



21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 1, january 3: to increase in spiritual hunger and holiness

**Psalm 51:10-12:** Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of my salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

**Daniel 6:10:** Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

It was Daniel's practice, three times a day, to go to an upstairs room in his apartment, open the windows facing Jerusalem, get down on his knees, and pray to the one true God. No doubt, Daniel prayed at other times also. He probably prayed throughout the day. But there were these special times, set aside times, where it was his priority to meet with God in prayer. In fact, it was such a priority to Daniel that when the king passed a decree that for the next thirty days people could only pray to the king, Daniel was unfazed. "No way." Daniel may have been an important official in Darius' kingdom, but when the king's law (don't pray) conflicted with God's Law (pray), the choice was clear. Daniel just kept right on praying.

Read Daniel 6. Daniel was thrown in the lion's lair, but God protected Daniel, delivered Daniel, honored Daniel, and put it in the Bible for all to see.

Of the many truths in this stunning chapter, one concerns Daniel's prayer. Three times a day, he set aside a special time to pray. God nowhere commands us that we must do the same, but there is wisdom here. Wisdom would suggest a special time, or several briefer times, set aside each day to meet with God in prayer. A time we prize. A time we protect. A time we prioritize.

Yes, we want to pray throughout the day, an ongoing conversation with our Father. But it is wise to also have a special time of prayer each day. Maybe it's not a long time, but it is your time, as in you and God. It is your time to talk and listen and be together, no matter what else happens that day. Your time to connect. During that time, God will fill you up, restore your soul, and prepare you for whatever the day brings.

### reflect:

- Describe your thoughts around Daniel and his commitment to the Lord.
- What special time will you set aside in the next 21 days to talk and listen to God?

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### prayer:

Lord, awaken my heart to Your love. Give me an increased hunger to spend more time in prayer, worship, and Your Word. Please give me a greater awareness of Your holiness, a tender conscience, and a heart to please You in every thought, word, and deed.

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## day 2, january 4: to draw close to the Lord

**Psalm 24:3-4:** Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.

**Psalm 32:5:** Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.” And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

How can I sincerely draw close to a God who is all powerful, all knowing, and fully aware of all the reasons I do not belong in His presence? Is it really safe? Is this really what God desires?

It is a common malady of this Christian life to face serious insecurities when considering approaching God. In my own life, I have experienced many dark seasons of feeling unworthy or uniquely disqualified from this privilege. Why the struggle? Because I know me! I know my propensity to sin. I know my inability to give God the righteousness He deserves. If I were Him, I wouldn't be pleased to have me come near.

Praise God. He knows we have these struggles. And, He has an answer.

First, my confidence in drawing near to God is not based on my performance. My confidence is in the performance of Jesus. Hebrews 4 instructs us to come to God with boldness based on our full confidence in the finished work of Jesus on our behalf.

And second, my confidence in drawing near to God is based on His love. I can trust His love for me. And strangely enough, the very things in my life that appear to disqualify me – sin, weakness, failure, flaws, etc. – provide convincing proof of God's love. If someone says they love you, but are not familiar with your past failures or current weaknesses, you cannot be sure they really love you. But if they are fully aware of the good and the 'ugly' and love you anyway, you are truly loved. Praise God! He knows it all and loves us anyway. My sin and weakness become my opportunity to really know He loves me. I can really trust His love for me.

Today we draw near to God. We do this by uncovering the 'ugly' side. We confess our sin. We reveal the part of our life that puts His love for us to the test (at least in our minds). And praise God again... He proves His love. He forgives and loves us anyway.

### **reflect:**

- It's not until we recognize the depth of our sin that we realize the depth of God's love. What sins have you minimized to 'little mistakes' versus acknowledging they are what nailed Jesus to the cross? According to Romans 2:4, what leads us to repentance?
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### **prayer:**

Heavenly Father, reveal anything in my life that would hinder my ability to come into Your presence. Help me see my propensity towards sin and help me to change. Help me to see my sin the way You see it. Thank You for loving me in spite of my failures. Lord, it is your loving-kindness that leads me to repentance.

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## day 3, January 5: to worship with a whole heart

**Psalm 111:1:** Praise the Lord. I will extol the Lord with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly.

**Psalm 27:8:** My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek.

In You, O God, I find my identity. When I come to seek You, I find that You are already here, seeking me. What gives my worship meaning is so much more than anything that I can do or say - it is You! You are the reason I came to exist, You are the giver of my next breath, and You are the reason for my continued being. You are the reason I worship. I worship You with my whole heart.

