

A woman with blonde hair and a nose ring is smiling as she looks at a photo album with two young girls. The girl on the left has braided hair, and the girl on the right is wearing a blue shirt. They are all looking down at the photos in the album. The scene is dimly lit, with the focus on the family's interaction.

# together

a family devotion





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***TOGETHER: A Family Devotion***

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Edited by Jerry Welch & Kirsten Barak

Layout by Taylor Easley

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# Introduction

Our identity is often wrapped up in who we are in relation to our family. We start out as sons and daughters; we are brothers and sisters. As we grow we become single adults; some of us become husbands and wives, parents, grandparents, and so on. While these relationships are important, they should not be what defines us. Ultimately, Christ defines who we are.

So often in life, we long for the next stage. As kids we want to be teenagers. As teenagers we can't wait to go to college. As college students we are eager to start life. As singles we want to get married. Marriage often leads to the desire to have kids. New parents are ready to get out of the diaper stage. Then we are ready to get out of the constant carpool stage. Later we are glad the kids are growing up, but we want them to make their own decisions. If we are not careful, we will not enjoy the stage God has us in because we are so busy longing for the next one.

When we first become parents our instinct is to hold. We hold the newborn in our arms and provide safety, security, and nourishment. We hold him to put him to sleep or we hold her as she is drinking a bottle. As he or she grows up, we hold our child to comfort him when he scrapes his knee or to console her when she feels sad. But our task as parents throughout each moment of holding is to prepare to release. God has designed the parenting task to culminate in sending out each child into the world. Meanwhile, we pray and prepare for that day.

This 30-day journey is intended for all members of the family whether you are a parent holding on, a child eager to be launched, a single adult, or a grandparent. Together we will walk through Scripture, pray, and take small action steps each day to contentedly live out the gospel in our current stage of life.

When you read the word "family" throughout this month, consider how it applies to your immediate family and also to the family of God.



# Day 1

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*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us  
our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**1 John 1:9**

Why would a book about the family begin with a passage of Scripture regarding confession of sin? Because we are all sinners! The truth of the matter is, as much as we would like to be good parents or obedient kids, our lives rely completely on the grace of God. We ought to be ones who are quick to seek forgiveness from our Heavenly Father.

I am not sure what sins you need to confess, but I am sure you have some that need confessing. We ALL do! Consider both sins of commission and sins of omission. Sins of commission are the sins in your life that you are doing that you know you should not be doing. Sins of omission are the sins in your life in which you are not doing what you know you ought to do.

Take a few minutes to write down some of your sins on strips of paper. Then pray asking God to forgive you and to help you make plans to completely repent (turn away from) the sins. Write down some action steps you need to take. Pray again, asking God to give you the ability to start some new actions of faithfulness to Him. Then throw the pieces of paper away as a demonstration of your confidence that the Lord has forgiven you.

# Day 2

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*Unless the Lord builds the house,  
those who build it labor in vain.  
Unless the Lord watches over the city,  
the watchman stays awake in vain.*  
**Psalm 127:1**

Alarm clocks, bathing, changing, cooking, feeding, dressing, teaching, explaining, driving, showing, helping, disciplining, laughing, loving, crying, hoping, dreaming and so on.... These are words that describe the incredible work of a parent. However, this passage today reminds us that no matter how hard we work, unless the Lord does the heavy lifting we will strive and work in vain.

Over this next month we will seek to learn how to prepare our kids to be released into the world. Step one is to trust in the Lord. Rest in His plan for your kids. If you try to do it on your own, you will fail.

Maybe you have already passed the stage of parenting or maybe you are not there yet. No matter the stage of life you find yourself in, you cannot make it on your own. Rest in God's plan for where you are. If you are a single adult without kids, this verse reminds us that though we may feel self-sufficient, we can do nothing apart from the Lord's help.

What plans have you made without consulting the Lord? What are you trying to do on your own without the Lord's help? Pray confessing your sins of self-righteousness and self-sufficiency. Thank God that He is able to do all things through you. Ask Him for the ability to trust His plans and to walk in His ways.



# Day 3

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*It is in vain that you rise up early  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of anxious toil;  
for he gives to his beloved sleep.*  
**Psalm 127:2**

You can not do this alone! If the first verse in Psalm 127 did not make that clear enough for us, the second verse does. You can get up early, and you can stay up late; you can bake the bread, clean the counters, scrub the floors, wash the laundry, wash the dishes, and get all the work done; but it is all in vain if you think you've got it all under your own control.

When you live like this it is as though you are a hamster on a wheel – moving fast but getting nowhere. Don't hear what I am not saying. I am not saying be lazy, don't get up early, and don't stay up late. I am saying begin each morning trusting that the Lord will give you the energy and stamina you need to make it through the day. I am saying lay your head on your pillow each night confident that God is in control and that the work you put in that day was pleasing to Him.

I realize these things are often easier said than done, but give it a shot. Start your next morning with a simple prayer of trust in God. And the next time you lay your head on your pillow, thank God for His provision, His strength, and His help.

# Day 4

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*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,  
the fruit of the womb a reward.*

***Psalm 127:3***

If we are being completely honest, there are days that children do not feel like a reward. Maybe it is because they are so needy, or disobedient, or outright mean. But nonetheless, God calls them “a reward.” This means that they are a gift to us in the church.

A reward is something we cherish, something we are thankful for, and ultimately something we seek to enjoy. “Fruit of the womb” sounds like something that is good. In those moments or maybe even in those seasons when your children feel like more of a challenge than a gift, remember the Word of God.

Spend some time today noticing the children around you. Be encouraged by the joy they bring through their laughter, their smiles, their inquisitiveness. Parents, you might want to make a list of things you love about your kids. If you are not a parent, take time to consider the ways in which the children of our church are a blessing to you and to others around you. Go out of your way today to share a smile, a hug, or a word of encouragement with the children God has placed in your life.

# Day 5

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*Like arrows in the hand of a warrior  
are the children of one's youth.*

**Psalm 127:4**

Children are like arrows? This has to be one of the weirdest analogies, right? How are children like arrows? I mean the correlation between arrows and people makes almost no sense. Not all people are skinny. Not all people are sharp. Most people do not fly through the air, and I don't know of any people who have feathers!

However, if the correlation between children and arrows has nothing to do with their shape and size but with their purpose, then there may be a beautiful analogy in there after all. Arrows are designed to be released from a bow towards a particular target. In ancient days most arrows were hand-made so that the archer would be confident in the quality of the arrow. Knowing this helps us to see that it is the job of the parent to prepare the child (arrow) to be sharp and well-balanced. It is also the distinct job of the parent (archer) to release the child into the world so that they might target the world around them with the gospel.

