



GETTING
TO
KNOW

GOD

Getting to Know God

"If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. For everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament new and better than the Old, everything that is distinctively Christian, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God the Father."

J. I. Packer



GETTING
TO
KNOW

GOD

QUIET TIME

Daily time alone with God is the most talked about, yet least practiced aspect of a Christian's life. We will never make time for God until we realize we can't live without it. The King of the Universe wants to reveal Himself and His love to us daily. He wants to help us succeed and fill us with His joy. Alone, we can't distinguish God's way from the world's way - or when we see the difference, we often follow the world anyway. We fill our lives with more work, more things, more headaches, and have less time to spend enjoying God and preserving our sanity.

It is harder today than ever before to have a devotional life. Technology has enabled others to think for us. The need for solitude and quietness is crucial.

- 1) Begin with prayer. Ask for God's wisdom as you read Scripture. Ask for a clear mind so you can concentrate on God's Word.
- 2) Take notes on what you read. God speaks to us through His Word. Write things down so you can return to them later.
- 3) Choose a favorite verse from the passage. Use the truth from that verse to help you pray about something that might need attention in your life. This will help you meditate on it and pray about it throughout the day.

God loves to have us come to Him with our burdens and our business, but He also wants to hear words of love and worship, as well as expressions of adoration and thanksgiving.



Day 1, January 5 – OUR EVER-PRESENT GOD

Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand.

Psalm 73:23

God does not leave you when times are tough, but is always there. The word that expresses this concept is “omnipresent”. It means that God is always equally present everywhere. He is not limited by human time frames but exists in the past, present, and future simultaneously. Since God created time, this is natural and effortless for Him. He loves you and wants you to experience the comfort of this fact. You may not always sense His presence, but He is there. In the year that lies ahead, there will be various blessings and sorrows He has designed for you to walk through with Him. You may feel you need Him to “carry you through” at some points but know this, He will never abandon you. The supplies needed for this journey are already in place, carefully selected by a loving God. Let the experiences God has planned fill you with joy that spreads to others and strengthens them in their faith.

“The universe that God created finds the Creator everywhere. He is everywhere present. There is no place that a person can hide and no chance that a believer will be out of His protective care. He is everywhere present in His works and in His personality. This does not mean that God is the same as the universe – merely that His presence is everywhere in the universe. The truth of God’s omnipresence is comforting for the believer for no one can escape God’s notice.” Don Stewart

God is symbolically holding hands with you. When life seems too challenging, His presence is with you and you can trust in your loving Heavenly Father. Be happy and place your faith in God because in the slippery places, He will steady you. He rejoices over you for you are a greatly valued child! He will guide you with His counsel, for God is the strength of your heart and your portion forever. (*Psalm 73:26*)

Prayer – Oh Lord, thank You for Your great love. You are the One who designed a wonderful plan for me and will equip me to walk through it successfully as I obey You. Thank You for always being present. I ask that I grow in faith and trust in Your care and provision for me. In the coming year, I thank You that You will always be holding me by Your right hand! In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Day 2, January 6 – THE GOD OF COMFORT

*Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you;
He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.
Psalm 55:22*

God reassures us that He is the God of comfort. In Him is the place to find rest for your soul's hurts, disappointments, and inner chaos. Tell God what is bothering you, put your troubles in His "pocket." Empty your pocket of cares and place them, all of them, in His. This is an exercise of faith on your part, you are believing that God is a loving Father who cares for you and you act on that knowledge. If you start worrying about something again, ask God for forgiveness and put your concerns back in "God's pocket." His pocket is never full because He is God, which means He has no limits. God can carry every problem His children have prayed about and His pocket would never be full. "God's pocket" is symbolic to give you an understanding that He will never run out of resources. No problem is too big or too small.

We all feel burdened at times by putting up with people's problems – sickness, grief and just being in the world system where things are imperfect. Jesus cheers us up in Matthew by letting us know that He is the one that can and will supply us with comfort. Comfort means *to give strength and hope, to ease grief or trouble and to support*. So, come to Father God and act on what Peter wrote; 1 Peter 5:7, *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."* God cares for you more that you know or can understand!

When our life is over, we will no longer need to look for comfort. We will be in the continual presence of God enjoying the perfect environment in heaven. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. (Revelation 21:4) We will enjoy the comfort of God forever!

Prayer – Dear Father, Thank You that in Your love You provide peace in troubled times. Please forgive me for often trying to bear things on my own. I give all my troubles and concerns to You, for You alone are my peace. Thank You for helping me as I place my worries in Your "pocket" and let You carry them while I trust You to guide me with Your wisdom. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 3, January 7 – GOD IS YOUR LOVING FATHER

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

1 John 4:7

“Daddy, how much do you make an hour?” With a timid voice and idolizing eyes, the little boy greeted his father as he returned from work. Greatly surprised, but giving his boy a glaring look, the father said “Don’t bother me now, I’m tired.” “But Daddy, just tell me please! How much do you make an hour,” the boy insisted. The father, finally giving up, replied: “Twenty dollars per hour.” “Okay, Daddy. Could you loan me ten dollars?” the boy asked. Being disturbed, the father yelled: “So that was the reason you asked how much I earn, right? Go to sleep and don’t bother me anymore!” Finally, trying to ease his mind, the father went to his son’s room. “Are you asleep, son?” asked the father. “No, Daddy. Why?” “Here’s the money you asked for earlier,” the father said. “Thanks, Daddy!” rejoiced the son, while putting his hand under his pillow and removing some money. “Now I have enough! “Daddy, could I buy you for an hour?” (www.bible/ca)

God’s door is always open to His children, and He reveals Himself continuously. He does not hide the truth but has given us a book full of truth, the Bible. Your requests will not fall on deaf ears because God promises a desired outcome for all who search for Him with all their heart. When we choose to respond to God’s Word with a humble attitude, He will reveal Himself to us.

Often, people have a hard time with the idea of God identifying Himself as their “Father.” They may unknowingly transfer a negative attitude they hold of an earthly father or a father figure to God. This causes people to wrongly think they cannot trust God. In their mind, they have basically written off the concept of a warm, concerned, loving God. In the Bible, God speaks for Himself and reveals what He is truly like. If you struggle with feeling judged or rejected by God, realize that for Christ followers, this is not an opinion based on fact. To correct this misconception, ask the Lord to forgive you and thank God for being your loving Heavenly Father. 1 John 4:7 tells us that love is of God. God’s love is not conditional like human love often is. His love is not based on feelings or our performance, therefore He never “falls out of love” with you.