I come to worship You because of who You are! You are the one and only true God! I bring You praise because of Your holiness. You are so gracious to me, and You have already done more than enough for me to bring You thanksgiving. I worship You.

May my life bring glory to You, my Lord and my God. I want to worship You with my whole heart. I am not ashamed to declare my love and adoration for You before others. All I am is Yours, and I belong to you. I am Your possession. May You be pleased with my worship.

I long to recapture a spirit of genuine worship, a personal revival of my whole being, heart, soul, and spirit. Heaven and earth declare Your glory, O God, and therefore so do I. All of creation submits to You, and so my life is surrendered to You. I am willing to do Your will. How can I be in Your presence and not be changed? I long to be the kind of worshipper that You have been looking for, fully devoted to You. I worship You with my whole heart.

### reflect:

- How has being in God's presence changed you?
- Because everything we do can be an act of worship, how does this affect your view and more so, your attitude about common, everyday tasks?

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### prayer:

Humbly and yet confidently, I come into Your presence. I am relying on the promise of Christ, providing me the relationship with You as my Heavenly Father. Bring me fully into Your presence O God. Lead me more fully into Your will so that every day of my life will be worship, offering a living sacrifice to bring You glory.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 4, January 6: to set the desire of your heart

**Psalm 27:4:** One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.

**Psalm 37:4:** Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

When it comes to setting our hearts in the proper place, there may be no better example outside of Jesus than an obscure often forgotten figure in the Old Testament named Ezra. He didn't lead the first wave of exiles back to Jerusalem; he led the second. He wasn't a powerful military leader, just a scribe. He didn't even show up in the book that bore his name until chapter 7 (out of only 10). But once Ezra arrived on the scene, he arrived in force.

We learn that the hand of God was all over this man (Ezra 7:6,9,28). That he successfully led 5,000 people with 30 tons of precious metals on a four month, 900 mile journey from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra 8). That he was supremely concerned about holiness and the purity of God's people (Ezra 9). And that he ultimately led God's people to repentance like few other scenes we read in scripture (Ezra 10).

So what's the point? The point is that all of Ezra's success can be Biblically directed back to the place where he set his heart. This is the key to Ezra's life of leadership and a clear guide to success with God in our own lives. Set your heart to the study of God's word. Set your heart to doing God's word. And set your heart to giving God's word away.

### reflect:

- The world needs more people like Ezra. Where will you set your heart?
- According to Matthew 6:33, what should you seek first?

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### prayer:

Lord I want You to be the top priority of my life with nothing even close in second place. Help me, Father, to love You more than I ever have before. I want You to fill my heart, all of it, so Your love and grace can flow richly through me to everyone I come in contact with.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 5, January 7: to walk in wisdom and revelation

**Psalm 43:3:** Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.

**Ephesians 1:17-18:** I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and the incomparably great power for us who believe.

Too often we slide slowly into the normalcy of pretending and stay there unaware. With this strange statement, I mean that as Christ Jesus has resurrected our souls by His grace, we know that light and life only come from Him. We are convinced of this emphatic truth. We've looked elsewhere for life and have been awakened to its emptiness. But sadly, we often return there slowly and sink into the gray of unintentional motion, conditioned responses, and banal routine.  
Lord Jesus, Open our eyes!

James, the leader of the Jerusalem church, reminds us that when we lack wisdom, we should ask it of God who gives generously. In Psalm 43, the Psalmists confesses that God's light and God's truth are the only reliable leaders, for they bring us to where He is.

God of Heaven, Lead us with your light and truth!

As we continue our way into this consecrated season of prayer and fasting, we are coming together as a church praying that God would lead us, open our eyes, and give us the moving power of His Spirit in a fresh and awakening way. This prayer is a heart-felt, guttural, straining desire to return to True Reality, God's light and life. We know that Christ Jesus has resurrected our souls by His grace and that light and life, along with wisdom and revelation, come only from Him.

### reflect:

- Where have you sensed God giving you the gift of wisdom and discernment in your life?
- James tells us that God will give us wisdom if we ask. Will you ask Him for wisdom? He promises to give it to you when you ask.

### prayer:

Lord, open my eyes to see You more clearly and my ears to hear anything You desire to speak. I pray for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation that I might know Jesus more deeply and have a profound understanding of the hope that is in His heart for me.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 6, January 8: to be filled with power and purpose

**Psalm 61:3 & 5:** For you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe. For you, God, have heard my vows; you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.