It is the job of the church to come alongside families in these years to further equip children and prepare them for release. This release can be difficult. It is my prayer that these days will continue to stir your heart as you seek to release the children of our church into the world for the glory of God in all nations.

Pray now, asking God to help you be a part of preparing and launching these arrows. Take time to consider what God may be calling you to do to help the children in your home, in your extended family, or in our church. Contact our preschool, kids, or student ministries to find opportunities for service.

# Day 6

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*Blessed is the man  
who fills his quiver with them!  
He shall not be put to shame  
when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.*  
**Psalm 127:5**

Some of you have a full quiver with one child while the quivers of others are filled with multiple children. The Lord fills our quiver sometimes through birth, sometimes through adoption, and sometimes through foster care. However He chooses to provide children to your family, may we all see them as a blessing. Consider your children as arrows that you will be launching into the world one day.

I am aware that some married couples are not able to have children, and many single adults do not have children either. Even so, let us not forget, it is the job of all believers to make disciples. In doing so, we find ourselves functioning like parents preparing to launch these disciples into a life of fruitful ministry in Christ.

In these years you are slowly pulling the string back on the bow so that when they take those necessary steps into adulthood and mature Christianity you can release them with confidence. Think of these years with young disciples like filling a backpack. Each year you are adding more items to their backpack so that upon their release they have more of the tools they need for the rest of life.

Take a few minutes to think back to your youth. What has God taught you that has helped you grow in your faith and in your relationship with Him? What could you share with the next generation that might encourage them to walk with God? Look for opportunities to share your testimony of salvation and of God's faithfulness with the next generation.

# Day 7

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*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*

***Ephesians 4:29***

The old adage “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me” just isn’t true. I remember as a kid hearing, “I’m rubber, you’re glue. What you say bounces off me and sticks on you.” Again, this is something that just isn’t true. Words have the ability to hurt deeply. Words stick with us.

How are you using your words? Are you tearing others down by speaking harsh words or by using a harsh tone? Are you offering silence when words are needed to encourage? Consider how you might speak words that help lift up or encourage your family members today. When you give a compliment, be very specific. Don’t just say, “thank you for all you do around here.” Say, “thank you for always providing good meals, thank you for making the yard look nice for our neighborhood,” or “thank you for taking the trash out without being asked.” These kinds of compliments can go a long way. Consider how you might use your words to specifically encourage others today.

# Day 8

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*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."*

***Ephesians 6:1-3***

For some of you still living under the authority of your parents, this one is easy to apply. Do what your parents say, when they say to do it, and do so without complaining. But what about those of us who are long past living under our parents' roof? Are we still supposed to "obey our parents"?

In short, the answer is no, because we are no longer children. This term for children here is not the same as sons and daughters, it is simply referring to young ones. However, both verse 2 here and the commandment it is quoting from (Exodus 20:12) are reminders that the command to honor is a lifelong command.

This reminds us all, whether we are children or adults, that it is our responsibility as Christians to honor our parents. If you are a child in your parents' home, one of the best ways to honor your father and mother is to simply obey them. Do that today. Choose to purposefully obey your parents as an act of love to God. If you are no longer a child, choose to honor your parents by the way you speak of them and speak to them. Look for ways to regularly celebrate the blessing of having your parents in your life. Call them or text them today. Stop by to see them if you can. Speak words of love and encouragement to them.

If you did not experience the blessing of having godly parents in your life, it's okay to lament and express your sorrow to God. But don't remain in lament. Consider the blessing of having God as the perfect Father who loves you and cares for your every need. Take time to pour out your thankfulness to Him.

# Day 9

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*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

***Ephesians 6:4***

This passage is obviously to one specific subset of the family unit – fathers. Briefly, I will write to the dads. Dad, choose today to speak words of kindness to your children. If they are grown, look for a way to encourage them through a text or phone call. If they are still at home, speak encouraging words to them over dinner tonight or at bedtime.

For those of you readers who are not yet a dad, or are not ever going to be a dad, let me simply suggest that this truth can be applied to all of us in some way. Consider how you have, at times, provoked someone else to anger, hurt someone's feelings, or spoken to someone in a hurtful tone. Ask God to forgive you for such sins. You may even need to go to certain people to ask for their forgiveness. Don't delay. Do whatever you can to make those relationships right today. Pray that God will help you to point people to the truths of Christ in His Word and through your words, your tone, and your demeanor.

# Day 10

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*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.*

***Philippians 4:4***

Clearly Paul understood that we all need this reminder. To rejoice means to “feel or show great joy or delight.” We often use the terminology of “taking joy” in something. Taking joy is our way of looking for contentment in our situations and circumstances even when they do not bring happiness. This is why Paul chose to repeat himself in this verse. “Taking joy” in all circumstances is not easy.

But notice, Paul says we are to take joy in the Lord. This should help us. You see, if we are charged to take joy in our trials and struggles then it wouldn't be very easy to rejoice. But because we are called to rejoice in the Lord, we can always know that joy is near – sometimes despite our circumstances. Tara-Leigh Cobble, Bible teacher and author, concludes her daily podcast by saying of God, “He's where the joy is.” As you walk through the day today, purposefully look for the joy God brings – even in the difficult circumstances. Write in your journal or make a note in your phone to remind you of the joy in your life. Look back to that list regularly as a reminder and as a springboard to more joy!



# Day 11

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*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

**Galatians 2:20**

It is astounding to think that our old life is truly gone! If we were crucified with Christ as Paul speaks of, then our old way of thinking, our old way of scheduling, purchasing, spending, giving, serving, loving, supporting, and acting will all be dead. Instead, we will be filled with the life-giving ways of Christ.

With that in mind, take some time today to consider these different areas of your life. How is your thinking different? How has your schedule, your spending and giving, your loving and supporting changed as a follower of Christ? This activity should be helpful for all of us, no matter our age or our stage of life. Consider ways that your life needs to change, if it hasn't already, to reflect that Christ does live in you. Remember that this new life you have been given is lived out in faith given by the very Son of God. So, rest in His grace as you seek to make these necessary changes.

# Day 12

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

***Philippians 1:21***

This short verse reminds all of us, no matter our age, to do two things:

*We are to live a life worthy of the gospel.* To live as a child of God is to live solely devoted to Christ and His gospel. No matter what age you are, consider now if you will choose to surrender the rest of your life to Christ.

*We are to die for the sake of the gospel.* This does not mean that we must all die as martyrs for professing our faith in a hostile location. Instead it means that our death (whenever and wherever that may happen) should leave behind a legacy of faith for those who knew us as followers of Christ. In life and in death, we should express full confidence in and celebration of the resurrection and our future hope in Christ.