Prayer – Our Father, I am joyful that You are the perfect heavenly Father who loves me unconditionally! Please forgive me for ever doubting Your love and concern for me. Guide and enlighten me when I pray, so I will grow in my understanding of who You are. Thank You. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Day 4, January 8 – GOD GIVES US A SOUND MIND

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:7

Many years ago, I was trying to teach my daughter to swim. She was a preschooler at the time and was hesitant about going into the pool. As she sat by the edge of the pool, I urged her to let me carry her into the water and help her float on her back. She refused to budge because she was afraid she would go under the water. I reassured her that I would not let her go, but she wouldn't leave her comfort zone because the fear of the unknown was too overpowering. As I reflect on the incident at the pool, I am reminded that at times we are afraid to obey God. The "spirit" of fear paralyzes us.

Fear is an emotion that often hangs over us like a cloud of doom and tempts us to worry about things, people and situations. It can rob us of sleep, steal our mental focus and war against personal peace. Fear has varying degrees. We can be a little bit afraid of our boss at work or we can be so afraid of our boss that we constantly worry about losing our job. We may experience fear about family, sickness, natural disasters and money to name a few. Anxiety can sap the life out of us and pass on the tendency to fear to others around us. Faith and fear are very much alike. Faith believes something good is going to happen and fear believes that something bad is going to happen. Both act on placing our thoughts on either a good or bad outcome. It is your choice whether or not to focus on God and place your faith in His promises. Isaiah 41:10 tells us, *"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

Prayer – Dear Lord, I rejoice that I have been covered with the precious blood of Jesus and I am in Your family! I ask You to help me as I learn to recognize that a spirit of fear is not from You. Please increase my faith in Your promise that You will help me. I am grateful that You are in charge and are taking care of me. You know everything about my circumstances, and I believe You are giving me wisdom. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 5, January 9 – GOD’S WORD LIGHTS OUR WAY

*Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.
Psalm 119:105*

Living by the Word of God reveals insight to you so you will stay on the right path. Practicing this keeps you steady during your life’s journey. Believers in Christ have a destiny created by God, and you are the only one that can fulfill that destiny. Your birthplace, your parents (good, bad or absent) are all part of God’s grand design. Your level of education and experience is God shaping you for the various roles you are to fill during your life. Remember to take the approach of asking, “What is God’s will?” rather than “What is God’s will for my life?” The latter question places the emphasis on you and the former puts the emphasis on humbly submitting to God’s pre-planned schedule for you. Study God’s Word with a teachable spirit and let His plan for you daily unfold as you obey Him. God’s assignments will include using what He has spiritually equipped you for and applying what He teaches you along the way. Choose to obey God step by step on the path He has designed just for you.

“You cannot stay where you are and go with God. You cannot continue doing things your way and accomplish God’s purpose in His ways. Your thinking cannot come close to God’s thoughts. For you to do the will of God, you must adjust your life to Him, His purposes, and His ways.” –Henry Blackaby

Jim Elliot, the martyred missionary to headhunters in Ecuador, expresses the heartfelt commitment to God that every Christian should have as their driving force:

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”

Prayer – Oh Lord, You light my way and are loving and kind! I confess that I need to be more dedicated to having a devotional time with You. Help me to focus on following You completely while You guide me throughout the day. I am in awe that You would allow me to take part in the marvelous plan You purposefully prearranged just for me. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Day 6, January 10 – ONLY GOD SATISFIES

Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Isaiah 55:1

While researching his masterful Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, the late Stephen Covey discovered that the lives of many supposedly successful people were actually a mess. If they could live their lives again, Covey wrote, many shared that they would have chosen a very different path. His conclusion was that too often people scramble up the ladder of life only to realize it has been leaning against the wrong wall. As Covey put it:

“If the ladder is not leaning against the right wall, every step we take just gets us to the wrong place faster. It’s a reminder to reflect. Many times, things change rapidly in our warp-speed world. Often, drifting our lives into places we would never consciously have chosen. Without constant reflection, we never discover the ladder is leaning against the wrong wall.”

God desires for His children to come to Him and drink their fill, for a continual relationship with Him is what we need. Often, we find ourselves chasing after the wind. We keep trying to catch it in our hand, and it alludes us time and time again. Reach out to the Lord, your Maker, for He desires a close relationship with you. God has created a thirst in us that only He can satisfy. “Oh Lord, why have You made us this way?” you may think. Because only then will we respond to God drawing us closer to Himself. We are drawn by our need for God because He alone can fulfill us. Are you tired of trying to fill the void with social events, addictions, unsatisfying relationships, power and money? God has your best interest in mind, He created you to need Him, so come to Him. Come to His waters for that is the only thing that will satisfy the thirst in your spirit. “His waters” is a metaphor of the joy you have in salvation through Jesus Christ. “Wine and milk” symbolize being fully satisfied. God offers us what is needed for life and brings joy. God’s invitation for you is to come to Him!

Prayer – Dear Father, I confess that I have tried to fill my life with things that don’t satisfy. Thank You for allowing me to understand this truth and the source of my frustration. I now choose to follow You wholeheartedly by placing You first in my life. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.





Day 7, January 11 – OBEYING GOD BRINGS BLESSINGS

*Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord!
Psalm 119:1*

At a young impressionable age, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego, God-fearing Hebrews, were taken captive against their will by their enemies, the Babylonians. Because they were the best of the young men captives, King Nebuchadnezzar appointed them to great status. A difficult test was in store for them. Nebuchadnezzar had an image of gold made in his likeness and commanded everyone in his kingdom to bow down to it. Everyone did bow down except for those three. The sentence for disobedience was to be thrown into a fiery furnace. Courageously, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego took their stand to obey God and said, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us." (Daniel 3:16-17). They stated that death was preferable to disobedience. God delivered them, and Nebuchadnezzar blessed God and commanded that no one in his kingdom speak against their God.

