

EMPTY

God is ready to fill what has run dry



your journal to support
healthy life rhythms

WELCOME

This journal is your companion for the next seven weeks of the *Empty Series*. We will lean into different analogies from our lives that can go *empty* and cause us to drift away from God. Over the next 40 days, you will be invited to *course correct* and lean into Him through our Sunday sermons, the daily devotionals, and the 1-2-3 Challenge.

Our prayer is that you develop healthier habits for a life filled with the love and peace that come from knowing Jesus more deeply. Missing a day is not failure; simply pick up where you left off. God wants your heart, not for you to complete a task.

Below is a summary of what these next 40 days include. You'll read a deeper explanation on the following pages.

JOURNAL DAILY

READ THE PROVIDED SCRIPTURE.

CAPTURE WHAT YOU SENSE GOD SAYING.

PRAY USING THE PROMPT OR YOUR OWN.

FAST **ONE** TIME EACH WEEK FOR 40 DAYS.

CHANGE **TWO** HABITS: STOP ONE & START ONE.

INVEST IN **THREE** RELATIONSHIPS.

**1-2-3
CHALLENGE**



THE 1-2-3 CHALLENGE

1. *Fast One Time Each Week*

Set aside one time each week to fast over the next 40 days. This could be one full day, one meal, or a type of food - you decide. Write down what your fast is below.

You can read an article about fasting in the back of this journal.

2. *Stop One Habit - Start One Habit*

Replace one habit that controls you with one habit you've been wanting to build. Use the same time slot, but in a new direction. Limit this time to just one hour per day.

There are different habits listed on the next page.

I will stop (for 40 days):

I will start (for 40 days):

3. *Invest In Three Relationships*

Plan one meaningful event with each person: a meal, a walk, a game, a trip. This is meant to be something that fills your cup when it's over. Fill in the details below.

Person 1:

Event and Date:

Person 2:

Event and Date:

Person 3:

Event and Date:

HABIT IDEAS

Use one of these or write your own bad habit to **STOP**

Social Media Scrolling	Isolating / Withdrawing
Drinking Alcohol	Doom Scrolling News
Cussing	Using Tabacco / Vaping
Complaining	Online Shopping
Consuming Sugar	Gossiping
Constant Email Checking	Hitting Snooze
Mindless Eating	Overspending
Gambling	Consuming Excess Caffeine
Video Gaming	Negative Self-Talk
Late-night Snacking	Sleeping
Binge-watching TV	Watching Pornography
Other:	

Use one of these or write your own good habit to **START**

Write Encouraging Notes	Walk Outside
Drinking More Water	Read my Bible
Praising	Prep Healthy Snacks
Read a Book	Learn a New Language
Meal Plan for the Week	Stretching
Call a Friend or Family	Journal thoughts
Healthier Sleep Habits	Listen to a Podcast
Deepen a Friendship	Self-Compassion Statements
Write a Letter	Learn Something New
Purge Old House Items	Volunteer at a Shelter
Other:	

WHERE ARE YOU RUNNING ON EMPTY

Empty Tanks

Scripture - Isaiah 40:29-31 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Life has this way of grinding us down. The demands, distractions, and disappointments can feel depleting. But the promise of the Lord to renew and carry us has not changed. With that confidence in mind, where are you running on empty? Name the tank, then ask God for the strength to follow where He is leading.



WHERE ARE YOU RUNNING ON EMPTY

Empty Tanks

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Father, I am running on fumes, and I have been for a while. I keep telling myself I can push through one more week, one more season, one more thing. But you already know the tank is empty. I am not asking you to refill me so I can keep running the same way that drained me. I am asking you to show me what you want to take out of my hands. Be my strength today, not my backup plan. In Jesus' name, Amen.



GOD'S REST IS EASY AND LIGHT

Empty Tanks

Scripture - Matthew 11:28-30 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.'

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Being yoked means to be bound to. Jesus wants us to bind us to Himself, to walk with Him, to share the load. He promises that He will help carry our burdens and the things that are emptying us. Yet, He also lets us know that He will not put more on us than we can handle, and that walking with Him is lighter. What would a lighter load look like for you? How do you need Jesus to show up to make that happen?



GOD'S REST IS EASY AND LIGHT

Empty Tanks

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, I'm learning what it means to walk with you and hand over control. I know that in order to fill my tank, I need you to help carry my load. Allow me to hand things off to you and trust that you'll take care of me. Amen.