**Psalm 92:11:** My eyes have seen the defeat of my adversaries; my ears have heard the rout of my wicked foes.  
**Romans 15:13:** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

As we near the end of the first week of fasting, you may be tired. You may be wondering how you will be able to fast for two more weeks. It reminds me of how often in life we feel tired. Physically tired, spiritually tired, emotionally tired. We have so many things pulling at our time and making us tired. Our daily task lists just seem to get longer and longer with less and less time for rest. Do you ever have those days where you just feel completely drained? Like you have nothing left to give? I often ask myself, “How can I fulfill the purpose God has for me when I feel like I have no more to give?” The answer is simple. God’s Word, the Bible.

Jesus tells us in John 15:1-4, “I am the vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful...Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.”

It takes discipline to keep our devotions at the top of the priority list. Especially, when there are so many other things fighting to be at the top of the list. The Bible is very clear though, in that if we are to bear fruit we must stay connected to the vine. He will prune us to bear fruit and cut off what is not bearing fruit for His purpose. God does have a plan and a purpose for each and every one of us. We must remain in Him to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. If we put God first and stay connected to Him, He will give us the strength and power to do the tasks He has set before us.

**reflect:**

- What areas of your life are not bearing fruit and can be pruned?
- Where will you find more time in your schedule to stay connected to the Vine?

**prayer:**

Father God, I pray for You to help me stay connected to the Vine. Lord, I desire You in every aspect of my life. Please prune off the things that are not important and get in the way of my time with You. I know that I can only fulfill your purpose for me by being filled with Your Holy Spirit.

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## day 7, January 9: to find and fulfill your destiny

**Psalms 139:24b:** ...lead me in the way everlasting.

**Psalms 18:36:** You provide a broad path for my feet, so that my ankles do not give way.

**Psalms 37:23:** The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in Him.

**Psalms 44:18:** Our hearts had not turned back; our feet had not strayed from your path.

So often, we are the ones to decide what we want to be or do with our life. As children, we are asked “what do you want to be when you grow up?” There is an unspoken pressure to decide, and then somewhere around your junior or senior year in high school, it becomes spoken with a deadline affixed to your sophomore year in college. But, finding and fulfilling our destiny can only be done in God.

Joseph was given a dream, David had an encounter with a prophet, and Joshua had a mentor. In all three cases, God conveyed His plan into the lives of these individuals. Jeremiah wrote that God has a plan for your life and when you seek Him, you will discover your destiny (Jeremiah 29:11- 13). Moreover, you find out His plan is far superior to yours.

Holding on to the dream is tough when you face prison time and accusation as Joseph did. The words of the prophet can fade away when you find yourself hiding and living in caves, as David did. The disciplines of your apprenticeship imparted by a mentor can become a lonely place when he is gone, as Joshua discovered.

However, all three experienced what Mary said in Luke 1:37, “no word from God is without power”. It is only the word from God that can sustain you in the long term. His plan for our lives is better than our own. The greatest joy, fulfillment, and success come when we seek Him about the direction for our lives and commit to follow His plan for us.

### reflect:

- Where do you believe God is leading you?
- Are you willing to surrender your plan to discover and live out His plan for you?

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### prayer:

Lord, please give me the next step in Your Divine plan for my life. Help me to be still and know that You are God, so that I can clearly sense Your guidance and hear from You. I commit to follow You, forever.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 9: January 11: to be saved and delivered

**Psalm 18:2:** The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

**Psalm 16:11:** You make known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

**Acts 16:31 (AMP):** Believe in and on the Lord Jesus Christ—that is, give yourself up to Him, take yourself out of your own keeping and entrust yourself into His keeping, and you will be saved; [and this applies both to] you and your household as well

To hide his identity, let's call him 'Andrew.' He was 17 years old, grew up in a strong Christian home, and was clearly loved and cared for. He was close to graduating from high school, but the past few months had taken a turn for the worse.

Andrew was a smart kid, but academics were not his forte. His friends joked, "Andrew will work at McDonald's for his entire life." They thought it was funny. Andrew laughed about it on the outside, but grew more broken inside. He began to think that if that's the way people thought of him, then he would live into it.

Early in the school year, he began to use drugs and drink alcohol with his friends. He kept it a secret from his family; he thought they would not understand. In the dark, his addictions grew, moving to harder drugs. His family tried every method to get through to him. They tried punishment, and Andrew would rebel more. They tried loving him in every way they could think of, and he rebelled more. His family was exhausted and confused. They came to a place where they finally realized that the situation was out of their hands - placing it entirely in God's hands.