"Disobedience says to God that you know better than He does when it comes to your life." Charles Stanley

We all would like to have great joy or happiness, which is the definition of "blessed." Often Christians miss out on receiving blessings because they don't obey God completely. If we pick and choose what we want to obey in the Bible, we have a watered-down version of what following Christ is really like. The one who receives blessings is blameless. Blameless means there is no fault. You may think you are incapable of being blameless, yet this is what God's Word says. It does not imply perfect living, only the Lord Jesus was capable of that, but that obeying God is the driving force of your life. When you fall short of that goal, confess your sins and get back on course with a regular habit of Bible study. Faithfully obey what you know to be biblical teachings. It is a lifestyle, not just having the head knowledge of God's ways, but daily living out what we know is right. Obedience brings the blessings of God.

Prayer – Oh Lord, I long to have my life give You glory, thank You for reminding me how to obey You. I repent of giving in to my own desires that war against the right thing to do. Help me now, I pray, to deny myself and follow You willingly and completely. Thank You for blessing me for obeying You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 8, January 12 – RIGHT AND WRONG ANGER

Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

Ephesians 4:26

Everyone gets angry, but we need to be cautious about how we express our anger. Righteous anger is becoming angry with what angers God, such as injustices. It is controlled anger that can lead to solving a problem, not unbridled rage. Cain, Adam's son, allowed sinful anger to control him to the point of murdering his brother Abel, who had done nothing wrong. Cain was jealous of his brother because he obeyed God by sacrificing what God had designated and found favor. Cain sacrificed what he thought was a good idea and blatantly disobeyed God. His sacrifice was rejected. In a jealous rage, Cain murdered Abel. Sadly, Cain has the legacy of being the first murderer in humanity.

"Anger and bitterness are two noticeable signs of being focused on self and not trusting God's sovereignty in your life. When you believe that God causes all things to work together for good to those who belong to Him and love Him, you can respond to trials with joy instead of anger or bitterness." -John C. Broger

Do not get so mad or worried about something that you take the wrong actions. It may produce short lived results, but you are disobeying God. Always pray when trouble or perplexing problems come up. God sees you and hears your prayers. Get biblical advice from a few people that have had experience in the matters you are facing. Your decisions do not affect only you, but your family and those close to you as well. Do not worry or fret, give your problems to God and ask Him to guide you to make the proper choices. We all make mistakes but determine to not get worked up emotionally and commit sin. Replace anger with forgiveness to all who have hurt you and carry on with obedience to God.

Prayer – Dear Lord, You are most gracious to remind me to not allow myself to fall under the control of anger, but to allow the Holy Spirit to control me. I confess that sometimes I get ahead of myself because I am just looking for a solution to my problems, rather than looking for the right solution. Please forgive me. Lord, I turn my problems over to Your care and accept Your peace. I will search for Your wisdom and Godly counsel before giving into anger and make a wrong decision. In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.





Day 9, January 13 – GOD GIVES LIFE AND PEACE

*For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.
Romans 8:6*

Our continual choice is either to yield to the Holy Spirit or give into our flesh. King David was a man after God's own heart and yet chose to give into lust and control over a powerless woman, Bathsheba. David already had many wives, but he plotted to commit adultery with the wife of a valiant warrior, Uriah. When this betrayal took place, Uriah was away at war, risking his life for David's kingdom. No one could refuse the King without dire consequences and Bathsheba was coerced to commit adultery. The baby from that union died as a judgment from God, and Bathsheba's husband was murdered in David's "cover up" plot. Bathsheba then had no good options except to marry King David after all that transpired. David eventually repented and God forgave him and blessed him with Solomon, but he reaped grievous consequences for his willful sin for decades. (2 Samuel 11)

"Chesterton is quoted as saying, "When a man stops believing in God, he doesn't then believe in nothing, he believes anything." – Mark Driscoll

We all want to live a lifestyle filled with life and peace. One thing that hinders us from accomplishing this objective is our flesh. Often, we may want to do what is right, but experience the pull of our carnal nature. Giving into the flesh does not produce peace because its desire is always selfish and is never satisfied. The fleshly mindset is; "It's all about me and what I want, feel or think I need." The mind that focuses on spiritual things practices denying the flesh; "It's all about God, not about me." The result of setting one's mind on the Spirit is to live a more satisfying life and experience peace that is produced by obeying God.

Prayer – Dear Father, I praise You for providing life and peace for Your children. I often feel the pull of selfishness and I know that giving into it will not produce good results. By reading Your Word I am convinced that the principle of denying self is the correct way to live. As I continue to deny my flesh, I will experience a fulfilling life and peace. I choose to surrender my will to You and obey Your ways consistently. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 10, January 14 – BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9

Moses had died, and Joshua moved up to take command. His first task was to lead the Israelites to take the last few steps into the Promised Land. Once they arrived, the Israelites faced the task of conquering the evil Canaanites. At this point in time, Joshua was one of the oldest Israelites, and his assignment seemed too overwhelming to accomplish. He was so scared he trembled. God ordered Joshua to reject the fear he was feeling and kindly assured him that He was with him wherever he went. Joshua made the commitment to follow God and led the Israelites to do the same. Even though Joshua was a great military leader, he was also human and experienced fear like we do. Yet God gave him the promise of His presence and empowered him to reject fear because he was following God's command. Joshua gallantly led the Israelites into war; they conquered their enemies and took possession of the inheritance God had promised them.

"If the Lord be with us, we have no cause of fear. His eye is upon us, His arm over us, His ear open to our prayer - His grace sufficient, His promise unchangeable."

-John Newton

Fear is not our friend when it takes over our soul. It can make us to go through life in a cowardly fashion as we try to not cause too many upheavals and often not attempting anything new. We avoid confrontation with anyone who could harm us emotionally or physically. Or we may become aggressive and controlling in relationships to assure we get our own way. We practice this behavior because we mistakenly believe if we can control people and situations our fear will lessen. When we are fearful, sound sleep can be hard to find. What fills our minds when fear and anxiety are in charge? Generally, problems and concerns keep running through our thoughts. God's solution to this situation is to pray about everything and thank Him for helping us in advance.