# Day 13

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*“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

***Deuteronomy 6:4-9***

This passage has two parts for us to remember. First and foremost, it is our job to love the Lord our God. Parents, you may want to love your children the most. This inclination is natural. However, God wants something more for us, something supernatural. Love God first. Love Him with all your heart, soul, and might. Consider that you ought to love Him with all of your passions, your gifts, and your skills. This will help you be a better parent. For those of you who are not parents, consider these truths just the same. Love God first, more than anything or anyone else in your life.

Secondly, it is our job to teach children. Parents, take note that you ought to teach your children the nature of God and the need for God, who He is and why we need Him. This passage does not let the rest of us off the hook. There is an expectation that we all bear the responsibility to teach children in the community.

Pause today and consider how you are participating in teaching or modeling for the next generation how to love the Lord our God with all their heart, soul, and might. Talk to your spouse, a close friend or relative, or one of the ministers at our church about how you can share what God has taught you with the next generation.

# Day 14

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*As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."*

**Luke 9:57-62**

This passage is not for the faint of heart. This passage reminds us of the cost of following Jesus. Jesus expects His followers to give up home, family, and friends. "Are you serious?" you may ask. Yes, Jesus is not satisfied by our desire to follow Him if we continue to look back to the trappings of this world. He wants and deserves our complete and undivided allegiance.

What do you have in your life today that you value too much? Is there a sport, school activity, or friendship that takes your focus off the Lord? Adults, how about you? Do you value your position at work or even your role as a mother or father more than your relationship with Jesus?

Jesus is not saying home and family and friends are bad. He is simply saying that in comparison to Him they are nowhere near as good. So cherish what is best in order to appropriately enjoy what is simply good.

Spend some time thanking God for your family and friends. Make a list of those people who are a blessing to you, the people you love and cherish. Now, spend some time praying that God would give you the ability to love Him more than you love all of them. Pray that He would give you the courage to do whatever He calls you to do, even if it takes you away from the people on your list.

# Day 15

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*O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land  
where there is no water.*

*So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power and glory.*

*Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.*

*So I will bless you as long as I live;  
in your name I will lift up my hands.*

*My soul will be satisfied as  
with fat and rich food,*

*and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,  
when I remember you upon my bed,*

*and meditate on you in the watches of the night;  
for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your  
wings I will sing for joy.*

*My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds me.*

*But those who seek to destroy my life  
shall go down into the depths of the earth;  
they shall be given over to the  
power of the sword;*

*they shall be a portion for jackals.*

*But the king shall rejoice in God;*

*all who swear by him shall exult,*

*for the mouths of liars will be stopped.*

**Psalm 63**

Does your soul long to hear from God? Do you yearn to be in His presence? When I spend much time with the Lord, I always want more. Each day that I spend earnestly seeking God, I find myself longing for more time to be with Him. However, when I fail to meet with God, I find myself creating excuses not to meet with Him. How is it that we busy ourselves so much that we forget what it is God has for us? We must hunger and thirst for God and God alone. Do you hunger for God?

My accountability partner often speaks of waking up early in the morning and imagining that Jesus is waiting for him at the same spot, eager to be with him to enjoy hearing from him through prayer and speaking to him through His Word. Consider how you might enjoy time with the Lord in the same way. No matter how busy you are, make time with the Lord each day a healthy habit in your life.

If you don't have a regular time with the Lord every day, let me encourage you to make a plan to do so. Pick out a spot where you will meet with the Lord. Plan the time of day that works best for you. Put it on your calendar or to-do list. Make a purposeful plan to begin spending one-on-one time with God daily.

# Day 16

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*Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*

**Colossians 4:2-6**

Paul is pleading with the church in Colossae to intercede with him on the behalf of others around him. In doing so, he is setting an example for all of us to pray this way. His charge is to pray in three ways.

1. Pray with a consistent urgency. Paul asks the readers to be steadfast and watchful. Live in a constant state of prayer while having a keen eye for the situations around you that need specific attention.
2. Pray with a thankful spirit. Even though it is not always easy to find reasons to be thankful during particular hardship, remember to be thankful to God that He remains faithful.
3. Pray with an evangelistic purpose. Notice that Paul is charging the readers to ask God to open a door for the mystery of the gospel to be clear.

Take time to pray right now that God might provide someone for you to share the gospel with this week and that you would be bold in declaring this glorious truth.

# Day 17

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<sup>1</sup> *I waited patiently for the LORD;  
he inclined to me and heard my cry.*

<sup>2</sup> *He drew me up from the pit of destruction,  
out of the miry bog,  
and set my feet upon a rock,  
making my steps secure.*

<sup>3</sup> *He put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear,  
and put their trust in the LORD.*

<sup>4</sup> *Blessed is the man who makes  
the LORD his trust,  
who does not turn to the proud,  
to those who go astray after a lie!*

<sup>5</sup> *You have multiplied, O LORD my God,  
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;  
none can compare with you!  
I will proclaim and tell of them,  
yet they are more than can be told.*

<sup>6</sup> *In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted,  
but you have given me an open ear.  
Burnt offering and sin offering  
you have not required.*

<sup>7</sup> *Then I said, "Behold, I have come;  
in the scroll of the book it is written of me:*

<sup>8</sup> *I delight to do your will, O my God;  
your law is within my heart."*

<sup>9</sup> *I have told the glad news of deliverance  
in the great congregation;  
behold, I have not restrained my lips,  
as you know, O LORD.*

<sup>10</sup> *I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;*

*I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;  
I have not concealed your steadfast  
love and your faithfulness  
from the great congregation.*

<sup>11</sup> *As for you, O LORD, you will not restrain  
your mercy from me;  
your steadfast love and your faithfulness will  
ever preserve me!*

<sup>12</sup> *For evils have encompassed me  
beyond number;  
my iniquities have overtaken me,  
and I cannot see;  
they are more than the hairs of my head;  
my heart fails me.*

<sup>13</sup> *Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me!  
O LORD, make haste to help me!*

<sup>14</sup> *Let those be put to shame and disappointed altogether  
who seek to snatch away my life;  
let those be turned back and brought to dishonor  
who delight in my hurt!*

<sup>15</sup> *Let those be appalled because of their shame  
who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"*

<sup>16</sup> *But may all who seek you  
rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who love your salvation  
say continually, "Great is the LORD!"*

<sup>17</sup> *As for me, I am poor and needy,  
but the Lord takes thought for me.  
You are my help and my deliverer;  
do not delay, O my God!*

**Psalm 40**

As a pastor, the most common questions I get from people often sound like, "What is God wanting from me in my life?" "Should I take this new job offer?" "Is she the one?" "Which college is right for me?" Ultimately, all of these questions are asking, "What is God's will?"