His family cannot explain it, nor can he really, but when things seemed most hopeless, God saved him. Andrew struggles to put it into words, but somehow, somehow, he felt the love of God, and that altered the course of his life. It was almost as if a light when on inside him; the blinders were off. He was saved and delivered into the love of God. His family counts all of their failed attempts and gives God the glory for doing in Andrew what human beings could not.

### reflect:

- Who does your heart ache for God to deliver and save?
- Will you trust that God will do the impossible in their lives?
- In this painful and confusing time, will you trust God to be your rock? Take refuge in Him.

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### prayer:

Father, I pray for the hurting and lost of this world. I ask that You do what only You can in the life of \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name). Be their Rock, their Redeemer. Use me in effective ways to show Your love. Enter into the hearts of those far from You. Be their Savior; deliver them into a transforming relationship with You. I pray for any loved ones by name who do not know the Lord or have fallen away from You. I ask You to reveal Yourself to them as the awesome God that You are. I pray a hedge of protection around my family from all deception, temptation, and any plans of the enemy that would thwart the good plans God has for them.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 11, January 13: to be healed and reconciled

**Psalm 107:20:** He sent out his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.

**Psalm 147:3:** He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

**Malachi 4:6:** He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.

The Scripture says in Matthew 4:1, “Jesus was led up by the (Holy) Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” It was God the Holy Spirit that placed Jesus in that desert for that particular time. There are no mistakes in God’s plan. There is no plan B. We only know His complete plan for our lives as we look backward. A.W. Tozer said, “To the child of God, there is no such thing as an accident. Accidents may indeed appear to befall him and misfortune stalk his way; but these evils will be so in appearance only and will seem evil only because we cannot read the secret script of God’s hidden providence.”

Our whole perspective of life changes when we find ourselves facing overwhelming temptation, tragedy, or any hard situation that needs real healing or reconciliation. This happened to a Pastor friend of mine. His son and daughter-in-law, upon graduating from Bible school in Arlington, Texas, with a great ministry to the Mexican people before them, encountered some problems that provoked the son to think God did not really care for him, so he decided to quit the ministry. He was determined to separate himself from God. He stopped praying and reading scripture and instead began drinking and staying out at night, etc. But on his way to inform the missions director of his decision, the son came around a curve, just outside of New Orleans, Louisiana and a tractor trailer, trying to avoid hitting a deer as it crossed the highway, plowed into his car, causing him to go to the hospital. Now he really believed God did not love Him. But during the next six months, God brought him back to good health, but most importantly reconciled him back to Himself.

I have been there; we all have been there in one sense or another. The Lord occasionally does the same with all of us, testing our faith, leading us into hardship, teaching us wisdom, showing us His ways, changing our course on this journey called life, calling us back to Himself—in the process healing us spiritually and sometimes physically. Our first reaction is usually anger, panic, and a sense of ‘why is this happening to me if you love me so much, Lord?’ But remember that deeper secret of the Christian life: “When we are in a difficult place, the Lord has placed us there, for reasons known for now only to Himself.”

The writer, Mackintosh, in referring to the Israelites leaving Egypt comments, “the sea was before them, Pharaoh’s army behind them, and mountains around them. And in all this, be it observed, permitted and ordered of God.” We are where we are today because God permitted it. As someone has said, “Nothing gets to the child of God unless it passes through His Hands first.”

Sometimes, circumstances beyond our control can push us off the thin wire we walk on in this thing called life. It could be the ringing of a phone, a knock on the door, a text, an email. We fall immediately into worry and fear that separates us from God, from our friends, our spouses, etc. How can we not worry or fear when our outflow exceeds our income, when a loved one is diagnosed with cancer, when layoffs occur at the company and our name is on the list, when our child is hurt or even killed, or our spouse wants to walk out. What is our hope? Where do we look for guidance in times like that?

We must pray to the One who has control over everything. We must ask Him to do what only He can do. And, we must consult the Scriptures for guidance and hope. Remember these men and women:

Hagar, a single mom, was forced into a desert with her boy where they nearly died of thirst. Joseph, desiring to be used of God, was seized, stripped, sold, and imprisoned in Egypt. David, anointed by Samuel, was pursued by Saul’s army. Most of the Lord’s disciples, who followed the Lord’s command to evangelize the world, died horrible deaths. The Lord Himself, fulfilling the Father’s will, was nailed on a cross until dead.

Peter wrote in I Peter 4:12, “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you. . .” In other words, we should not be surprised when we find ourselves trapped in painful, frightening, difficult, or impossible situations. As a matter of fact, these things are to be expected in this venture of following Christ. *(continued on pg. 12...)*







# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## PRAYER FOR OUR COMMUNITY

### day 14, January 16: to be a habitation for God's presence

**Psalm 100:3:** Know that the Lord is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.

**Psalm 95:7-8:** For He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, the flock under His care. Today, if only you would hear His voice, "Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness."