WHEN WEARINESS HAPPENS, WHERE IS OUR TRUE RENEWAL COMING FROM

Empty Tanks

Scripture - Hebrews 4:9-11 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Weariness is more than staying up too late; it's a deep physical, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion that comes from the relentless pressure we endure. Yet, God offers us Sabbath rest, not a quick break but the same holy rest He entered into. When we keep running without that rest, we eventually lose the capacity to live into what God has called us to do. What might change in us if we embraced a true Sabbath each week to be restored and to remember who holds our lives?



WHEN WEARINESS HAPPENS, WHERE IS OUR TRUE RENEWAL COMING FROM

Empty Tanks

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, in you I find rest. Thank you for inviting me into a rest that restores my soul. While the world pushes me to keep going, you call me to a sacred rest meant for your people. Fill my empty places with your presence and let my strength be renewed by you alone. Amen.



BUSY AS A BADGE OF HONOR

Empty Tanks

Scripture - Luke 10:38-42 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Have you ever heard the phrase "I'll sleep when I'm dead?" Honestly, we could rephrase this to "I'll rest when I'm dead." We live in a world that tells us if we don't have a full, busy schedule, then we must be doing something wrong. Jesus says the opposite is true! Busyness isn't what we need; Jesus is what we need. How are you carving out time to stop the busyness and just be with Him?



BUSY AS A BADGE OF HONOR

Empty Tanks

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, help me to pursue you, the good thing, instead of busyness.



FULLNESS FROM CHRIST

Empty Tanks

Scripture - Ephesians 3:19 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Although you may take a minute to mourn how much it costs you, is there anything more refreshing than getting a full tank of gas? What possibilities are ahead of me now! Where could I go? What could I see? What could I do?

These questions also occur when our spiritual tanks are filled. Paul says that God grants the fullness of life and power as we experience the love of Christ. Maybe you've been feeling like you're running on empty this week, this month, or this year. It might just be time for you to be made complete (refilled) by experiencing the fact that Jesus loves you unconditionally. We often think of following Jesus as a checklist of tasks, but in Scripture, He calls us to experience rest in the love of Jesus.

What happens when you rest in the love of Jesus? To quote Dr. Seuss: "Oh, the places you'll go!"



FULLNESS FROM CHRIST

Empty Tanks

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, help me rest in your love today.



HOLY AND BLAMELESS

Empty Tires

Scripture - Colossians 1:22-23a NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault. But you must continue to believe this truth and stand firmly in it.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Have you ever been driving down the road when a light pops up on your dashboard? Hoosiers experience this a few times each year with the low tire pressure warning light. Even if it is annoying when it appears, it serves as a reminder to bring us back to safety. We as Christians often listen to Satan when he whispers shame and guilt about our past mistakes. As we're traveling the road of life, Jesus activates the dashboard light to call us back to His grace. Everyone who has accepted Jesus as Savior stands holy and blameless. Jesus already conquered our past, present, and future sins on the cross! Don't let Satan or anyone else convince you that you are not holy and blameless as God's child.



HOLY AND BLAMELESS

Empty Tires

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Thank you, Jesus, that I am holy and blameless in you.



RENDER YOUR HEART

Empty Tires

Scripture - Joel 2:12-13 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

What does it mean to fast, weep, and mourn? Written that directly, most of us can't imagine going through those things to get closer to someone. We tend to think of these things as just what people do, not as something you live out. Joel speaks of rendering as an act of deep, genuine, and emotional change that leads to wholehearted repentance. We should not just step through the motions, but we are called to return with our whole heart. As we draw near to God, we offer much more than completing an act, like fasting. We get to draw near to a relationship with a God that is compassionate, gracious, and merciful.



RENDER YOUR HEART

Empty Tires

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, shape and transform me to you. Render me, bring me to you so that I can match the desire of my heart to be wholeheartedly for you.



A FULL LIFE

Empty Tires

Scripture - John 10:10b NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

To the full. Do you ever find yourself wishing your life, friends, or work were full of more? We are bombarded daily with marketing and messages full of ideas to make life better, more meaningful, or more fulfilling. From weight loss fads to new clothes or toys to lavish trips, there is no shortage of ideas, but none quite get you to the feeling of a full and peaceful life. As you spend time praying and fasting, ask God to reveal where you tend to seek better that isn't from Him. Journal those areas and commit to the Lord to seek His will to fill your cup.



A FULL LIFE

Empty Tires

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, I don't want to chase after things of this world that aren't meaningful. I want to live a life full of what you have for me, nothing more, nothing less. I want to overflow with hope because of your Spirit (Rom 15:13), which comes from my relationship with you, not from the things of this world. Help me to find all I need in you, your word, your creation, your love, and your holiness. In your son's name I pray, Amen.