Although I don't usually know the specific answers, I do know that we are to do what God commands through Scripture. I know that we

are to love God, love others, and teach others to do the same. Although that may sound very trite, it is not. God has made things very clear for us in His Word. How does David know that he wants to do the will of God? Because he knows the law; it is hidden in his heart. (Psalm 119:11)

So, instead of worrying quite as much about each specific circumstance in your life, do your best to know God's Word, do what it says, and enjoy the opportunities God sets before you.

When was the last time you memorized Scripture? If Scripture memory is not a regular part of your life, then start today. Choose one of the verses (or a set of verses) from this passage. Work to memorize it (or them) this week. Get someone to hold you accountable. And keep going! Make Scripture memory a regular part of your life.



# Day 18

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- <sup>1</sup> *Fret not yourself because of evildoers;  
be not envious of wrongdoers!*
- <sup>2</sup> *For they will soon fade like the grass  
and wither like the green herb.*
- <sup>3</sup> *Trust in the LORD, and do good;  
dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.*
- <sup>4</sup> *Delight yourself in the LORD,  
and he will give you the desires of your heart.*
- <sup>5</sup> *Commit your way to the LORD;  
trust in him, and he will act.*
- <sup>6</sup> *He will bring forth your righteousness as the light,  
and your justice as the noonday.*
- <sup>7</sup> *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him;  
fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way,  
over the man who carries out evil devices!*
- <sup>8</sup> *Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath!  
Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.*
- <sup>9</sup> *For the evildoers shall be cut off,  
but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.*
- <sup>10</sup> *In just a little while, the wicked will be no more;  
though you look carefully at his  
place, he will not be there.*
- <sup>11</sup> *But the meek shall inherit the land  
and delight themselves in abundant peace.*
- <sup>12</sup> *The wicked plots against the righteous  
and gnashes his teeth at him,*
- <sup>13</sup> *but the Lord laughs at the wicked,  
for he sees that his day is coming*
- <sup>14</sup> *The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows  
to bring down the poor and needy,  
to slay those whose way is upright;*
- <sup>15</sup> *their sword shall enter their own heart,  
and their bows shall be broken.*
- <sup>16</sup> *Better is the little that the righteous has  
than the abundance of many wicked.*
- <sup>17</sup> *For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,  
but the LORD upholds the righteous.*
- <sup>18</sup> *The LORD knows the days of the blameless,  
and their heritage will remain forever;*
- <sup>19</sup> *they are not put to shame in evil times;  
in the days of famine they have abundance.*
- <sup>20</sup> *But the wicked will perish;  
the enemies of the LORD are like  
the glory of the pastures;  
they vanish—like smoke they vanish away.*
- <sup>21</sup> *The wicked borrows but does not pay back,  
but the righteous is generous and gives;*
- <sup>22</sup> *for those blessed by the LORD shall inherit the land,  
but those cursed by him shall be cut off.*
- <sup>23</sup> *The steps of a man are established by the LORD,  
when he delights in his way;*
- <sup>24</sup> *though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong,  
for the LORD upholds his hand.*
- <sup>25</sup> *I have been young, and now am old,  
yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken  
or his children begging for bread.*
- <sup>26</sup> *He is ever lending generously,  
and his children become a blessing;*
- <sup>27</sup> *Turn away from evil and do good;  
so shall you dwell forever.*
- <sup>28</sup> *For the LORD loves justice;  
he will not forsake his saints.  
They are preserved forever,  
but the children of the wicked shall be cut off.*
- <sup>29</sup> *The righteous shall inherit the land  
and dwell upon it forever.*
- <sup>30</sup> *The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom,  
and his tongue speaks justice.*
- <sup>31</sup> *The law of his God is in his heart;  
his steps do not slip.*
- <sup>32</sup> *The wicked watches for the righteous  
and seeks to put him to death.*
- <sup>33</sup> *The LORD will not abandon him to his power  
or let him be condemned when he is brought to trial.*
- <sup>34</sup> *Wait for the LORD and keep his way,  
and he will exalt you to inherit the land;  
you will look on when the wicked are cut off.*
- <sup>35</sup> *I have seen a wicked, ruthless man,*

*spreading himself like a green laurel tree.*

<sup>36</sup> *But he passed away, and behold, he was no more;  
though I sought him, he could not be found.*

<sup>37</sup> *Mark the blameless and behold the upright,  
for there is a future for the man of peace.*

<sup>38</sup> *But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed;  
the future of the wicked shall be cut off.*

<sup>39</sup> *The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;  
he is their stronghold in the time of trouble.*

<sup>40</sup> *The LORD helps them and delivers them;  
he delivers them from the wicked and saves them,  
because they take refuge in him.*

**Psalm 37**

When I first read this passage years ago I was extremely excited because I had some desires that I was really hoping God would give me. However, when I began to grow more in my relationship with Christ, I began to grasp that God changes our desires as we delight in Him. So, yes, He grants you the desires of your heart, but the desires He grants are the ones He actually put in your heart in the first place.

Take time to ask yourself these questions. You may even want to answer them in your journal. What are some of the desires of your heart? Are these desires given by God? If they are from the Lord, then wholeheartedly pursue them. If they are not, pause right now and ask God to remove these desires from your heart. How do you know if the desires are from Him or not? Pray. Read His Word. Seek wise counsel.

# Day 19

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*Hear, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way.*

***Proverbs 23:19***

Read that verse out loud again. Are you hearing God when He speaks? Is there too much noise around you to truly listen? It might be necessary that you turn off the TV, put down your cell phone, stop scrolling through social media, or pause the video game so that you can remove all of the distracting noise around you in order to hear when the Lord is speaking to you.

The final portion of this verse says to “direct your heart in the way.” What is the way? Jesus said “I am the Way.” Often, the hardest part of praying is LISTENING to God. Take time today to be silent before the Lord. Listen to what God is saying to you and then follow what He says. You will likely not hear an audible voice from the Lord, but you can train yourself to listen for His voice. I would encourage you to spend more time reading God’s Word so that you might hear directly from Him. He will never contradict His Word or lead you to do anything that contradicts His Word. So, the more you know His Word, the more you will recognize His voice. You will begin to “hear” Him speaking to you through prayer, His Word, godly people in your life, and even the situations He puts you in.

# Day 20

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*No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

**Joshua 1:5-9**

Three times in four verses God tells Joshua to be “strong and courageous.” Why is that something that we find so difficult? We were created to be bold followers of Christ. This passage is extremely encouraging to me because I can look at the rest of this book of the Bible and see what God did in and through the life of Joshua. It is good for me to remember that in the beginning he had to be reminded over and over to be strong and courageous. Are you strong and courageous?