Prayer – Dear Lord, thank You for caring for every detail of my life. You are always with me and will carry me through whatever comes my way. Please forgive me for not trusting in You as I should. I ask You to help me grow in my faith and not allow fear to overcome me. Father God, thank You for being my strength! In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 11, January 15 – HUMBLE YOURSELF

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

James 4:10

One of the best kept secrets in the Christian world is that there is power and nobility in humility. Even the twelve disciples had to learn humility. Once when they were traveling to the city of Capernaum, they argued about which of them would be the greatest. God is more interested in the character we attain rather than the position we reach. Practically speaking, the attitude of humility can be adopted as an act of the will, by focusing our attention on the Holy Spirit's leading and direct our attention on God. He is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the one the angels tremble before. He controls all things and sustains the universe by the power of His Word. There is no one as great or glorious as God. We must keep in mind that our every breath and heartbeat, your eyes, ears, strength, and mental health are all from God. He could remove them at any time.

We would all like to be lifted up by the Lord and in James 4:10 above, God tells us how to accomplish this. We are to humble ourselves. Humbling ourselves includes not striving in our own power, but rather to rely on the Holy Spirit's power to strengthen and guide us through life. It is necessary to regularly take an honest evaluation of our thoughts and actions to achieve humility. We need to take a "heart check." The following are some questions you can ask yourself. Do you have any unconfessed sin or areas in your life that you are choosing to live your own way rather than God's way? Do you think more highly of yourself than you should, do you regard others above yourself? Do you practice fake humility so you will look good? What in your thoughts, speech and actions do not glorify God? As you prayerfully consider these questions ask God to forgive you of the specific sins you have committed. There are always fresh starts with God when we respond in humility and repentance of sin.

*The way up...the way to have God lift you up in whatever way He chooses...is down...
to become a servant, deny self and help with the needs of others.*

Prayer – Heavenly Father, Thank You for teaching me to humble myself so that You can use me for Your kingdom purposes. I ask for You to forgive me of the pride that hinders me from experiencing a close relationship with You that You desire, and I need to be complete. May I become more like Christ and help to meet others needs as You guide me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 12, January 16 – CHRISTIANS ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp-stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:14-16

Christians should have a spiritually healthy influence in the world. The metaphor of light in the Scripture indicates the believer's ability to cause an effect of goodness on the human race. We can light a candle and enter a dark room and the darkness is dispelled by the light. We have the light of Jesus' truth and must take it into the darkness of sin that holds mankind in slavery. We shine our light by sharing the truth of Jesus, and setting the right example to those in the world, so they can find salvation in Him. For Christians to "shine", we are to reflect the biblical attributes of love, goodness, truth, and wisdom. Romans 13:12 reminds us that, *"The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."* Sin will dull our shine. In the preceding verse, Paul is urging Christians to confess and forsake their sins so they can be powerful in their example to others and effectively "put on the armor of light."

"Before you can be a light to others, take a look at your own life. Has sin dulled the evidence of Christ in you? Maybe it's time to stop, take a moment and ask God to reveal any sins you might be ignoring. If there's a sin you repeatedly struggle with, write it down and pray over it continually. Ask God for His forgiveness and help in changing your heart. We'll never be perfect, but we need to address our sin, partly because it impacts others." (www.billygraham.org)

Prayer – Dear Lord, I praise You for always being faithful and showing me in Your Word how to obey You! I confess that at times I am more concerned with myself than with being a light to those around me. I acknowledge that I can only be an effective witness of the light of truth if I am living my life by Your truth. Thank You for working with me and helping me to continually cast off the works of darkness and replace them with the armor of light. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 13, January 17 – HAVE FAITH IN GOD

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

Electricity is something you can't see, but you know is there. It is evidenced by the power that turns on the lights and enables buildings and homes to operate computers, heating systems and a long list of things we have come to depend on. Faith is the confident assurance that the Bible is true and what it has stated about past and future events are authentic. Genesis 1:1 says, *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."* Hebrews 11:3 reinforces the creation account by stating, *"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."* The believer's faith in what God states in the Bible is the proof or evidence for the reality of things that cannot be substantiated by the perception of our senses. Faith rests on the object of its reality, who is God, who cannot lie. This is how we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 4:18).

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found, because God had taken him; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:4-6

Let us be reminded to not follow our moods or feelings. Don't let your emotions run your life by focusing on negative circumstances, rather than exercising faith in God. Trust God with all the disillusionment and frustrations in your life, rather than give into it.

"Real faith is not hoping to get what you want, but accepting what God gives you."- Adrian Rogers

Prayer – Dear Lord, I thank You for teaching me how to have faith in You and for being patient with me when I lack faith. I ask that from this moment, I would live in bold confidence and keep my eyes on You and not compare myself to others. Help me as I grow in my focus on You and Your Word, rather than my circumstances and feelings. Please enable me as I pursue a lifestyle that proclaims Your excellence. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 14, January 18 – GOD PROVIDES STRENGTH

*Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.
Romans 8:37*

Satan is our adversary. He sends a variety of life-defeating, joy-stealing attacks to threaten the well-being and faith of God's children. Many of those attacks are listed in Romans 8:35-39: trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, and sword. Paul is encouraging us to stand firm in our faith when those attacks come, reminding us that not only will we win in the end, but Jesus enables us to win now. Satan lacks the power to steal our eternal destiny, and he cannot separate us from the love of God. Nothing we face worries God in the least. If we are His children through faith in His Son, then we have His pledge of love and protection.

Christians should never give up, but should always trust God. Being "more than a conqueror" means that before a problem comes your way, you already know that Christ enables you to overcome it. You may have to go through circumstances that try your faith and sap you of your strength. Yet you can continue to hope in God's strength to carry you through the challenges. Do not waste your emotional energy by condemning yourself because you may not have achieved 100% peaceful living, but rather be thankful knowing that as you yield to the Lord, you are growing in this area. In this life, we will not achieve perfection, that will happen when you reach heaven, but we can make great progress! Rejoice in the progress you make; this changes your focus from things you fear to God's growing peace and care for you. Purposefully giving thanks changes your focus from negative thoughts to thankful and uplifting ones.