**1 Timothy 2:8:** Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.

**Matthew 13:58:** And He did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

Oh, how Matthew 13:58 breaks my heart because I so desire that God be active in my community! Therefore, I must pray.

Several times in scripture we see God looking for a person who will stand in the gap for a people, a nation, or the land. He desires to come with blessing, healing, and salvation and is looking for someone, or a group of someones, to agree with Him by paving the way for His coming in prayer.

The Biblical record reveals the Lord descended with His presence on Nineveh, Antioch, Ephesus, and Jerusalem as well as other cities. Today, we have documented reports of the same kind of Divine activity in over 1,000 communities in the past several years.

The thought resounds: why not here; why not now? It is possible because our heavenly Father wants to exalt His Son over our community. There is not a formula to accomplish this, but there are some things we should give ourselves to as we invite Him to come.

Christian researchers have discovered all 1,000 communities that are experiencing God's abiding presence have five things in common.

- Persevering spiritual leadership
- United efforts of prayer
- Social justice and reconciliation, compassion evangelism
- Public Power Encounters
- Spiritual Mapping/Diagnostic Research: what's going on in your community, what are the desperate needs?

So, let's get to it! Find out who the spiritual leaders of our community are and pray for them regularly. Attend community-wide prayer events where Christians gather to pray for the community. Pray for social justice and compassion efforts to rise up and be successful. Join in public displays of your faith with other believers. Lastly, ask God to give wisdom about transforming the underlying issues in our community where powers and principalities derive their power.

#### reflect:

- How will you play a role in bringing God's presence to our community?
- In what areas can you play a leadership role in providing united efforts of prayer with Christ followers, fighting for social justice, or showing Christ's compassion to our community?

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#### prayer:

Heavenly Father, I lift up my neighbors before You Lord, asking for Your presence to fill the atmosphere so that they will hear You speak and see You work in their lives. Right now I pray for all of my neighbors by name. and I ask, God, that You will reveal Yourself to each one of them.



# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 15, January 17: to value integrity

**1 Samuel 16:7b:** The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

**Proverbs 4:23:** Above all else, guard your heart. For EVERYTHING you do flows from it.

**Matthew 5:8:** Blessed are the PURE in heart, for they will see God.

If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a noise? Whether a noise is heard or not, the fallen tree is dead, and there is now a hole in the forest. There is impact. It has been said integrity is what you do when no one is looking. Does it matter what you do when no one is looking? Do you think there is really an impact? How about with your relationship with God?

God looks at the heart. We cannot hide this from Him. The core of who we are, He knows. What we look at, think about, talk of, and act on is all made clear to our Creator. Integrity is from the heart.

Poor integrity does not protect the heart; rather, it tries to destroy it and disobeys God. Good integrity protects the heart, keeps it pure, heals, and ultimately obeys God.

Consistent poor integrity that disobeys God is defiance to God. It slowly builds a brick wall in between us and God until we can hardly hear Him at all. Poor integrity hinders our connection with God.

Good Integrity is not being perfect. It is humbling, repentant, and obedient to God even when no one is watching. Read more about private behavior in Matthew 6:5-6 and Matthew 25:31-46.

### reflect:

- Do you value integrity?
- Why does God choose to look at the heart of a person?
- How might God use your integrity to impact the people around you?

### prayer:

Father, I know you can see my thoughts and know them completely. I want to be obedient to you. Allow others to see that you change me from the inside out.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 16, January 18: to be cleansed of sin

**Psalm 25:18:** Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins.

**Nehemiah 1:6b, 8-9 (NIV):** I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s house, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you. Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.’

In a meeting of diverse Christian leaders someone said, “the church in our city needs to repent.” One response to the statement was, “what do we need to repent for?” Then the individual asking the question went on to talk about all the good things the church in that city was doing and finished by trying to make the case that there was not a need for repentance and the seeking of forgiveness from God, but rather the favor of God was resting on the city.

1 John 1:8-10 says, “if we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.”

The Scriptures reveal the sinfulness of cities such as Sodom, Gomorrah, Nineveh, and other cities too. Those that repented and turned to God were blessed and those that did not, well, some of them do not even exist anymore.

God loves to take a sinful city and turn it into a revival center. He did just that in Antioch, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Nineveh, and more recently in Cali Columbia, Fiji, Guatemala, Uganda, Brazil, and hopefully very soon in our own community.