Recently my oldest son was given a necklace with this verse reference inscribed on it. In addition to this Scripture reference it said, “I will be strong and courageous.” He wears this around his neck every day as a constant reminder that the Lord is with him to make him strong and courageous. You and I could use a similar reminder as we face temptations and difficult circumstances every day.

Do something today that will remind you of God’s Word, that He is with you, and that He will guide you through all circumstances. Perhaps that is wearing a certain necklace or bracelet, writing a Bible verse on a post-it note, or making a reminder on your phone. Do something to keep God’s Word before you and to remind yourself regularly that you are His.

# Day 21

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*Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

**Joshua 24:14-15**

Adults, today is the day for you to choose. Choose for your family. Choose for your household. Children, today is the day for you to choose to obey.

Who have you chosen to serve? Are you serving God or a god of this world? Are you following God's call in your life? What does it really mean to serve the Lord? I long to be a man of God who serves the Lord with sincerity and faithfulness. While I often fall short of being that man, my family and I have chosen to be servants of the most high King – Jesus, the Lord of all. Do not let your past sin stop you from present obedience. Choose today to surrender yourself and your household to the Lord.

Sometime today stop what you're doing and get on your knees. Purposefully surrender yourself to the Lord. Lay your life down before Him. Confess your sin to Him and seek His forgiveness. Pray for your family and close friends. Surrender them all to His control. Gather your family around you and commit your lives individually and collectively to Him. If you're a single adult, gather with some godly friends to pray for one another and commit to hold one another accountable to living surrendered to Christ.

# Day 22

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*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

***John 3:16***

This is the most recognizable Scripture reference in all of America. Most notably because of posters held up during major sporting events all around the country. People usually choose to hold up this verse because it is the most succinct “gospel in a nutshell” verse in the Bible.

We can take 3 simple action steps based on this verse.

1. Trust in God’s love.
2. Believe in God’s plan.
3. Surrender to God’s work.

If you understand that it is out of the abundance of God’s love for you and the world that He would sacrifice His Son for you then you can begin to comprehend the significance of your salvation. So believe that His plan of salvation is the only way and is offered to you that you might surrender your life to Him. Do not wait another moment! “Believe in Him” that you might have “eternal life” with Christ.

If you realized today that you have never completed these 3 steps, I want to encourage you to waste no time. Do so immediately. You can take these steps with the Lord right now. If you need someone to talk to or to help you understand what God is leading you to do, contact a godly friend or minister of our church today. The people of God, our family of faith, would be overjoyed to have the opportunity to talk with you and pray with you about God’s will for your life.

# Day 23

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*But God shows his love for us in that while we  
were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**Romans 5:8**

Are you amazed by this? When Christ died for us, He was not wondering whether or not we would sin. He died for us while we were still sinners! This means that as Jesus hung on the cross sinless, He took on our sin for us. Think about your family. Consider how much you love your children, your parents, and even your siblings (even when they get on your nerves). I love my family a lot. I would do anything I could for them. However, if they were punished for breaking the law, my first inclination would be for them to experience the discipline necessary to stop them from breaking the law again.

Thankfully, my way was not God's way. His gracious plan for us was for Jesus Christ to take the punishment we deserved, to receive the ultimate discipline for sins you and I committed. Take time today to rejoice in this unimaginable gift of grace – the substitutionary atonement of our sin by Jesus' death on the cross! Spend some time contemplating the cross, the magnitude of your sin and His suffering. Relish in the abundance of His grace! Sing to Him. Write a prayer of thanksgiving in your journal. Share your joy with your family and friends.

# Day 24

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*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.*

## **Romans 8:1-11**

I want you to do something different today. Count how many times this passage has the word flesh, spirit, and law. As you do, seek to discern the meaning of each word.

Flesh \_\_\_\_\_

Spirit \_\_\_\_\_

Law \_\_\_\_\_

Read this passage again and consider how these words fit together. Why are they so important to understand? What is the role of the flesh, the Spirit, and the law in your life? Is there anything out of proportion? Does the flesh have too much control? Are you using the law to make yourself or others feel guilty? Are you living evidence of the Spirit's work in your life? Where is the hope found in this passage? Is your life an expression of that hope?



# Day 25

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*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

**Matthew 28:18-20**

This passage is known as the Great Commission. It is where Jesus, with all authority, provides the expectation for all disciples to take part in the work of making Him known throughout all the earth. If you are a follower of Christ, that means you! Maybe you are a child and you are assuming that it will be your turn to share the gospel one day. Or maybe you are a parent, and you think you are too busy. Or maybe you are single, and so you think this is a call for the young married couple. NOPE. This command is given to all disciples of all ages to make disciples of all nations.

I would like to challenge you to think in three specific categories regarding your own participation in disciple-making.

1. Pray. How are you praying for the gospel to be made known in all the earth? Are you praying for the country as assigned each week here at Colonial Heights? Are you praying for our missionary families around the world?

2. Give. Are you setting aside money to support the work of ministry and missions around the world? How are you supporting the church and the mission efforts presented to you?

3. Go. Are you participating in the work of personal evangelism? When was the last time you shared the gospel with a friend? Have you considered going on a short-term mission trip? Is God calling you to serve in a long-term capacity overseas? Talk about these different categories with your family and work together to make disciples of all nations.

# Day 26

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*To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song*

*May God be gracious to us and bless us  
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah  
that your way may be known on earth,  
your saving power among all nations.*

*Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you!*

*Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah*

*Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you!*

*The earth has yielded its increase;  
God, our God, shall bless us.*

*God shall bless us;*

*let all the ends of the earth fear him!*

***Psalm 67***

What an incredible gift! We get to ask God for blessings. In fact, the psalmist here is doing just that: asking God to bless him and to help him. But when we ask for blessings, we are to remember that we are called to be like a river through which the blessings flow. We are not called to be a stagnant pond that simply receives blessings and doesn't pour them out on others. The psalmist writes, "that your way may be known on earth." The reason he asks for blessings is so that he might be a blessing to others and make known the Giver of the blessings.

Here at Colonial Heights we realize that our greatest blessing is our salvation, therefore we like to say that we are "saved to be sent." As a believer you have been richly blessed so that others might know Christ. Your salvation is the catalyst for you to share the good news with those around you. May you take this as your challenge to share the good news of salvation with others in hopes that all the peoples will praise the Lord!

With whom do you need to share the gospel today? Make a list of people whom you know are lost. Begin now praying that God will give you opportunities to share the reason for the hope you have in Christ. Pray that God will work in them and that He will open their hearts to His truth.

# Day 27

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*After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

**Revelation 7:9-10**

AMAZING! Oh friend, I am longing for this day. Whether you are a child, a student, or an adult; I want you to pause and think about this day. You will be surrounded by family (even if not your blood relatives), brothers and sisters speaking different languages but worshipping the same God. The One who saved you, the One who died on the cross for your sins, the very Lamb of God.