*"The will of God is never exactly what you expect it to be. It may seem to be much worse, but in the end it's going to be a lot better and a lot bigger."
-Elisabeth Elliot*

Prayer – Our Lord, I rejoice that I have been covered with the precious blood of Jesus and I am in Your family. I ask You to help me as I learn to recognize that You have said "we are more than conquerors." Please increase my faith in Your promise that You will help me. I thank You that You are in charge and are taking care of me and know everything about my circumstances. I am trusting You to give me wisdom and help. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 15, January 19 – GOD SEES EVERYTHING

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Hebrews 4:13

“Ready or not, here I come!” is the cry that can be heard when children are playing the game of Hide and Seek. When I played Hide and Seek indoors as a child, there never seemed to be a hiding place where my brothers could not find me. I made the decision to do something forbidden. On the second floor. There was an off-limits storage area, and that is where I hid. It was my hope that it was the one place I would not be found. The brother who was “it” could not find me, got upset and told my mother. I eventually came out and down the stairs and guess who was in big trouble? My mom banned me from going to the second floor of the house, and administered a good talking to, then sent me to my room. I learned my lesson, better to stay within the parameters of the household rules than disobey just to win a game.

Adam and Eve were captivated by the lies of Satan. God warned them about not eating from the tree of good and evil, but they chose to disobey. Becoming like God, knowing good and evil (Genesis 3:22), appealed to them and they were willing to rebel and taste the forbidden fruit. For the first time in their lives, they felt the shame of being guilty of sin. This was the consequence of their life-changing encounter with evil. God went to the Garden of Eden and called out to them, so they could spend time together. Adam and Eve hid themselves from God because they knew they had sinned. God met with them and confronted them about their disobedience. There were dire repercussions, sin entered the earth, and nothing was the same. It is a warning to us to realize that nothing is hidden from God and His eyes are always on us. He lovingly guides us by knowledge of His Word to obey Him for our own good.

“Obedience is the opener of eyes.” –George MacDonald

Prayer – Dear Lord, Your holiness is beautiful, and Your love never ends even when I willfully sin. Thank You for sending Your son, Jesus, to give His life as a sacrifice for the sins of humankind. I ask for Your forgiveness for any rebellion found in my heart. I commit to cooperate with You and learn to obey Your Word, the Bible. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Day 16, January 20 – BELIEVE GOD

Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.
Isaiah 41:10

In the book of Judges, we learn that the prophetess, Deborah, exhorted Barak, a great warrior, to follow God's orders to deploy 10,000 troops from the tribes of Israel, and go to battle against their enemy. Deborah assured him that God would give him the victory. But Barak would not go to battle unless Deborah went with him. Barak's attitude revealed that he was not convinced God would defeat their enemies. Deborah agreed to go with him in battle. Barak put his faith in Deborah's presence rather than in God. Barak did not get the credit for the victory of the battle because he did not venture out in faith. Yet, later in Hebrews 11:32, God graciously commended Barak for taking action and placing his trust in God after his struggle with doubt.

Our feelings are not always correct in interpreting the situations we face in life. Negative emotions have the power to misguide us. If fear is prominent in our heart, it spills over into our reasoning and builds continued negative thought patterns. The result is to make decisions in response to fear, rather than faith in God. Unbelief can produce a less than peaceful interpretation of some looming threat in our future. The conclusions our minds come up with is not necessarily accurate when they are fear driven. We need to practice utilizing godly wisdom, in order to think and act with knowledgeable insight. This will help to alleviate making mistakes by acting on negative thinking patterns.

"We need never shout across the spaces to an absent God. He is nearer than our own soul, closer than our most secret thoughts"
-A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God: The Human Thirst for the Divine*

The trials of life can be faced with the certainty that we are not alone. We have a mighty Father who fights for us! Choosing to trust God can save us a lot of pain and please our Heavenly Father in the process. Who doesn't want that?

Prayer - Dear Heavenly Father, Your goodness to me is overwhelming! You have provided a way out for me, so I won't succumb to fruitless mental strongholds that weary my soul. I choose to practice godly wisdom as You enable me by Your power. Help me to please You by being submissive and honoring You with my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 17, January 21 – OUR UNCHANGING GOD

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

James 1:17

Some changes in our lives can be refreshing, but too much change too quickly creates stress. According to *uhhospitals.org*, the top five stressors in life are: death of a loved one, divorce, moving, major illness or injury and job loss. When we encounter an overload of change, we look for security and stability. God never changes and this attribute is called immutability. In Malachi 3:6a, God declares, *“For I am the Lord, I do not change. Therefore, you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.”* We change because we are imperfect. Creation is always changing, but God never changes. He never has bad days. The last phrase in James 1:17 above, *“or shadow of turning”* means that there is nothing that you will find wrong with God. There is nothing in Him that could even remotely appear to be evil. The more you get to know Him, the more you realize how beautiful and holy He is.

When we are faced with an overload of stress, remember God’s love and provision for us never changes. His Word always stays the same. Stability comes from consistently building our life on God’s Word. We are to hide God’s Word in our hearts by memorizing Scripture. An advantage of memorizing Scripture is that our minds will contain a reservoir of inspired words. When the need arises, the Holy Spirit can bring them to mind and the wisdom of God’s Word will direct us. When Jesus was tempted by the devil, He had Scripture memorized to counter Satan’s tests. Jesus was hungry and the devil said, *“Jesus, why don’t You turn these stones to bread?”* Jesus replied, *“the Bible says, ‘you shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”* He did not carry a scroll of the Old Testament to counter the devil’s temptations. He had Scripture memorized, and it helped Him. He left an example to show us how to face stress and temptations.

Prayer – Dear Father, thank You for sending Your son Jesus to be my perfect example. Your Word is always true and guides my way. I repent of not memorizing Your Word as I should. Please guide me as I develop this spiritual discipline of Scripture memory. Thank You for being perfect and unchanging in these challenging times. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Day 18, January 22 – GOD’S PURPOSES PREVAIL

The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand.

Isaiah 14:24

Do you remember the first time you were disappointed as a child? One Christmas I asked for a sled and thought my request would be easily granted on the much-awaited Christmas morning. My two brothers and I sat on the floor while my parents passed out the Christmas presents. My dad handed a wrapped gift to me that I could tell was a large chalk board. I thought, “great, I guess my parents got two presents for me”. My younger brother was sitting next to me, and I saw my mom pick up the sled shaped gift and come towards us. I was filled with joy, until she handed it to my brother. I did not begrudge him the sled but was surprised because my brother had told me he asked for a bike. In a matter of seconds my hopes shattered like a glass when it falls on the floor. After that incident, I learned a hard lesson in life; possessing a strong desire for something does not necessarily make it come true, when you place your hope in uncertain things.