How does it happen that an entire community or city repents to the extent that it gets God’s attention and a transformation begins to occur? It begins by individuals getting honest with God, confessing their sin, and crying out to Him for forgiveness and freedom.

The real question is not, can it happen in our community, but will you allow it to happen in you? Let’s be honest before God about those things in our heart. Confess our sins to Him and repent!

### reflect:

- Imagine what our community would look like if a true transformation occurred among Christ followers. What are some things that would look different?
- Will you pray for the revival to begin in you?

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### prayer:

Holy God, I understand that a city or region cannot receive Your blessing if it is built on sin and bloodshed. That type of foundation causes the people to labor and gain nothing. Lord, we humbly ask Your mercy and for Your forgiveness to be poured out in the community we live in. Lord, at this time I also name the specific sins that I am aware of such as injustices or covenant breaking, and I repent of them. I ask that You use me in my community wherever you desire so that You are glorified and seen in our midst.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 17, January 19: to experience revival

**Psalm 86:6:** Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?

**Psalm 80:18-19:** Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name. Restore us, Lord God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

It is pointed out that 2 Chronicles 7:14 is addressed specifically to Israel. That is true. But surely the passage shows God's heart for any people, any land. What does God want from us? First, we must humble ourselves. We must admit that God is God and we are not. We must submit to God and come to Him in brokenness and repentance.

*2 Chronicles 7:14: If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

Second, we must pray and seek God's face. No revival or awakening comes without prayer. Extensive prayer. Fervent prayer. Corporate prayer. Continual prayer.

It is worth noting that the prayer here is focused on seeking God's face and not God's hand. We are seeking God for Himself and not for what He gives us. We are locked in on God's glory, not on our need.

Third, we must turn from our wicked ways. God wants obedience, not religious ceremony. We cannot just say the words of repentance and pray the prayers of repentance. We must do the deeds of repentance and obey God in every part of life.

If we do these three things, then God promises to respond in three ways. First, He will hear us. He will hear those prayers. Second, He will forgive our sin. He will remove our sin as far as the east is from the west. And third, God will heal our land. He will pour out His favor and blessing upon us.

In 1861, Abraham Lincoln had just been elected President. The nation was tottering on the brink of war. There was cruel slavery in the land.

The President faced widespread opposition and hostility. He issued a proclamation for our country, a proclamation which expresses the spirit of this passage.

*"Whereas a joint committee of both houses of Congress has waited on the President of the United States and requested him to recommend a day of public humiliation, prayer and fasting to be observed by the people of the United States with religious solemnities, and the offering of fervent supplications to Almighty God for the safety and welfare of these states, his blessing on their arms, and a speedy restoration of peace. And whereas it is fit and becoming in all people at all times to acknowledge and revere the supreme government of God, to bow in humble submission to his chastisement, to confess and deplore their sins and transgression, in the full conviction that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to pray with all fervency and contrition for the pardon of their offenses and for a blessing upon their present and prospective action. Therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do appoint the last Thursday in September next as a day of humiliation, prayer and fasting, for all the people of the nation. And I do earnestly recommend to all the people, and especially to all ministers and teachers of religion of all denominations, and to all heads of families, to observe and keep that day, according to their several creeds and modes of worship, in all humility, and with all religious solemnity, to the end that the united prayer of the nation may ascend to the Throne of Grace, and bring down plentiful blessings upon our country." Abraham Lincoln*

### reflect:

- During this time of prayer and fasting, have you humbled yourself before God?
- How will you continue having a humbled state before God when our 21 days of prayer and fasting end? Is there a practice you can commit to, such as kneeling before Him at the beginning of everyday to recognize Who He is?
- How will you continue to pray and seek God's face when our 21 days are over?

### prayer:

Father, I pray for a marketplace revival to sweep through our community and for revival to break out in Your streets, in schools, government, business, media, entertainment, and congregations – especially in Your congregations as we are reflecting who You are. I ask, Lord, that You raise up dedicated Christians who will become a voice to reform our region and to make a difference in the lives of all who live here.

# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 18, January 20: to uphold righteousness and justice

**Psalm 89:14:** Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

**Matthew 6:33:** But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

My stomach dropped into my shoes as my eyes grew big. I had just heard that there are more slaves in the world today than at any other point in history. How can that be true? In the progressive post-abolition culture that we live in, how can there be over 27 million slaves worldwide? And how could there have been over 1,000 calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline in the past four years from the state of Michigan? Surely slavery doesn't happen here in West Michigan. But it does, and the reason is because there is heartbreaking injustice in the world.