That is why there is such confidence in the praise that is given to God in these verses. These shared cries and loud voices are all in complete agreement that salvation belongs to the one God who sits on the throne.

Are you in agreement as a family? Talk about it together: is there only one God on the throne of your heart and of your home? What does it mean to have Christ on the throne in your home? Do you ever try to take control of your life or your family for yourself? Consider ways you can live in agreement with the One who is on the throne. What changes might you need to make?

# Day 28

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*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 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 firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints...*

***Ephesians 6:10-18***

This was my favorite passage of Scripture as a young boy. For one, I loved the idea of being strong, being battle ready, and getting to wrestle. I soon learned that those ideas were not related to anything physical but instead were of the spiritual realm. Although sometimes our wrestling in prayer and our battling against temptation can feel physically exhausting.

I wonder if you ever consider your own participation in spiritual warfare. Paul is charging the people of the church to join in the battle by praying at all times. Even if you are young, your job is to join in the battle against temptation. Fight those battles by praying Scripture, calling out to God, and asking God for help.

Consider joining with your family and friends to pray over specific areas of temptation in your life, your marriage, your family, and other relationships. Pray for yourself and each other.

# Day 29

<sup>1</sup> *Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.*

<sup>2</sup> *Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her*

*that her warfare[a] is ended,  
that her iniquity is pardoned,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.*

<sup>3</sup> *A voice cries:[b]*

*"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight in the desert a  
highway for our God.*

<sup>4</sup> *Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.*

<sup>5</sup> *And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."*

<sup>6</sup> *A voice says, "Cry!"*

*And I said,[c] "What shall I cry?"*

*All flesh is grass,  
and all its beauty[d] is like  
the flower of the field.*

<sup>7</sup> *The grass withers, the flower fades  
when the breath of the Lord blows on it;  
surely the people are grass.*

<sup>8</sup> *The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand forever.*

<sup>9</sup> *Go on up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good news;[e]  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;[f]*

*lift it up, fear not;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Behold your God!"*

<sup>10</sup> *Behold, the Lord God comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
behold, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.*

<sup>11</sup> *He will tend his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms;  
he will carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead those that are with young*

<sup>12</sup> *Who has measured the waters  
in the hollow of his hand  
and marked off the heavens with a span,  
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure  
and weighed the mountains in scales  
and the hills in a balance?*

<sup>13</sup> *Who has measured[g] the Spirit of the Lord,  
or what man shows him his counsel?*

<sup>14</sup> *Whom did he consult,  
and who made him understand?  
Who taught him the path of justice,  
and taught him knowledge,  
and showed him the way of understanding?*

<sup>15</sup> *Behold, the nations are like  
a drop from a bucket,  
and are accounted as the dust on the scales;  
behold, he takes up the  
coastlands like fine dust.*

<sup>16</sup> *Lebanon would not suffice for fuel,  
nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering*

<sup>17</sup> *All the nations are as nothing before him,  
they are accounted by him as less  
than nothing and emptiness.*

<sup>18</sup> *To whom then will you liken God,  
or what likeness compare with him?*

<sup>19</sup> *An idol! A craftsman casts it,  
and a goldsmith overlays it with gold  
and casts for it silver chains.*

<sup>20</sup> *He who is too impoverished for an offering  
chooses wood[h] that will not rot;  
he seeks out a skillful craftsman  
to set up an idol that will not move.*

<sup>21</sup> *Do you not know? Do you not hear?  
Has it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have you not understood from*

*the foundations of the earth?*

<sup>22</sup> *It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,  
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
and spreads them like a tent to dwell in;  
<sup>23</sup> who brings princes to nothing,  
and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.  
<sup>24</sup> Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,  
when he blows on them, and they wither,  
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.  
<sup>25</sup> To whom then will you compare me,  
that I should be like him? says the Holy One.  
<sup>26</sup> Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
who created these?  
He who brings out their host by number,  
calling them all by name;  
by the greatness of his might  
and because he is strong in power,  
not one is missing*

<sup>27</sup> *Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,  
“My way is hidden from the Lord,  
and my right is disregarded by my God”?*  
<sup>28</sup> *Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.  
<sup>29</sup> He gives power to the faint,  
and to him who has no might  
he increases strength.  
<sup>30</sup> Even youths shall faint and be weary,  
and young men shall fall exhausted;  
<sup>31</sup> but they who wait for the Lord  
shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;  
they shall run and not be weary;  
they shall walk and not faint.*

**Isaiah 40**

Our God is mighty. He is awesome in power and is the creator of all. He is the one who grants strength in times of weakness. Do you trust Him? Do you rest in Him? Take this time to tell the Father that you are trusting, resting, and hoping in Him and Him alone? Underline parts of this passage that help you remember to trust, rest, and hope in Him.

# Day 30

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## *Aleph*

- 1 *Blessed are those whose way is blameless,  
who walk in the law of the Lord!*
- 2 *Blessed are those who keep his testimonies,  
who seek him with their whole heart,  
3 who also do no wrong,  
but walk in his ways!*
- 4 *You have commanded your precepts  
to be kept diligently.*
- 5 *Oh that my ways may be steadfast  
in keeping your statutes!*
- 6 *Then I shall not be put to shame,  
having my eyes fixed on all  
your commandments.*
- 7 *I will praise you with an upright heart,  
when I learn your righteous rules.[b]*
- 8 *I will keep your statutes;  
do not utterly forsake me!*

## *Beth*

- 9 *How can a young man keep his way pure?  
By guarding it according to your word.*
- 10 *With my whole heart I seek you;  
let me not wander from your commandments!*
- 11 *I have stored up your word in my heart,  
that I might not sin against you.*
- 12 *Blessed are you, O Lord;  
teach me your statutes!*
- 13 *With my lips I declare  
all the rules[c] of your mouth.*
- 14 *In the way of your testimonies I delight  
as much as in all riches.*
- 15 *I will meditate on your precepts  
and fix my eyes on your ways.*
- 16 *I will delight in your statutes;  
I will not forget your word.*

## *Gimel*

- 17 *Deal bountifully with your servant,  
that I may live and keep your word.*

18 *Open my eyes, that I may behold  
wondrous things out of your law.*

- 19 *I am a sojourner on the earth;  
hide not your commandments from me!*
- 20 *My soul is consumed with longing  
for your rules[d] at all times.*
- 21 *You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones,  
who wander from your commandments.*
- 22 *Take away from me scorn and contempt,  
for I have kept your testimonies.*
- 23 *Even though princes sit plotting against me,  
your servant will meditate on your statutes.*
- 24 *Your testimonies are my delight;  
they are my counselors.*

