod with the beautiful gospel of Christ and I will proclaim Your message to everyone I encounter today through both my actions and my verbal testimony.

With the sword of Your Word I can destroy every stronghold that rises against me. I declare victory in the Name of the Lord God Almighty and trust You will accomplish Your will in and through me today.

Amen.

Day 14: The Secret Weapon

Content of this devotion is taken from pp. 66-70 in Ron Dunn's book *Don't Just Stand There, Pray Something!*

Before we ever step onto the battlefield of preaching or teaching or witnessing, the outcome has already been determined on the battlefield of prayer.

This is vividly portrayed in Exodus 17:8-13.

The Israelites meet Amalek in the Valley of Rephidim, he blocks the path of Israel and says, "This is as far as you go. If you go any farther, it will be over my dead body."

Moses says to Joshua, "Get your men and go down into the valley and fight Amalek, and I'll get on top of the mountain and hold up the rod of God."

I think if I had been Joshua, I might have said, "Moses, I've got a better idea. *You go* down into the valley and *I'll* get up on the mountains."

But Joshua follows Moses' orders and fights Amalek in the valley.

Meanwhile, Moses is on the mountain, with the rod of God, and a strange thing happens.

When Moses holds up the rod, Joshua prevails; when he lowers the rod, Amalek prevails.

Like a symphonic orchestra, the battle follows the baton of the maestro. After a while Moses tires and his hands become lead weights. On the mountain, the rod of God sinks, and in the valley, Amalek prevails.

Aaron and Hur, with Moses on the mountain, find a stone for Moses to sit on; then, one standing on each side of him, they hold up Moses' hands "until the going down of the sun," and Joshua prevails.

I love the understatement of the King James Version: "Joshua *discomfited* Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." (Exodus 17:13, emphasis added.)

Discomfited was a kind way of saying *ANNIHILATED!*

But don't miss the main point here. Where was the battle decided?

In the valley with Joshua?

No, it was decided on the mountain with Moses.

The victory in the valley is won by the intercession on the mountain.

The church could win more battles in the valley if it had more intercessors on the mountain lifting high the rod of God, the name of Jesus.

The battle for lost souls is won by prayer and intercession.

Prayer is the warfare.

Evangelism is not the attempt to win the battle—it is the mopping-up operation.

The physical possessions of the church, the buildings, organizations and programs are the trucks we drive onto the field of battle to load up the spoils of the victory won by intercession.

Intercession is the secret weapon of the [kingdom of God].

Apply

What battles are you facing today? Do you trust God enough to allow Him to win them? Will you give those battles to the LORD today? Who doesn't know Jesus the way you know Him? Will you pray for his/her eyes and ears to be open?

Choose a promise from the Bible that speaks directly to your battle. If you need help finding a verse that applies to your situation, check out the resources section of our prayer page on the website or app.

Pray

What if prayer is as simple as getting on your knees and crying out, "Help!"? Claim your victory today and invite God to fill you with the certainty of knowing you've got this battle won.

Day 15: Spend an Hour in Prayer

Use the prayer guide on pp. 9-11.

Day 16: Have Faith in God

Read Mark 11:12-24 and 19-26

“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered.

Most everyone has faith in something.

Some people have faith in themselves.

Others have faith in their family heritage.

This past year it seems that many people put their faith in the person who sits in the oval office and those that serve in government.

There are people in our society who have placed their faith in the belief that people are inherently good, and that utopia can be achieved on earth.

People seem to be hardwired to have faith.

Jesus said to “have faith in God.”

He emphasized the object of our faith rather than faith itself. Perhaps that is because Jesus knew that it’s human to have faith.

Faith would come naturally. Faith in God would need to be a decision of the will with effort on the part of the mind and spirit.

Jesus also knew that the devil would prowl about looking for ways to distort, displace and destroy our faith in God.

The devil’s been far too successful.

Abraham is such a great example of a man who had faith in God. He holds his position in the faith chapter of fame (Hebrews 11) mostly because of how strong his faith had become.

Ironically, it’s because Abraham lived for many years in between the promise of God and the fulfillment of that promise that his faith is used as an example of how we ought also to believe.

When we put our faith in God we win.

But to put our faith in God we need to know Him. We need to know His character and His desires. We need to become intimately acquainted with the ways that He works, and the values He holds dear.

We learn these things the same way Abraham learned them; by looking to Him in the “mean-time.” (That’s the in between time of life that comes when God’s given you a promise but has yet to fulfill it.)