As Christ followers, God makes it clear that we are to take a stand against injustice and fight for those who do not have the ability to fight for themselves. "Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow." (Isaiah 1:17 NIV) When I compare this command to the statistics of injustices like human trafficking, poverty, homelessness, domestic abuse, and so many others, I begin to feel helpless. How do we even begin to act justly when injustice seems to be taking over? Where do we start?

The best place that we can start is where many great Biblical leaders before us have started. With prayer. Look to the examples of men like Moses, Ezra, and Nehemiah who turned first to God and pleaded for His guidance and intervention. These men saw God change the attitudes of kings and rulers to move in ways that were beyond what they had imagined. The rulers of their day who were once set against God allowed a nation to be freed from slavery, a temple to be rebuilt by an exiled people, and a city wall to be built up in only 52 days. Each of these men were guided in their work by the One who has a passion for those under unjust oppression.

There is an overwhelming amount of work to be done to solve the injustices in our world today. So where do we begin to stem the tide of heartbreak?

The best place, the only place to start, is on our knees asking God to give us His wisdom and discernment as we work to uphold justice in our circles of influence. Don't hesitate to ask boldly for Him to move the hearts of those with greater influence as well – our leaders, politicians, and media. Our call is to uphold righteousness and justice in the world around us, but God, just like the leaders whose stories are recorded in the Bible, God does not leave us alone in that task.

### reflect:

- What injustices cause your heart to break?
- Where is God giving you influence to fight injustice?

### prayer:

Father God, Your Word shows that You care deeply for those that are suffering under injustice. Thank You for Your father heart that upholds the oppressed. I ask that You would be with our leaders and work through them as You have so many times throughout history. Give them a passion to establish just laws and the wise discernment they need to solve issues. Where there is a lack of passion, move in their hearts to create an urgency to uphold justice. Give me a fire to stand for those who are suffering all kinds of injustice. Show me how I can work to influence those around me, and move in my own community to show Your love and compassion. May Your Kingdom come even now!

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 19, January 21: to experience God's presence and power

**Psalm 43:3-4:** Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.

I remember the first time I really felt the presence of God. Not those moments of 'Jesus Chills' where you know the Spirit is leading you on to something, but the first time there was weight and a person alongside, that Presence when the Holy Spirit wasn't just prompting, but came down in force. It all happened when I was 17 and had just met up with the person I was dating at the time. We were living in separate towns over the summer, and our relationship wasn't a good one. We were untrusting, bitter, and often vaguely angry at each other, so most times when we met, it was an opportunity to fight like cats and dogs. However, that day instead of the bitterness and anger I expected, I saw peace in her eyes. I saw a change; I saw someone with depth. We talked for two hours and then parted ways. While I was starting my old maroon Ford Tempo to go home, I muttered a quick but sincere prayer of, "God I don't know what she has with You, but that's what I need." I then started to drive home.

And then it happened. It felt like something descended on my little car, and for the first time I knew peace. I felt so relieved, I laughed to myself and then I cried, realizing all the hurt I had done to others. I then realized that people who were laughing and crying should probably not be driving 60 mph down country roads, so I pulled the car over and prayed about what was happening. I talked to the Holy Spirit as He dwelt in my little Tempo... and life has never been the same.

### reflect:

- Have you met and encountered the Holy Spirit of God? When and where was that? What led up to that encounter?
  - How are you different because of that moment? What has changed in and around you because of that?
  - As we begin to draw our time of fasting to a close, where has God shown up?
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### prayer:

God, I pray that Your Spirit comes down in real and powerful ways in my life. Come alongside me today and demonstrate who You are. Show me the power of Your radical love, show me who I am because of what You have done, and show me how that can impact those around me with Your will and love. Come alongside me in my interactions with others, in my conversations with You, and in how I treat my family and my friends. Be near to me, show me Your presence and Your power, and make me a different person because of how You love me. But more than anything, I pray that You show up in my life. I acknowledge that there is no church, there is no faith without You, and so I pray that You are present and vibrant in all that I think, say, and do.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 20, January 22: to be filled with God's glory

Psalm 22:27-28: All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations.

Habakkuk 2:14: For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

At a time when Israel was rebellious, immoral, and indifferent towards God, Moses prayed, "Lord, show me Your glory!" God was quick to respond to this prayer. And Moses saw with his own eyes a portion of the glory of God. But he also heard the voice of God declaring His glory:

God defined His glory by describing His nature. "I am the Lord, God! I am compassionate, merciful, loving and forgiving. And I am perfectly just and will not excuse the guilty."