## *Daleth*

- 25 *My soul clings to the dust;  
give me life according to your word!*
- 26 *When I told of my ways, you answered me;  
teach me your statutes!*
- 27 *Make me understand the  
way of your precepts,  
and I will meditate on your wondrous works.*
- 28 *My soul melts away for sorrow;  
strengthen me according to your word!*
- 29 *Put false ways far from me  
and graciously teach me your law!*
- 30 *I have chosen the way of faithfulness;  
I set your rules before me.*
- 31 *I cling to your testimonies, O Lord;  
let me not be put to shame!*
- 32 *I will run in the way of your commandments  
when you enlarge my heart![e]*

## *He*

- 33 *Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes;  
and I will keep it to the end.[f]*
- 34 *Give me understanding, that  
I may keep your law  
and observe it with my whole heart.*

35 *Lead me in the path of your commandments,  
for I delight in it.*

36 *Incline my heart to your testimonies,  
and not to selfish gain!*

37 *Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things;  
and give me life in your ways.*

38 *Confirm to your servant your promise,  
that you may be feared.*

39 *Turn away the reproach that I dread,  
for your rules are good.*

40 *Behold, I long for your precepts;  
in your righteousness give me life!*

#### Waw

41 *Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord,  
your salvation according to your promise;*

42 *then shall I have an answer  
for him who taunts me,  
for I trust in your word.*

43 *And take not the word of truth  
utterly out of my mouth,  
for my hope is in your rules.*

44 *I will keep your law continually,  
forever and ever,*

45 *and I shall walk in a wide place,  
for I have sought your precepts.*

46 *I will also speak of your  
testimonies before kings  
and shall not be put to shame,*

47 *for I find my delight in your commandments,  
which I love.*

48 *I will lift up my hands toward your  
commandments, which I love,  
and I will meditate on your statutes.*

#### Zayin

49 *Remember your word to your servant,  
in which you have made me hope.*

50 *This is my comfort in my affliction,  
that your promise gives me life.*

51 *The insolent utterly deride me,  
but I do not turn away from your law.*

52 *When I think of your rules from of old,  
I take comfort, O Lord.*

53 *Hot indignation seizes me*

*because of the wicked,  
who forsake your law.*

54 *Your statutes have been my songs  
in the house of my sojourning*

55 *I remember your name in the night, O Lord,  
and keep your law.*

56 *This blessing has fallen to me,  
that I have kept your precepts.*

#### Heth

57 *The Lord is my portion;  
I promise to keep your words.*

58 *I entreat your favor with all my heart;  
be gracious to me according to your promise.*

59 *When I think on my ways,  
I turn my feet to your testimonies;*

60 *I hasten and do not delay  
to keep your commandments.*

61 *Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me,  
I do not forget your law.*

62 *At midnight I rise to praise you,  
because of your righteous rules.*

63 *I am a companion of all who fear you,  
of those who keep your precepts.*

64 *The earth, O Lord, is full  
of your steadfast love;  
teach me your statutes!*

#### Teth

65 *You have dealt well with your servant,  
O Lord, according to your word.*

66 *Teach me good judgment and knowledge,  
for I believe in your commandments.*

67 *Before I was afflicted I went astray,  
but now I keep your word.*

68 *You are good and do good;  
teach me your statutes.*

69 *The insolent smear me with lies,  
but with my whole heart I keep your precepts;*

70 *their heart is unfeeling like fat,  
but I delight in your law.*

71 *It is good for me that I was afflicted,  
that I might learn your statutes.*

72 *The law of your mouth is better to me  
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.*



*Yodh*

- 73 *Your hands have made and fashioned me;  
give me understanding that I may  
learn your commandments.*
- 74 *Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice,  
because I have hoped in your word.*
- 75 *I know, O Lord, that your rules are righteous,  
and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.*
- 76 *Let your steadfast love comfort me  
according to your promise to your servant.*
- 77 *Let your mercy come to me, that I may live;  
for your law is my delight.*
- 78 *Let the insolent be put to shame,  
because they have wronged me with falsehood;  
as for me, I will meditate on your precepts.*
- 79 *Let those who fear you turn to me,  
that they may know your testimonies.*
- 80 *May my heart be blameless in your statutes,  
that I may not be put to shame!*

*Kaph*

- 81 *My soul longs for your salvation;  
I hope in your word.*
- 82 *My eyes long for your promise;  
I ask, "When will you comfort me?"*
- 83 *For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,  
yet I have not forgotten your statutes.*
- 84 *How long must your servant endure?<sup>2</sup>[g]  
When will you judge those who persecute me?*
- 85 *The insolent have dug pitfalls for me;  
they do not live according to your law.*
- 86 *All your commandments are sure;  
they persecute me with falsehood; help me!*
- 87 *They have almost made an end of me on earth,  
but I have not forsaken your precepts.*
- 88 *In your steadfast love give me life,  
that I may keep the testimonies of your mouth.*

*Lamedh*

- 89 *Forever, O Lord, your word  
is firmly fixed in the heavens.*
- 90 *Your faithfulness endures to all generations;  
you have established the earth, and it stands fast.*
- 91 *By your appointment they stand this day,  
for all things are your servants.*

- 92 *If your law had not been my delight,  
I would have perished in my affliction.*
- 93 *I will never forget your precepts,  
for by them you have given me life.*
- 94 *I am yours; save me,  
for I have sought your precepts.*
- 95 *The wicked lie in wait to destroy me,  
but I consider your testimonies.*
- 96 *I have seen a limit to all perfection,  
but your commandment is exceedingly broad.*

*Mem*

- 97 *Oh how I love your law!  
It is my meditation all the day.*
- 98 *Your commandment makes me  
wiser than my enemies,  
for it is ever with me.*
- 99 *I have more understanding than all my teachers,  
for your testimonies are my meditation.*
- 100 *I understand more than the aged, [h]  
for I keep your precepts.*
- 101 *I hold back my feet from every evil way,  
in order to keep your word.*
- 102 *I do not turn aside from your rules,  
for you have taught me.*
- 103 *How sweet are your words to my taste,  
sweeter than honey to my mouth!*
- 104 *Through your precepts I get understanding;  
therefore I hate every false way.*

*Nun*

- 105 *Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.*
- 106 *I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,  
to keep your righteous rules.*
- 107 *I am severely afflicted;  
give me life, O Lord, according to your word!*
- 108 *Accept my freewill offerings  
of praise, O Lord,  
and teach me your rules.*
- 109 *I hold my life in my hand continually,  
but I do not forget your law.*
- 110 *The wicked have laid a snare for me,  
but I do not stray from your precepts.*
- 111 *Your testimonies are my heritage forever,*

*for they are the joy of my heart.*  
112 *I incline my heart to perform your statutes  
forever, to the end. [i]*