When you read the Bible and pray, you are developing your faith in God. And when you put your faith in God, **whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.**

Apply

Today's devotion could easily tip over into a "name-it and claim-it" kind of theology if we're not careful.

But you simply can't read the Bible and think for one minute that God's decided to give the ruling of the Universe over to us.

He's not a genie and we're not Anthony (remember the astronaut who dreamed of Jeanie?!)

Consider the challenge we have before us. With faith in God, *whatever we ask for in prayer, believing that we've received it—it will be ours.*

There are some things we know align with the heart of God.

The salvation of souls.

Alleviating suffering.

Generosity toward the poor.

All of these things and so much more reflect the work God wants us to participate in. When we pray for these things, we can be confident God will deliver them.

Take a look at your prayer list. Highlight the items on your list that certainly align with the heart and mind of God.

Consider these things done and begin to praise God for the answers that are on their way to fruition. (Also keep in mind that God's answers often come with invitations for you to participate in the process.)

Pray

Take a look at the other things on your prayer list and consider praying something like this:

Father in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

I give these things to You and ask that You work in my mind and my heart so that I will want what You want in each of these circumstances/lives.

Give me insight and understanding.

Give me courage if You're waiting on me to do something brave.

Be glorified in everything I'm placing before You this day.

Amen.

Day 17: Praying for the Lost (Part 1)

Read I John 5:14-15, 2 Peter 3:9 and I Timothy 2:4

The will of God is clearly stated in these verses.

Christ's death on the cross established the fact that God is not willing that any should perish.

When we pray for the lost to be saved, we are praying within the revealed will of God.

God has always used intercessors to achieve His will. Intercession has postponed, even prevented, the wrath of God from coming upon an individual or a nation.

The four men who lowered their crippled friend through the ceiling to get him to Jesus were "intercessors." The Bible says:

When [Jesus] saw their faith, He said unto [the man sick of the palsy], 'Man, your sins are forgiven you.'
Luke 5:20.

Jesus saw *their* faith. Whether the sick man had faith is not mentioned. It was the faith of his friends that secured the healing.

The simple, yet profound fact is that God responds to prayer.

Because we pray, He does things that He would not otherwise do.

That God would place such an incomparable privilege and responsibility in our hands is past understanding—but He has done just that.

Through intercession we can become the instrument of salvation to men and women we never see face to face in this life. We can become, in one moment, a missionary to the farthest corners of the earth. With the arm of intercession, we can embrace the world and lift it to God in prayer.

But perhaps even more exciting is that we can become the instrument of salvation to our own family members, friends and neighbors.

Here are some things that will help us as we pray for people we know and those we don't know.

The Condition of the Sinner

- 1. The lost person is bound by the god of this world.** Whether we evangelize through preaching or through praying, we must reckon with this fact. Let's look at some relevant passages.

"With gentleness he must correct his opponents, for God might grant them repentance that would lead them to a full knowledge of the truth, and they might recover their senses and escape from the devil's trap in which they have been caught by him to do his will." (2 Timothy 2:25,27, WILLIAMS, emphasis added).

Men have been “taken alive” (the meaning of the Greek verb) by Satan, and as his captives they are slaves to his will. The only hope for them is that God may grant them repentance.

Paul writes, “In which you once walked according to the course of this world, *according to the prince of the power of the air*, the spirit who now *works in the sons of disobedience* (Ephesians 2:2, emphasis added).

The word translated “work” here is literally “energizes,” and is used elsewhere for the Holy Spirit’s activity in the believer.

The unsaved person is energized by the spirit of the devil.

Of course, a lost person doesn’t know that, and certainly would not admit it if he did. He thinks he is free (that’s part of his lostness), but in truth, his course of action is dictated by the prince of the power of the air.

And in I John: “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (5:19, NAS).

Forgive me if I sound like a dictionary, but the Greek verse translated “lies” conveys the picture of a mother cradling her baby in her arms and rocking it to sleep.

That is a vivid picture of the lost; cradled in the arms of Satan, helplessly and hopelessly bring lulled to sleep.

Jesus said, “When a strong man well-armed keeps guard over his dwelling, his property is secure. But when a man stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he strips him of all his arms on which he relied, and distributes his goods as spoils (Luke 11:21,22 WILLIAMS).

In this passage Jesus is answering the charge that He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons (Luke 11:14).