"Yahweh! The Lord God! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations. I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin. But I do not excuse the guilty. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children and grandchildren; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations." Exodus 34:6-7

So when we pray for God's glory to come, we are praying for His nature to overwhelm our nature. We are seeking His nature to drive out the influence of sin nature, demonic nature, or any influence in a region or culture that is counter to Him.

This hour for us is not unlike the time when Moses prayed this great prayer. We, too, are at time when our nation and the world have never been so contentious with God. The name of Jesus stirs deep resentment in many people. Holiness is rare. Morality is in rapid decline. And the church of Jesus Christ is in a battle for its existence. In America, 3,500-4,000 churches a year close their doors. Churches lose 2.7 million people a year to nominalism or secularism. And 1,500 pastors a month are leaving the ministry. (*Barna stats*)

Moses could have prayed, "God meet our needs." But this circumstance demanded so much more than "meet our needs." He prayed, "Show me Your glory!"

We are in a desperate place today. We join our hearts in intercession to pray, "God, show us Your glory!" Overwhelm the numbness of our hearts with Your fire. Revive me with Your presence. Show Your glory in the church. Show us Your glory in America and all over the world.

"Father God, Show us Your Glory!"

### reflect:

- Will you begin to pray, "Lord, show us Your glory" so that the world will see and know Him?
- What does it look like to be the 'salt and light' in the work place, school, or neighborhood you live in?

### prayer:

Sovereign God, I pray that the believers in our community would be a city set on a hill and 'salt and light' to the world. I ask that we would influence other nations with righteousness. I pray You give me Your perspective on reaching this world with the Love of Jesus. Lord, instill in me a passion to join You in the mission of pursuing people to know You so that You are glorified among all nations and peoples. Lord, may I hunger and thirst after You and desire that for all people.

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# 21-day prayer guide prayer for your personal life

## day 21, January 23: to continue to seek God first

**Psalm 9:10:** Those who know your name trust in You, for You, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek You.  
**Jeremiah 29:13:** You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

**1 Chronicles 29:13:** Now devote your heart and soul to seeking the Lord your God.

**Colossians 3:2:** Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

I remember when I first met my husband and was interested in him. I looked for opportunities to run into him. I deliberately sought out ways I could have a conversation with him. I was curious about him and wanted to learn more about him, and I confess that I chased after him. We laugh about it now because he was more shy than I was, and I was determined to get to know him. And it worked. We will be celebrating our 30th anniversary this year.

For the last 21 days, we have been chasing after God as we pray and fast. We have deliberately chosen to focus on Him and seek His presence. We have deliberately chosen to take time to read His Word and listen to His voice. For some of us, we can honestly say we didn't really 'hear' from God in a profound way during this time. For others, this has been an amazing time of growth, and we have felt His guidance and direction about something we were seeking. Regardless of what we have learned through this time or if we have 'cheated' on something we were going to fast from, these past 21 days have been crucial to us because we have obeyed God's command to seek His presence. It is always a beautiful thing when we chase after God and we put Him first because we desire to know Him more. And He promises us that when we seek Him, He will be found.

As we conclude our 21 days of prayer and fasting, it is important to ask, "Now what?" How can you remain committed to seeking Him? Very simply, decide to love God and seek Him. That's right, decide.

Look for opportunities to spend time with Him and to learn from Him. Daily. Decide to chase after Him and not the things of this life that quickly distract us from Him. Daily. Give Him your whole heart. Daily. Look for Him in each day, through people, circumstances, the Bible, and creation. Daily. It will take intention, effort, desire, and time. But it will be so worth it as your relationship with Him grows, develops, and you fall more and more in love with Him. Hebrews 11:6 says that God will reward those who earnestly seek Him.

Will you continue to earnestly seek after the God of this universe who loves you completely and desires to walk with you daily? The reward will be great because God is great!

### reflect:

- How will you continue to pray daily and seek God through Scripture now that our 21 days of prayer and fasting are ending?
- Will you pray daily for a hunger and a thirst to chase after God and seek His presence?
- What will you commit to intentionally doing so that you are seeking God daily?

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### prayer:

Father God, thank You for these last 21 days of focusing on You. Thank You for the promise that You will be found when I seek You. Thank you that You don't hide from me but that You constantly draw me near to You. Please put a hunger and a thirst in my life for You Lord. You are so beautiful. So amazing. So forgiving. So good. And I am deciding to chase after You with all of my heart from this day on. Daily. Lord, may I put You first and seek Your face. Daily. I love you, Lord and I want to love and know You more. Amen.

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