In our lives, intentions are just intentions. We begin with the best of them, but when our plans don’t work out, we simply change our intentions and move on. Not so with God. God’s intentions are perfect, which means they can’t be improved upon, and thus they never have to be changed. We need to remember that when we have failed, God will never stop loving us. He is always acting with great affection towards us. God’s purpose in your life is bigger than your struggles and will not be derailed by your problems and disappointments. The basis of our stability is in the fact that God poured out his love in our hearts when we trusted in Christ as our Savior. After receiving the Holy Spirit, He continuously encourages us with the Word of God. We are reassured that we have God to lead and help us through life, and the promise of everlasting life in the future will be fulfilled.

Prayer – Our Father, thank You for always loving me no matter what! You provide the Bible to minister peace, joy and direction where and when I need it. May I live confidently with the knowledge that nothing in my life can derail me from the fact that Your purpose in my life is always bigger than my problems and disappointments. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.





Day 19, January 23 – BE A WITNESS

*Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, Whom He has redeemed
from the hand of the enemy.
Psalm 107:2*

We are not to keep silent about the fact that we are Christians. How can we keep silent about a complete transformation? Our spiritual eyes have been opened by the living God through accepting Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Do your coworkers know that you are a Christ follower? Does your family? As Christians, we are bearers of the Gospel of Christ. When the Lord gives us an opportunity or you are in a situation where you need to speak up, tell the testimony of what Christ has done for you. Many believers struggle with this aspect of their lives because they are not sure what to say. Simply state how you came into a relationship with Christ, tell about how you heard the Gospel story. Contrast what you were before salvation, how you received salvation and how your life has changed since salvation.

As you tell your own story about coming to Christ, share these key truths:

1. We are all sinners, and each of us needs to acknowledge before God that we are sinners. That acknowledgment involves repentance, which is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Read Romans 3:23; 6:23 & Acts 3:19.
2. The only way a person can receive the gift of forgiveness is by faith in Jesus as God's Son. Use verses like Acts 4:12, Ephesians 2:8-9, & John 14:6 when talking about faith in Christ.
3. Confessing your faith in Jesus Christ means confessing Him as Savior and Lord. Share Romans 10:9-10,13.

Invite the person to pray a prayer like this:

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner and have rebelled against You in many ways. I believe Jesus died for my sin and only through faith in His death and resurrection can I be forgiven. I now turn from my sin and ask Jesus to come into my life as my Savior and Lord. From this day forward, I will choose to follow Jesus. Thank You, Lord, for loving me and for forgiving me. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen." (Warren. Bible Studies for Life, Fall 2016. Ed. Ronnie Floyd. Nashville, TN: LifeWay Christian Resources, 2016.)

Prayer – Dear Lord, we honor You for Your provision of salvation for us. I ask that You give me a Godly boldness to witness for You, and give the truth to a lost and desperate world. Please remove the spiritual blindness from the eyes of those who need Your salvation and make me an effective witness of the Gospel. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 20, January 24 – FAITH IN GOD

By faith we understand that the [a]worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Hebrews 11:3

It takes more faith to not believe in God than it does to believe in Him. God spoke the world into existence. God said, *“Let there be light and there was light.”* (Genesis 1:3) He also created the fish by saying “fish” and water just by saying “water” and continued speaking everything in the world into existence. Every type of vegetation, stars, and oceans. Daily we are witnesses to the unfathomable power of God! His power has no limits, and it is just as easy for Him to answer a prayer as it is to create the Universe. Where there is evidence of a design, there is always a designer. Jesus has the power of God and showed it through His power over nature.

“Faith in the biblical sense is substantive, based on the knowledge that the One in whom that faith is placed has proven that He is worthy of that trust. In its essence, faith is a confidence in the person of Jesus Christ and in His power, so that even when His power does not serve my end, my confidence in Him remains because of who He is.”

*Ravi Zacharias, Jesus Among Other Gods:
The Absolute Claims of the Christian Message*

Let us be reminded to not follow our moods or feelings. Don't let your emotions run your life by focusing on negative circumstances, rather than having faith in God. Trust God with all the disillusionment and frustration in your life, rather than give into it. God's people have always been recognizable by their faith and their relationship to God. Faith is a firm conviction or an unwavering assurance that God will do what He says He will do. This faith endures even when God does not perform on our timetable because it rests in His character, not in ourselves or our performance.

“Hope is called the anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:19), because it gives stability to the Christian life. But hope is not simply a ‘wish’ (I wish that such-and-such would take place); rather, it is that which latches on to the certainty of the promises of the future that God has made.” – RC Sproul

Prayer – Our Father, I thank You for creating the Universe and creating me. I ask that I would have a new awareness of Your power and be continually thankful for the beauty and greatness of creation! Please make me aware of any lack of faith on my part, and help me to increase my faith in You as I meditate on Your Word and obey it. Enable me to live by faith and not by sight. For Your Name's sake, Amen.





Day 21, January 25 – BEWARE OF DECEPTION

Through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be [c]blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners.

Deuteronomy 18:10b-14a

On August 21, 2017, the rare occurrence of a total eclipse took place. What was interesting was how differently people of varying “religious” backgrounds celebrated the day. A large part of the population celebrated as pagans. Neo-pagan Wiccans, which worship various deities and nature spirits, believed that when the sun and the moon work in union it allows occult practitioners to “work with them to bring their magic down to earth” for the purposes of cleansing and inner spiritual evolution (dailycaller.com). Sadly, the continuation of their belief system just drives them deeper into spiritual darkness.

On the day of the eclipse, many Bible believing Christians worshiped and glorified God and His wonders! That is a wonderful response. But, Christians still need to be aware that some things we “might” practice are rooted in the occult and leave an opening for Satan to have a piece of our soul. What is the biblical basis for “knocking on wood”, repeating “it comes in threes,” reading horoscopes, owning dream catchers, good luck charms etc.? We need to remember that when we accept Christ we are saved, but our mind must be subject to biblical “renewal” in order to be transformed into thinking like Christ. If we do not cooperate with this blessed process, we will remain in bondage to areas of deception. Spiritually speaking, we will still be crawling when we could be walking or walking when we could running. Jesus is Lord, whether we practice acknowledging Him as Lord in our lives or not. Is the Lord impressing you to turn away from any unbiblical practices and replace them with truth based on God’s Word?