DON'T STOP PRAYING

Empty Tires

Scripture - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

Always be joyful. Never stop praying.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

If we are honest, sometimes praying can feel like a task to complete rather than an experience to enjoy. We feel like we must set an appointment time, show up on our knees, close our eyes (no peeking...He'll know), and spend time impressing Him with our eloquent speech. The problem is that picture goes against what Paul tells us to do in 1 Thessalonians 5. First off, does the appointment above seem very joyful to you? Secondly, is Paul asking us to walk around on our knees, with our eyes closed, so we never stop praying? Of course not! So, what is Paul encouraging us to do? He is saying that verse 17 is a byproduct of verse 16. The joy that comes from the Gospel keeps me in constant communication with Him. The Gospel activates the effect of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit doesn't need every waking minute to be filled with an eloquent speech with eyes closed to know what we're going through. He wants us to rest in the joyful truth of the Gospel: Jesus wins.



DON'T STOP PRAYING

Empty Tires

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Thank you for the joy of the Gospel.



BE STILL

Empty Tires

Scripture - Psalms 46:10 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

“Be still, and know that I am God!
I will be honored by every nation.
I will be honored throughout the world.”

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Such a powerful statement, to “be still, and know”. It sounds so peaceful, but it’s an area many of us struggle with: to be still, to let go, and simply to trust. Surrendering control is so foreign to us, but God is so different from everything else we know. He is the beginning and the end. He is all-knowing, all-powerful, all-loving, and all-present. May we take to heart the words to be still, to trust His timing is always perfect, and remember that He is worthy of all praise and glory. Ask the Lord where you are holding on to control, struggling to be still. Journal those below asking for God’s forgiveness as you work to trust Him completely.



BE STILL

Empty Tires

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Almighty Father, you are truly awesome. You are sovereign, bringing order out of chaos, working all things for my good, even when I can't see it. Please help me where I struggle to trust you. I want to surrender these areas to you. I believe you are God, the one to be praised for the rest of my life. In your name, Amen.



LIFE IS MEANT TO BE LIVED

Empty Wells

Scripture - Ecclesiastes 8:15 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

So I recommend having fun, because there is nothing better for people in this world than to eat, drink, and enjoy life. That they will experience some happiness along with all the hard work God gives them under the sun.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Life is meant to be lived, yet in our world we are bogged down by deadlines, activities, and the relentless attack of “hurry.” Solomon lived a full life, chased all kinds of status, pleasure, and honor, yet none of it amounted to anything in his eyes. What was worth it, though? To eat, drink, and enjoy life. Our wells are meant to be filled with the small joys God provides. What are the things in this life that fill you up that you don’t often get to do? What would have to change in your life to make them happen more?



LIFE IS MEANT TO BE LIVED

Empty Wells

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Jesus, I'm sorry that I get so busy with life that I miss the small moments of joy around me. Help me be more willing to slow down and do the things that I love, with those I love. I want to enjoy the life that you have blessed me with. Amen.



THIS IS THE DAY

Empty Wells

Scripture - Psalms 118:24 NKJV

Read slowly; read more than once.

This is the day that the Lord has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

If you're reading this, then you woke up today. YAY! You are alive and seeking to become more like Jesus. Why else would you do this 40-day challenge? And today is a day we get to choose to rejoice and be glad; be glad because the Lord made it – and if we pause for just a moment, we can see the many blessings God provided just for us today. He knows what speaks to you, and He has it available for you to enjoy if you'll take a minute to notice and really appreciate it. Write down the things that bring you joy and give thanks for each one.



THIS IS THE DAY

Empty Wells

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Dear God, thank you for the gift of today, this beautiful day. Help me to sit in this moment and to appreciate the ways you are showing me your love. I want to notice the flowers, the animals, the wonderful tastes and smells, and especially the people I love in my life. Help me to not take a second of it for granted. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WHAT WE FILL OUR WELLS WITH MATTERS DEEPLY TO GOD

Empty Wells

Scripture - Luke 15:17a NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

“When he came to his senses ...”

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Have you ever taken a sip of something and realized something was off? That’s what happens when we come to our senses that we’ve been drinking from the wrong well. In this passage (Luke 15:11-32), both brothers were drawing from false wells. The younger brother drank from the well of pleasure and self-direction. The older brother’s well was obedience without intimacy and the belief that being perfect earns love. Both wells eventually run dry because neither is the well of God. God’s well fills instead of empties, heals instead of harms, and brings life instead of death. We also have wells we turn to. Look honestly at your life and name them. Maybe it’s the dry well of busyness, pleasure, or hidden idols. What would it look like to awaken to the fullness of God’s well that never runs dry?