Two things are especially noteworthy in Jesus’ reply:

First, men are described as the property of Satan, who stands guard over them lest they should escape; and

Second, before He can free the captives, Jesus must first deal with the captor, Satan, and disarm him.

In praying for a lost person, we are not forcing the person’s will—we are *freeing* his will from the bondage of Satan.

Apply

List the names of the people you know who are held captive to the prince of this world. Commit now to pray for each of these people until they are saved/rescued and restored to their freedom in Christ.

Want some powerful reinforcement as you pray for your family members and friends? Consider visiting the Prayer Clinic and inviting our trained prayer partners to pray with you until God answers. Come by the prayer room on Sunday mornings or click here to submit your prayer request online:

<https://form.jotform.com/200766010840041>

Pray

Pray for us as a church to penetrate the darkness this year by interceding for each person God's given to each member of this church.

Consider praying something like this for the people on your list:

Lord, I believe that Jesus took down the "strong man" when He died on the cross and raised from the dead. I know You are Ruler of the Universe and that You've made the way for us to be in relationship with You.

Give (name) eyes to see and ears to hear.

Send a messenger, someone they will hear.

Let me be a messenger that someone else is praying that You'll send.

Give us boldness and discernment so that we will know what to say when.

Open the eyes of their hearts, LORD, so that they will know You and accept Your lavish gift of salvation and eternal life.

I love you and am so grateful that You are hearing and answering this prayer even now.

Amen.

Day 18: Spend an Hour in Prayer

Use the prayer guide on pp. 9-11.

Day 19: Praying for the Lost (part 2)

Content from pp. 121-123 in *Don't Just Stand There, Pray Something!*

Read 2 Corinthians 4:3,4 and I Corinthians 2:14

Yesterday we discussed the condition of the sinner and determined that:

- 1. The lost person is bound by the god of this world.**

Today we continue this conversation.

- 2. The lost person is blinded to the gospel by the god of this world.** Listen to Paul: “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, *whose minds the god of this age has blinded*, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them (2 Corinthians 4:2,3, emphasis added).

An unsaved person does not have the capacity to see himself as a lost sinner or to understand the gospel message. He has been blinded spiritually by Satan. Paul tells us that “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (I Corinthians 2:14).

No amount of human power, logic, or argument can penetrate the darkness of the unsaved mind.

We cannot explain the way of salvation simply enough for him to believe. The devil doesn't have to make a drunkard or a murderer of a person to keep him from being saved. He only has to keep him blind to the gospel of Christ.

- 3. Before any person can be saved, this (1) binding and (2) blinding of the devil must be overcome.** There must be emancipation and enlightenment. As we saw earlier, Jesus first had to deal with the devil before He could free the captives.

This leads to the next truth we should understand in praying for the lost:

The Conquest of Satan

The devil is a defeated enemy. The New Testament clearly teaches that his defeat is twofold. First it is absolute. We've already seen in Luke 11 that Jesus has bound the strong man, the devil. Other helpful passages are Hebrews 2:14,15, I John 3:8 and Colossians 2:14,15.

The language of the Colossians verse is taken from the victory march of the conquering Roman generals. After defeating an enemy, the victorious commander would chain the officers of the defeated army to his chariot and drag them back to Rome. He would send a runner ahead to announce to the city that the victory had been won, and the people would line the streets awaiting the spectacle.

Finally, the triumphant train entered the city, trumpets blaring, citizens cheering, garlands streaming, the conquering hero in his chariot drawn by magnificent white stallions. Trailing behind, chained to the chariot that was moving slightly faster than they could run, were the leaders of the defeated army—stumbling, falling, being dragged in the dust. The victor not only crushed his enemies, but he also made a public spectacle of them.

When Jesus died on the cross, He defeated Satan and all his thugs, and when He burst forth from the grave, He made a public spectacle of them. Satan’s defeat is absolute.

Apply

If these lessons resonate with you and you’d like to learn more about how you can effectively and powerfully pray for the lost, consider following these 21 days with an online course I created with my friend Jennifer Kennedy Dean (who died in June 2019). You will love this 21-day study as it breaks down how all of these truths work together.

You can access the “Praying for the Lost” course here:

<https://www.leighannmccoy.com/store/J4V4tgUG>

Pray

Consider the victory Jesus won on the cross. Underline Colossians 2:14,15 in your Bible and thank God for making a spectacle of the devil and his demons.

Recognize that the people you are praying for are being held captive by a defeated enemy.

Pray something like this:

LORD, thank You for the salvation You are bringing to (name) in response to my prayers.