When Jesus came to earth “the Word became flesh”. Jesus came to undo the works of Satan. This includes removing deception from His followers.

Prayer - Dear Lord, only You are God, maker of the heavens! Thank You for Your faithfulness to me and for revealing anything I say or do that is not from a Godly source. I choose to renounce those practices in Jesus’ Name. I am committing to cooperate with You in the process of mind renewal by obeying Your Word. In Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.

Day 22, January 26 – PEACE OF GOD

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.

Isaiah 43:2

When there are choppy seas and a bad weather forecast, it is not a time for us to allow terror to grow in our hearts. It is an occasion for us to consider a wise plan of safety. If dangerous weather is heading your way, follow the advice of your civic leaders. When tempests flare up in our lives, this is the time to remember that God can calm the storm in your heart. Do not focus on the storm of circumstances, focus on the peace that is available for you to access by faith in God's promises and knowledge of His Word.

He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. Psalm 91:14. Therefore, follower of Christ, give it all to Him in prayer and trust Him knowing His strength is enough for you today and in the days to follow.

It helps us to remember that God knows the end from the beginning and knows you by name. In John 10:3 we read, *"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out."* Cease striving and know that He is God and will be exalted in your life when you give testimony of His faithfulness. This pleases God, because even though we may go through suffering, we are also choosing to look through the cloud of doubt and believe with the eyes of faith, His promises to us. God holds us up, and His love and concern never fails. Trust this and fix your mind on these facts.

Prayer – Our Lord, it is a great comfort to know that You will not allow me to go through anything that You will not equip me for spiritually. Thank You for helping me when life seems like it's swirling all around me like a tempestuous sea. Cause me to remember that You are in charge and can walk on water and calm the seas. I place my trust in You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 23, January 27 – DON'T LOOK BACK

But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:62

Genesis 19 tells the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. God sent two angels to warn Lot and his family that He was going to destroy the city of Sodom and Gomorrah for their unrepentant sin and that they must leave to avoid death. Genesis 19:17 states, "So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he [the angel] said, 'Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.'" Lot's wife lagged behind, disobeyed God and looked behind her. She turned into a pillar of salt. Jesus is saying that God doesn't see anyone that looks back longingly at the world, as being fit for the kingdom. Because they, just like Lot's wife, don't really want to leave the world. The plow, in the verse above, is symbolic of the work of the kingdom and sowing the seed of the Word of God. Jesus told them before they would choose to follow Him that even He had "nowhere to lay his head" at night (Luke 9:58c) so they had better count the cost and then don't look back.

When God calls us, we have to be willing to forsake everything in order to follow Him (Luke 14:33). Sometimes Christians have to forsake their own family members to be part of God's Church. It's not that we necessarily have to—but we must be willing to. By looking back, Lot's wife showed that she wasn't willing to forsake all in order to obey God. Maybe she didn't really count the cost and only hastily decided to leave Sodom. Christ tells us that we have to count the cost before we decide to follow Him. Once we decide to follow Christ, we are to move forward and not look back (Luke 9:62). This is the important lesson we learn from Lot's wife. (lifehopeandtruth.com)

Prayer – Dear Lord, thank You for leaving me the perfect example of Your life in the Bible. You did not turn away from suffering or complain that You were no longer in heaven but remained on earth in the form of a man for 33 years. You always went forward determined to go to the cross and suffer for my sake so I could receive eternal life. Help me to be a focused disciple. I want to follow Your example and not look back but count the cost and obey You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 24, January 28 – GOD IS TRUTH

*Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds.
Colossians 3:9*

Where does lying come from? When you were a child, you probably lied to stay out of trouble. Your mom may have asked you, “did you take your sister’s toy?” At the time, lying was the way to escape getting on a parent’s bad side. It may have backfired if your parent discovered that you did take your sister’s toy and lied to cover it up. But from a young age, we often learn to lie to make ourselves look good and to attempt to escape correction for wrongs committed.

Lying originated from the evil one, our adversary, Satan. John 8:44b, in referring to Satan states, “*He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.*” When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. The originator of truth is God, and truth was manifested through His Son Jesus. One of the names for Jesus is Truth. Ephesians 4:25 instructs us, “*Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.*” When we live a life of truthfulness, it affects other believers for good because we are all united in Christ. We cannot live in the center of God’s plan for our life when we choose to habitually lie, because it is choosing to practice what Satan supports.

The following is a simple character check list that covers a variety of methods used to lie: Do you put on a pious act in front of your Christian friends but live differently at home or work? Does lying come easy for you? Do you embellish to make yourself seem greater than you are? Do you ever cheat on taxes or other financial transactions? Have you ever stolen things? Do you put on a show to impress others? Do you keep your word? Don’t let participating in lies keep you from God’s best for your life. Confess your short comings to God, and instead of lying, become a truth teller.

Prayer – Lord, You are truth and I ask You to forgive me for the lies I have told (name the ones that come to mind to confess). I receive Your forgiveness and thank You for enabling me to live a life of truth and integrity as I focus on You and Your ways laid out in Scripture. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.





Day 25, January 29 – GOD IS FAITHFUL

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.
1 Corinthians 10:13

You can't live very long in this world without having undergone trials of sickness, death, broken relationships and other issues. These are all examples of "temptations." Temptation in this verse is referring to a Christian going through trials in which they have a free choice to be faithful or unfaithful to God. When we experience the struggle of temptation, sometimes our thoughts turn to self-pity. During the time of testing, we may think, "no one has ever gone through this before! I am a faithful Christian so why does God let these difficulties happen to me? The people I work with, that never darken the door of a church, haven't suffered the sickness I have or the financial struggles I seem to never escape. I feel like I am the only one that has such a hard time!" We may feel that way, but our feelings are not always the gauge we should rely on to determine our reactions. The truth found in God's Word is what we must know and act on.

The truth is that our trial is not unique as 1 Corinthians 10:13 tells us. Other people regularly experience similar trials and have done so throughout the ages. Innumerable Christ followers have had to withstand the effects of testing. God will not let believers undergo anything for which He has not prepared them. God provides grace and power for the Christian to continue a faithful commitment to God in the face of difficulties. God never leaves our side, and Jesus prays for us to endure. During times of pain and suffering, realize that God has allowed it for a reason and know that part of that reason is to glorify God by our attitudes and actions during the trial.