WHAT WE FILL OUR WELLS WITH MATTERS DEEPLY TO GOD

Empty Wells

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, Father, I come to you with empty hands and a thirsty heart. I confess the wells I've chased promised much but left me dry. Thank you that your well never runs dry and your arms are always open. Draw me back to you, the source of true life. Amen.



THE BEST PART OF WAKING UP

Empty Wells

Scripture - Psalms 34:8 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him!

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

In the 80's and '90s, there was a well-recognized jingle. It went: "The best part of waking up is Folgers in your cup!" Some of you had a blast of nostalgia, a memory of the taste of mediocre coffee, or both. David makes a similar claim, though not about a cup of coffee and not just when we wake up. He calls us to the indisputable truth that God is always good. However, there are times when we question if God is good: The death of a loved one, the loss of a job, or the news of a life-altering disease. David isn't calling us to just a belief that God is good... he is calling us to experience God's goodness. In those times when David's well was empty and he questioned the goodness of God, he always came back to past experiences or tastes of the goodness of God. That's what Psalm 34:8 is calling you to today. No matter what season you are in right now, remember that God is good.



THE BEST PART OF WAKING UP

Empty Wells

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Remind me of your goodness.



DRAW NEAR

Empty Wells

Scripture - James 4:8 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinner, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

One of the most comforting promises in Scripture is that God does not play hide-and-seek with His children. James reminds us that when we intentionally move toward God, He responds by drawing near to us. We don't earn His attention, but He delights in a relationship with us. Drawing near to God often happens in simple everyday moments: a quiet prayer before work, a few minutes in Scripture, a walk in nature, or an honest conversation with Him about what is on our hearts. God welcomes us where we are, whether we feel strong in faith or spiritually dry. Sometimes we wait until we feel "good enough" before approaching God. James challenges that thinking. As we reframe our thoughts, we discover that God has been waiting with open arms all along. How can you draw nearer to God today?



DRAW NEAR

Empty Wells

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, help me draw near to you today. Quiet the distractions around me and the worries within me. Teach me to recognize your presence and to desire to be near to you. Amen.



GOD SHEPHERDS US THROUGH THE VALLEY

Empty Valleys

Scripture - Psalms 23:4-6 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

God faithfully shepherds us through every season of life, even the darkest valleys. He does not always lead us around the valley, but He lovingly walks with us through it. What valley are you facing today? Who or what are you turning to there? Bring your heart to God in the valley. He is near, and He will faithfully shepherd you through.



GOD SHEPHERDS US THROUGH THE VALLEY

Empty Valleys

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Father, you are my good Shepherd who walks with me through every dark valley. I confess that when life feels heavy, I am not always quick to turn to you. I often look to other people or things for comfort. Please draw my heart back to you and help me trust your nearness as you shepherd me through every valley of life.



I CAN'T CONTINUE ON

Empty Valleys

Scripture - 1 Kings 19:3-5, 7-8 NCV

Read slowly; read more than once.

When Elijah heard this, he was afraid and ran for his life, taking his servant with him... Then Elijah walked for a whole day into the desert. He sat down under a bush and asked to die. 'I have had enough, Lord,' he prayed. 'Let me die. I am no better than my ancestors.' Then he lay down under the tree and slept. Suddenly an angel came to him and touched him. 'Get up and eat,' the angel said... Later the Lord's angel came to him a second time. The angel touched him and said, 'Get up and eat. If you don't, the journey will be too hard for you.' So Elijah got up and ate and drank. The food made him strong enough to walk for forty days and nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Have you ever felt like you couldn't continue? Or you didn't want to continue on, to keep going?

Life is hard, but the Lord provides what we need to continue on. Do you trust Him to help you continue on?



I CAN'T CONTINUE ON

Empty Valleys

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, I trust you to help me continue on.



DRY BONES

Empty Valleys

Scripture - Ezekiel 37:14 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

"I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord"

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Have you ever been to a place that was completely desolate? The valley of dry bones would have contained so much human remains that it would be difficult to stand. Plus, these bones were dry, meaning that life has been long gone from this place. It would have been desolate, abandoned, and disgraced. Then, at the Spirit's command, Ezekiel prophesied to the bones to come alive. At Ezekiel's utterance, the process of resurrection begins. Finally, the Spirit comes and indwells each of the bodies, giving them new life. Where in your life have you experienced desolation, where all hope seems to be lost? Where do you need the Spirit's resurrecting power?