Thank You for the conversations and encounters (name) will have that are divinely appointed.

I praise You for the thoughts that are being guided and directed by Truth.

Give (name) a hunger for Your Word and a Bible nearby. Compel them to read Scripture and hear Your voice.

Oh God, please reveal Truth to (name) and let him/her see through the deception of the enemy.

In Jesus’ Powerful and Loving name I pray.

Amen

Day 20: Praying for the Lost (part 3)

Content from pp. 123-127

Read Matthew 18:18, James 4:17, I John 2:1-2, John 3:17,18 and Revelation 20:13, 15

Well, you may ask, “If Jesus death on the cross defeated Satan and all his thugs, and He made a public spectacle out of them, then why do I have such a hard time with him?”

If the devil is chained, he either has a mighty long chain or he’s chained to me.

Has anyone informed Satan of his defeat? He acts like he doesn’t know it.’

That’s a good question, and there is a good answer.

Although Satan’s defeat is absolute, for the time being—until God brings down the curtain on history—the second thing about his defeat is that it must be appropriated.

This is true of everything God has done for us through Christ. What God has made available, we must appropriate.

Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Matthew 18:18

We are to take our cue from heaven.

Whatever has already been bound in heaven, we may bind on earth; whatever has already been loosed in heaven, we may loose on earth.

We are to see things from heaven’s viewpoint.

Now, from heaven’s viewpoint, has Satan been bound? Yes. From heaven’s viewpoint, have slaves of Satan been loosed?

Yes. Absolutely.

James provides a perfect illustration for this: “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

Now, let’s catch up with ourselves. So far, we have said the unsaved are bound in slavery and blind to the gospel, and that it is the devil who has done this.

Therefore, before any person can be saved, he must first be emancipated and enlightened. That is now possible because the devil, who has bound and blinded that person, has been defeated by Christ and rendered powerless. That brings us to...

The Cross of Christ

The atonement of Christ is the main pillar upon which intercession rests.

Read I John 2:1-2.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. NASB

Propitiation means “atoning sacrifice” or “covering.”

On the cross, Jesus covered our sins with His blood, and not our sins only, but also those of the whole world.

He is the “Lamb of God” who takes away the sin of the whole world!” (John 1:29)

Men do not go to hell because of their sins; they go because they reject the atonement made by Christ. (read John 3:17-18)

Why is the lost person condemned?

Is it because he steals, curses, or gets drunk?

No.

He is not condemned by what he has done, he is condemned by what he has not done.

He has not believed.

In the Revelation we find a picture of the final judgment of the unsaved dead.

And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them; and they were judged, each one of them according to their deeds. ¹⁵ And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:13,15 NASB

Observe that while the unsaved dead are judged according to their works, they are not cast into the lake of fire because of their works.

The book of works is opened to prove their need of salvation.

They are cast into the lake of fire because of what was not written in the Book of Life—their names.

Regardless of how bad their record was, if their names had been written in the Book of Life, they would have escaped the eternal punishment.

Our right to pray for the lost is based on the fact that Christ has already paid for their sin with His blood. We are claiming what is rightly His.

Apply

When you pray for the lost (or those who’ve lost their way), you are loosing what has already been loosed in heaven.

You are binding what has already been bound in heaven.

When you pray for (look at your list of names), you are executing heaven’s glorious riches into their lives *and God is glorified, for these are the ones He died to save.*

Pray

Consider keeping a journal with a page for each person you are praying to be saved. Update the journal entries as God responds to your prayers.

Celebrate each one that God saves.

Pray for the lost you know personally. Pray for the lost who live in your neighborhood. If you'd like to pray for your neighbors by name, become a light in our community by clicking on this link: Bless Every Home (<https://blesseveryhome.com/light/?cust=7791>) You will receive a list of 5 or 6 neighbors to pray for by name daily throughout the year.

Pray for the lost who live in the cities where we have planted churches and those God has put on your heart.

Pray for the lost in every nation. Ask God to assign you one nation, one people group or one missionary you can pray for this year. Consider choosing one of ours. Please go to <https://tsclife.org/missions> and write a letter of encouragement to one of our Missionaries or choose a family to pray for during 2021.

Jot down some verses from these lessons that assure you these prayers will be answered. And thank God for being faithful to His Word to perform it.

Day 21: Spend an Hour in Prayer

Use the prayer guide on pp. 9-11.

If you haven't already, consider joining our ongoing Prayer and Fasting team:

<https://tsc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/200336>