*Samekh*

113 *I hate the double-minded,  
but I love your law.*  
114 *You are my hiding place and my shield;  
I hope in your word.*  
115 *Depart from me, you evildoers,  
that I may keep the commandments of my God.*  
116 *Uphold me according to your  
promise, that I may live,  
and let me not be put to shame in my hope!*  
117 *Hold me up, that I may be safe  
and have regard for your statutes continually!*  
118 *You spurn all who go astray  
from your statutes,  
for their cunning is in vain.*  
119 *All the wicked of the earth  
you discard like dross,  
therefore I love your testimonies.*  
120 *My flesh trembles for fear of you,  
and I am afraid of your judgments.*

*Ayin*

121 *I have done what is just and right;  
do not leave me to my oppressors.*  
122 *Give your servant a pledge of good;  
let not the insolent oppress me.*  
123 *My eyes long for your salvation  
and for the fulfillment of your righteous promise.*  
124 *Deal with your servant according  
to your steadfast love,  
and teach me your statutes.*  
125 *I am your servant; give me understanding,  
that I may know your testimonies!*  
126 *It is time for the Lord to act,  
for your law has been broken.*  
127 *Therefore I love your commandments  
above gold, above fine gold.*  
128 *Therefore I consider all  
your precepts to be right;  
I hate every false way.*

*Pe*

129 *Your testimonies are wonderful;  
therefore my soul keeps them.*  
130 *The unfolding of your words gives light;  
it imparts understanding to the simple.*  
131 *I open my mouth and pant,  
because I long for your commandments.*  
132 *Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
as is your way with those who love your name.*  
133 *Keep steady my steps  
according to your promise,  
and let no iniquity get dominion over me.*  
134 *Redeem me from man's oppression,  
that I may keep your precepts.*  
135 *Make your face shine upon your servant,  
and teach me your statutes.*  
136 *My eyes shed streams of tears,  
because people do not keep your law.*

*Tsadhe*

137 *Righteous are you, O Lord,  
and right are your rules.*  
138 *You have appointed your  
testimonies in righteousness  
and in all faithfulness.*  
139 *My zeal consumes me,  
because my foes forget your words.*  
140 *Your promise is well tried,  
and your servant loves it.*  
141 *I am small and despised,  
yet I do not forget your precepts.*  
142 *Your righteousness is righteous forever,  
and your law is true.*  
143 *Trouble and anguish have found me out,  
but your commandments are my delight.*  
144 *Your testimonies are righteous forever;  
give me understanding that I may live.*

*Qoph*

145 *With my whole heart I  
cry; answer me, O Lord!  
I will keep your statutes.*  
146 *I call to you; save me,  
that I may observe your testimonies.*  
147 *I rise before dawn and cry for help;*

*I hope in your words.*

- 148 *My eyes are awake before  
the watches of the night,  
that I may meditate on your promise.*
- 149 *Hear my voice according to your steadfast love;  
O Lord, according to your justice give me life.*
- 150 *They draw near who persecute  
me with evil purpose;  
they are far from your law.*
- 151 *But you are near, O Lord,  
and all your commandments are true.*
- 152 *Long have I known from your testimonies  
that you have founded them forever.*

*Resh*

- 153 *Look on my affliction and deliver me,  
for I do not forget your law.*
- 154 *Plead my cause and redeem me;  
give me life according to your promise!*
- 155 *Salvation is far from the wicked,  
for they do not seek your statutes.*
- 156 *Great is your mercy, O Lord;  
give me life according to your rules.*
- 157 *Many are my persecutors and my adversaries,  
but I do not swerve from your testimonies.*
- 158 *I look at the faithless with disgust,  
because they do not keep your commands.*
- 159 *Consider how I love your precepts!  
Give me life according to your steadfast love.*
- 160 *The sum of your word is truth,  
and every one of your righteous  
rules endures forever.*

*Sin and Shin*

- 161 *Princes persecute me without cause,  
but my heart stands in awe of your words.*

162 *I rejoice at your word  
like one who finds great spoil.*

163 *I hate and abhor falsehood,  
but I love your law.*

- 164 *Seven times a day I praise you  
for your righteous rules.*
- 165 *Great peace have those who love your law;  
nothing can make them stumble.*
- 166 *I hope for your salvation, O Lord,  
and I do your commandments.*
- 167 *My soul keeps your testimonies;  
I love them exceedingly.*
- 168 *I keep your precepts and testimonies,  
for all my ways are before you.*

*Taw*

- 169 *Let my cry come before you, O Lord;  
give me understanding according to your word!*
- 170 *Let my plea come before you;  
deliver me according to your word.*
- 171 *My lips will pour forth praise,  
for you teach me your statutes.*
- 172 *My tongue will sing of your word,  
for all your commandments are right.*
- 173 *Let your hand be ready to help me,  
for I have chosen your precepts.*
- 174 *I long for your salvation, O Lord,  
and your law is my delight.*
- 175 *Let my soul live and praise you,  
and let your rules help me.*
- 176 *I have gone astray like a lost  
sheep; seek your servant,  
for I do not forget your commandments.*

**Psalm 119**

I realize this passage is a long one. It might take you 15-20 minutes to read. Just remember that God's Word is worth taking the time to read it all. This Psalm (the longest of them all) is so rich with reminders of how great God's Word is for us. Spend some time praying through this passage as the Lord leads you. May your time in His Word increase your desire to be in the Scriptures every day.



# What's Next?

Congratulations on finishing up this month-long devotional! Don't quit now. Practice daily the godly habits you have acquired. Consider the following (and whatever else the Lord may lead you to do).

## **Continue to read Scripture daily.**

You can use the Bible reading plan provided through our church or one of a myriad of others available online. Just make a plan to get into His Word daily. Don't try to take on too much if you are just getting started. The goal is to develop your relationship with God.

## **Spend more time in prayer.**

Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:16). Purposefully plan to increase your time in prayer. Keep a prayer journal. Pray for the lost. Commit everything to God in prayer. Pray by yourself. Pray with others. Teach your kids to pray.

## **Share the gospel.**

Remember that we are commanded by Christ to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). This begins with evangelism, sharing the good news! And it continues in relationships. Pray that God will give you opportunities to lead people to Christ (especially your family and friends). And then be willing to walk with them through the hard journey of discipleship, following Christ daily.

## **Consider your role in your earthly family.**

What are you doing to spur your family on in faith? What practices should be a regular part of your family life? No matter how old you are or what your place is in the family, you can set an example "in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12).

## **Consider your role in the family of God.**

What are you doing to live as an active part of the family of God in your local church? How are you serving your "family"? How are you passing on what God is teaching you? Look for ways to encourage your brothers and sisters in Christ.