DRY BONES

Empty Valleys

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, thank you that you redeem and restore even the most desolate of places. I ask that you would come in and breathe new life into areas of our lives where it seems like hope has been lost.



THE VALLEY OF ACHOR AND THE DOOR OF HOPE

Empty Valleys

Scripture - Hosea 2:15a NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

There I will give her her vineyards and make the valley of Achor a door of hope.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

We're all familiar with trouble: whether it be financial, relational, etc. All of us have been impacted by the brokenness of the world and have been desperately in need of God's grace. Hosea 2 references Joshua 7; readers of this text would have been familiar with the event that brought grief to a nation and death to a family. Here, Hosea is speaking to a nation who has been unfaithful to God and has also experienced firsthand the valley of trouble in their own lives. Yet, Hosea's message is about redemption for the undeserving. No longer would that valley be known as trouble, but as a door of hope because of God's unconditional, unrelenting, unmerited love for His people. Where in your life have you experienced trouble? What would it look like for that place to become "a door of hope"?



THE VALLEY OF ACHOR AND THE DOOR OF HOPE

Empty Valleys

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, thank you for your grace for us. Give us grace as we navigate our troubles and forgive us for any trouble we might have caused. God, by your grace, transform our troubled, empty valleys into doors of hope.



NOTHING ELSE WILL SATISFY

Empty Valleys

Scripture - Psalms 73:26 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Sometimes in life, we find ourselves like the Psalmist, struggling with envy because unbelievers seem to be prospering without the struggles we face. This spiritual self-pity empties you of true joy, which forgets our sin and what we truly deserve from God. The Psalmist acknowledges that when he tried to understand this on his own, it only added to his anguish. When he cried out to the Lord, the Lord revealed the condition of his heart. He saw how this sin hurt him and then others, but finally, he saw that he was as arrogant toward God as the people he despised. The Psalmist's eyes are opened, and he declares, 'My flesh and heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.' He realizes if I don't have you, I have nothing – nothing else will satisfy or last.



NOTHING ELSE WILL SATISFY

Empty Valleys

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

*Lord, remind me that the stars shine brightest in the dark
and your everlasting love fills me when I find myself at
some of the lowest points of my life.*



CONSEQUENCES OF UNHEALTHY HABITS

Empty Stomachs

Scripture - Proverbs 23:1-3 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

When you sit down to eat with a ruler, observe carefully what is before you, and put a knife to your throat if you are given to appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Unhealthy habits rarely begin as major problems. Most start small—an extra indulgence, a coping mechanism, a compromise, a pattern we tell ourselves we can control. But over time, habits can begin to control us instead. Proverbs warns us to pay attention to our appetites because not everything that looks appealing is good for us. What habits, routines, or cravings in your life may be leading you away from God? Ask God to reveal any unhealthy patterns and give you the wisdom and self-control to make changes.



CONSEQUENCES OF UNHEALTHY HABITS

Empty Stomachs

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, show me any unhealthy habits that are keeping me from You. Help me recognize what is deceptive and give me the wisdom and self-control to choose what is good. Shape my desires so that I hunger more for you than for temporary comforts. In Jesus' name, Amen.



TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

Empty Stomachs

Scripture - Proverbs 25:16 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

If you have found honey, eat only enough for you, lest you have your fill of it and vomit it.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Not everything that harms us is bad in itself. Sometimes the problem is simply too much. God gives us many good gifts to enjoy, but even good things can become unhealthy when they begin to control us or consume more of our time, attention, and energy than they should. Work, hobbies, entertainment, food, social media, and even ministry can become out of balance. Where in your life might "more" not actually be better? Ask God to help you recognize areas where moderation is needed and to enjoy His gifts with wisdom and gratitude.



TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

Empty Stomachs

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, thank you for the good gifts you have placed in my life. Help me enjoy them with wisdom and self-control. Show me where I have allowed good things to take too much space in my heart or schedule. Teach me to live with balance and to keep you first in all things. In Jesus' name, Amen.



TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Empty Stomachs

Scripture - Ephesians 5:18-20 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Paul wrote this to contrast being controlled by worldly things with being controlled by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit-filled life is marked by worship, encouragement, gratitude, and joy that come from God's presence within us. This isn't a one-time event but an ongoing surrender of our hearts to God. As we create space for the Spirit to guide our thoughts and actions. God desires to fill us with His power, peace, and purpose so we can reflect Jesus to those around us. What areas of your life do you need the Holy Spirit's guidance? What is a step you can take today to surrender that area more fully to God?



TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Empty Stomachs

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, draw me near to you. Make my desires for things that fill me up with you. Thank you for the Holy Spirit and the guidance it gives me. Amen.



RUN, FORREST, RUN!

Empty Stomachs

Scripture - 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Forrest Gump ran across America “for no particular reason at all.” Most of us would probably get 1/8 of a mile down the road and have blown our ACL if we tried to do that without proper training. Training and/or discipline of the body is tough work, and it takes a lot of commitment and focus. However, the benefits are incredible! Psychological research shows it can strengthen the mind by improving self-control, emotion regulation, resilience, confidence, cognitive function, and overall well-being. Paul challenges us to view the benefits of bodily discipline through the lens of spirituality. Look at all the benefits, not only for an earthly achievement. The beauty of the Gospel is that our heavenly achievement comes, not from our works, but from accepting Jesus. We pray, we give, and we go because Jesus has already won the race.



RUN, FORREST, RUN!

Empty Stomachs

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

May I run to win souls for Jesus.



JUST ENOUGH

Empty Stomachs

Scripture - Proverbs 23:20-21 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Do not join those who drink too much wine
or gorge themselves on meat,
for drunkards and gluttons become poor,
and drowsiness clothes them in rags.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

How often do you eat or drink too much and feel good? Usually, we feel sluggish and unproductive. Even on Thanksgiving, there is groaning and pain from overindulgence, a day we can excuse away our gluttony! It can be hard to gauge what may be *just enough* in our country today. More is not always better. Proverbs says to honor our bodies and not succumb to pressure and lies that lead us to overdo it. Pray to the Lord and ask Him to reveal where you are overindulging or losing focus. Jot those areas down and seek wisdom on how to adjust your lifestyle to better care for your body, physically and spiritually.



JUST ENOUGH

Empty Stomachs

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, you have blessed me with this body. I desire to honor you with all that I have, including my physical self. Help me when my self-control is weak. I want to keep my eyes focused on you and follow your lead for my life. Thank you for your patience as I learn and grow to be healthier, both physically and spiritually.



HOPE AFTER GRIEF

Empty Hearts

Scripture - Romans 8:38-39 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

In Scripture, grief is the deep ache of a heart touched by loss. A heaviness that comes from loving in a broken world. It is not weakness, but an honest cry of a soul God sees, honors, and steps into. Scripture whispers that even in heartbreak, we are never abandoned. God holds us and He does not loosen His grip in our hour of need. Hope after grief is not impossible. It rises from the truth that grief is not the final word over our lives; God is. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.



HOPE AFTER GRIEF

Empty Hearts

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

El Roi, thank you for being the God who sees me. When my heart feels empty with grief, I know that you see me and you are sitting with me. Help me to have hope after grief because I know that this is not final. Amen.



GOD SEES AND HEARS OUR EMPTY HEARTS

Empty Hearts

Scripture - Psalms 34:15, 17-20 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry; The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Do you believe the Lord's eyes are on you and His ears are attentive to your cry? When we trust that God sees, hears, and cares for us, we can bring our empty hearts to Him. In His presence, we find nearness, comfort, and rescue. Come to the God who cares for your broken heart and crushed spirit. He is near, and He is waiting for you.



GOD SEES AND HEARS OUR EMPTY HEARTS

Empty Hearts

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Father, I confess that I often forget you see me, hear me, and care for me. Help me trust your nearness when my heart feels empty or broken. Draw me back to you, and teach me to run to your presence instead of chasing empty comforts that cannot satisfy.



BROKEN BUT NOT DESTROYED

Empty Hearts

Scripture - Psalms 62:1-5 NLT

Read slowly; read more than once.

I wait quietly before God, for my victory comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will never be shaken. So many enemies against one man—all of them trying to kill me. To them I'm just a broken-down wall or a tottering fence. They plan to topple me from my high position. They delight in telling lies about me. They praise me to my face but curse me in their hearts. Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

David starts by waiting quietly on the Lord and declaring where his victory is found; then he reflects on the people coming against him and the lies being told. David doesn't end there, though; he reminds himself to wait on the Lord and declares that his hope is in Him. You can allow yourself to listen to the lies, or you can stand firm on the truth that is found in Christ. Are you standing in the lies or waiting on the Lord?



BROKEN BUT NOT DESTROYED

Empty Hearts

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Help me to wait patiently on you, Lord, and focus on your truth, not the lies from the enemy.



GRIEF IS AN ACT OF FAITH

Empty Hearts

Scripture - Lamentations 3:19-24 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall! My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in Him.'

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Faith does not require us to ignore our grief. In Lamentations, Jeremiah openly expresses his sorrow and pain. Yet in the middle of his suffering, he remembers God's faithfulness. Biblical grief is not the absence of faith; it is choosing to bring our pain honestly before God. What grief, loss, or disappointment are you carrying today? Bring it to God, trusting that His love has not failed and His mercies are new every morning.



GRIEF IS AN ACT OF FAITH

Empty Hearts

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, thank you that I can bring my grief and sorrow to you. Help me trust even in seasons of pain; your steadfast love never ceases. Remind me that your mercies are new every morning and that you remain faithful no matter what. In Jesus' name, Amen.



FINDING TRUE JOY

Empty Hearts

Scripture - Psalms 126:5-6 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Someone said that the Dead Sea is dead because it has no outlets. If we, as people made in God's image, don't take the time to process our pain and hurt, we will find ourselves somewhat dry and dead inside. Often, people grew up without the opportunity to grieve their hurts and losses properly. They were told to simply 'suck it up' or 'get over it' or 'move on.' Our compassionate Heavenly Father does not seek to revictimize His children but wants to validate their pain and mistreatment. If we don't take the time to slow down and revisit some of these hurtful memories, we will find ourselves insensitive to others' pain. The Psalmist declares a truth about what we sow and how we grieve. We must grieve properly in order to experience true joy.



FINDING TRUE JOY

Empty Hearts

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, help us not to avoid our grief and sorrow, but to come to you and to one another to find true healing and true joy.



STAYING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT EVEN IN BUSY SEASONS

Empty Oil

Scripture - Ephesians 5:15-18 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Busy seasons can leave us spiritually drained. We rush from one responsibility to the next, often neglecting the very relationship that sustains us. Paul reminds us to live wisely and to be continually filled with the Spirit. Spiritual fullness does not happen by accident; it requires intentionally making space for God. Where have you been running on autopilot? What would it look like to slow down and invite God to refill you today?



STAYING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT EVEN IN BUSY SEASONS

Empty Oil

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, in the middle of busy days and full schedules, help me not to neglect you. Teach me to live wisely and to make time for what matters most. Fill me with your Spirit so that I can serve, lead, and love others from a place of overflow rather than exhaustion. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WHAT ARE YOU FILLING YOUR LAMP WITH

Empty Oil

Scripture - Matthew 25:1-5 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.”

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

The oil in this parable reminds us that we need a living, lasting relationship with God as we wait for Jesus' return. This kind of faith cannot be borrowed; it is formed personally, day by day. Through prayer, scripture, fasting, serving, and obedience, God fills and strengthens our hearts. What are you giving your time, attention, strength, and resources to? You are storing something up. Is it a deepening life with Jesus, or something that cannot last?



WHAT ARE YOU FILLING YOUR LAMP WITH

Empty Oil

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Father, keep me close to you as I wait for your return.

Prepare my heart, and use me to help others be ready too.

Gently reveal what distracts me, and help me store up what draws me nearer to you.



BROKEN DOWN

Empty Oil

Scripture - Psalms 139:23-24 NCV

Read slowly; read more than once.

God, examine me and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any bad thing in me. Lead me on the road to everlasting life.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Do you go to the doctor and get an annual checkup? Maybe you do because insurance covers it, but you don't think it's important. Maybe you don't because your health has been "fine" and there is no need to "waste the time." Here's the thing, checkups are important because they will run tests to check things that are more easily detected by a professional. Sometimes we ignore issues for so long that at some point we get broken down and need serious help. This is very similar in our walk with the Lord. We need to come to Him daily and ask Him to examine us because He can reveal things to us that we need to work on before we are broken down. Have you allowed the Lord to examine your heart and point out the areas He wants to help you with?



BROKEN DOWN

Empty Oil

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, I submit to your authority and ask you to examine my heart and reveal the areas that need your intervention.



LOVE DEEPLY

Empty Oil

Scripture - 1 Peter 4:8 NIV

Read slowly; read more than once.

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

Forgiveness is the oil of relationships. It reduces the friction and allows people to come close to one another. If you don't believe another person is forgiving, you will struggle to truly be open and vulnerable. If you are unforgiving, loneliness is inevitable for you. For true relationships to grow and become more intimate, there must be the security of knowing you can blow it again and again in the eyes of your friend and still be loved and totally forgiven. Peter, who experienced this firsthand from Jesus, says, 'Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.' Jesus said, '... whoever has been forgiven little loves little.' (Luke 7:47) It's only as we realize how much Jesus has forgiven us that we will find ourselves full of the oil needed to forgive others.



LOVE DEEPLY

Empty Oil

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

Lord, fill me with the oil of gladness that comes from knowing how much I am loved and forgiven. Help me forgive any grievances I might still be holding on to and reduce friction in my relationships.



FINISHING WELL MATTERS

Empty Oil

Scripture - 2 Timothy 4:7-8 ESV

Read slowly; read more than once.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Journal

Write what God is saying to you or whatever is on your heart after reading this prompt.

No one wants to start strong and finish empty. Just as a car engine needs oil to keep running, we need the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to finish our race well. Paul wrote these words near the end of his life with confidence, not regret. Through hardships, suffering, and countless opportunities to quit, he remained faithful. What does finishing well mean to you? When you look at the direction of your life, are you becoming the person God has called you to be?



FINISHING WELL MATTERS

Empty Oil

Journal

Prayer

A prayer for today. Add additional prayer as you feel led.

God, I want to finish well. Fill me with your Spirit and keep my heart close to you. When I grow weary, renew my strength. Guard me from drifting or running on empty and help me remain faithful in every season. May my life honor you from beginning to end. In Jesus' name, Amen.



PRAYER

What is prayer? How do I pray?

If you have asked those questions, you are not alone. Even Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray. In response, Jesus gave them the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)—not simply as words to repeat, but as an invitation into communion with a loving Father.

Psalm 27:4 gives us a simple rhythm: dwell, gaze, and inquire.

DWELL: Choose a consistent time and place to meet with God. To dwell means to remain; to intentionally make space for God. Whether it is a chair in the morning, a walk at lunch, or a few moments before bed, create a rhythm that helps you connect with Him.

GAZE: Turn your heart toward God.

Begin with a song, a prayer, or a scripture. As you do, ask God to quiet your heart and help you become more aware of His presence and voice. Continue turning your heart toward God through slowly and attentively reading Scripture.

INQUIRE: Talk and listen to God.

As you spend time with God, respond to what He stirs in your heart. Bring Him your questions, burdens, and requests. Listen for His voice. Keep a prayer list of people and places where you long to see His kingdom come.

Start small, stay consistent, and don't give up. Keep showing up before God with an open heart, knowing that each moment of prayer—no matter how simple—is helping you grow closer to Him.

FASTING

What is fasting? How do I fast?

Ever fill up on junk food and lose your appetite for a real meal? We do the same thing spiritually. We stuff ourselves with distractions and noise until we can barely taste the goodness of God.

Fasting is giving up something we need (*food*) for something we need even more (*God*). It's not a diet. It's about drawing near. Fasting sharpens our hunger for God. All through Scripture, God's people fasted when they needed to hear from heaven, seek His mercy, or find power beyond their own (Esther 4 and Acts 13). Jesus expected His followers to fast, saying "when you fast," not "if" (Matthew 6:16–18), and He promised the day would come when His disciples would fast (Matthew 9:15). That day is now.

How do I fast? Give up food, and drink water only for a period of time. If that stalls you out, black coffee or tea is fine (no sugar or cream). Then, replace your eating time with Scripture reading and prayer.

When do I start and stop? For a 24-hour fast, go from sundown to sundown as the Hebrew people did. If you fast only one meal, skip it entirely and give that time to prayer.

Decide the boundaries before you begin, because your flesh will negotiate, and then Satan will tempt you to quit and accuse you of failing if you do.

When hunger shows up, let it be a doorbell knocking on your heart to pray. No matter what happens, keep showing up hungry.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Journaling can be powerful and hard.

It helps participants slow down, notice God's presence, and process life. Use this guide to facilitate discussion in your group. Remind everyone that there is no "right" way to journal and that developing a healthy rhythm is more important.

To keep journaling fun, invite members to look for "*God sightings*", celebrate small wins, or write down funny or unique moments that happen. A journal can become a record of God's faithfulness and personal growth over time. No one should feel pressured to share anything they are uncomfortable discussing. Journaling can uncover difficult emotions, so help create a safe space and do your best to respond with empathy, encouragement, and prayer.

If someone is consistently struggling, gently encourage them to seek more support. They can text "NEXT" to 317-565-4911 to get connected with our Care Ministry.

Questions to use in your weekly gathering:

- What is a highlight from your journal this week? Or did any scripture, prayer, or insight stand out in your journaling?
- Where did you notice God at work in your life?
- What emotion showed up most often for you this week, and why?
- What is something you have been reminded to be grateful for?
- What is something you want to put into practice this week? How can we help?
- What is one challenge or burden you would like prayer for?



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