"When Christians find themselves exposed to temptation, they should pray to God to uphold them, and when they are tempted, they should not be discouraged. It is not a sin to be tempted; the sin is to fall [give] into temptation." -D. L. Moody

Prayer – Dear Lord, it is a great comfort to know that You will not allow me to go through anything that You will not equip me for spiritually. You always make a way of escape whether it be through supernatural peace, strength or whatever is necessary for the situation. I will trust You for this. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 26, January 30 – GOD SENT THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

John 8:12

There are many other religions that claim to have the true light, but they are only a poor imitation of Jesus, the Light of the World. Jesus grieves when He sees people being deceived into thinking they have found the true light when what they have found is a false light. The source of this imitation of truth is not the Light of Life, but Satan who is able to appear as an angel of light. *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light"* (2 Corinthians 11:13-14). Do you perceive the evil imitation of the true light purposefully trying to lead you astray? Only God is the Creator, and Satan is a created being and cannot create things but can and does use already created things by perverting them in innumerable ways. This explains the vast number of false teachings promoted by demons that have a "form of godliness", but when the mask is removed, it exposes evil lurking to steal your soul. 1 Timothy 4:1 says, *"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons."* If you have been seduced by this on any level, you can renounce it in Jesus' name and begin to obey and practice the supreme source of truth, the Bible. This is the only way to freedom from the bondage of lying religions that want to control and cheat you out of the everlasting life that only Jesus can provide. Satanic deception is a carefully planned plot that has been in motion for centuries and wears many disguises. Ask the Lord to reveal to you any way that you have been deceived and commit with all your heart to live out the truth of God's Word.

Prayer – Our Father, I praise You for Your kindness to me by showing me how I can be caught up in deception. Your goodness and love just go on and on. Place an urgency in me to know and practice the truth. I know that time is passing, and people are being deceived. I ask for the Holy Spirit's discernment to move me to separate myself from deception that is from Satan. I accept that You empower me to do my part to follow the one and only true Way. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 27, January 31 – GOD TEACHES US KNOWLEDGE

*Teach me good judgment and knowledge, For I believe Your commandments.
Psalm 119:66*

Do you remember a parent saying to you as a child, “how many times have I told you?” to do this thing or that. God reminds us, like a parent saying, “how many times have I told you to spend time in worship, Bible reading, and prayer on a regular basis?” He does it for our own good, like a parent who quickly calls to a small child to warn them to not go into the busy street. Our lives are intertwined with God’s because He is our Creator. Acts 17:25 tells us, “Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.” Getting to know God is a continuous practice, like breathing. Seeking God with all your heart is a good sign that you are on the right track with your relationship to the Lord. Not being perfect but growing in maturity. God has supplied His Word for us to read and consult so our lives will be guided with wisdom and power. “For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6). Gaining understanding in the truth and the practice of God’s Word takes time and action on your part. Will you commit to following biblical principles first and foremost and not rely on your feelings, which can be fickle and lead you astray? The more you realize and embrace God’s love for you, the more your ability to trust and obey Him increases.

“Believers know that we are dead without Christ and have everlasting life in Him, but Jesus went further than saying we have mere existence: He said that He came so that we might have abundant life (John 10:10).

We show this life (or death) constantly by the choices we make.”

T.W. Hunt, The Mind of Christ: The Transforming Power of Thinking His Thoughts

Prayer – Our Lord, I thank You for loving me so much that You remind me that I have a tendency to take You for granted. When I do this, I get lazy with my commitment to You. Please forgive me for not prioritizing my time with godly goals in mind. I ask You to help me as I pledge to regularly spend daily time in worship, Bible study and prayer. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Day 28, February 1 – GOD GIVES TO THE HUMBLE

The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them.

Psalm 145:18-19

A remedy is something we use when we have a problem and want to correct it. It can be a financial problem, a health problem, or a people problem to name a few. Will you come to God to help solve your problems? God is always loving and offers us help when we need it. It's unwise to consider fast and shallow answers to your problems that seem to offer relief, but don't actually solve anything in the long run. Some problems have layers and are complicated. As the ground has many layers of soil, look at problem solving like gradually "digging" your way through the layers in a problem. Keep going with perseverance to unearth the "gold" of solutions waiting to be found by using the wisdom of God.

"You may be wondering why such difficulty has come into your life. However, the greater question is, "Lord, how do You plan to use this difficulty so I may serve You better?"

Charles F. Stanley

God promises us wisdom. "A wise son heeds his father's instruction, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke" (Proverbs 13:1). Come to God on a continual basis by reading, applying the Word and praying. You can tackle those layers of problems together, with God by your side. This is a remedy that works! You will experience a closer relationship with God, find strength in the process and grow in peace in the midst of turmoil. "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). Start the process and continue with God's remedy that helps you with problem solving by applying the biblical course of action. This way of life will include correction, soul healing, wisdom from God, and a growing love relationship with your Maker.

Prayer – Thank You Lord for being the problem solver. Your wisdom goes beyond my human capacity and I thank You for the promise to help me when I commit my life to You and follow in Your ways. I have problems that need a solution and I trust You to guide me through the process of solving them. Thank You for caring about me and everything that happens in my life. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 29, February 2 – GOD EXPECTS US TO FORGIVE

*Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.
Colossians 3:13*

Forgiveness sets us free and is the key to moving past offenses that others have committed against us. Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling. If you wait until you feel like forgiving, you are choosing to remain in bondage to the sin of unforgiveness, because you may never “feel like forgiving.” The following are some reasons why people don’t forgive: you know that what someone did to you was evil, you are still living with the results of their actions against you, they don’t deserve to be forgiven, and if you forgive them it means that what they did was alright. We must realize that the truth about forgiveness does not mean that we haven’t been hurt by someone else. The pain we feel is real and not to be ignored. But when we allow unforgiveness to fester, it turns into bitterness. Bitterness is anger, disappointment, and resentment at being treated unfairly (perceived unfair treatment or actual unjust harm towards you). The sin of bitterness in a person may drive them to plot revenge and carry it out on the offender.

“Don’t wait to forgive until you feel like forgiving; you will never get there. Feelings take time to heal after the choice to forgive is made.” –Neil T Anderson

To obey God and forgive all those that have offended you, your perspective needs to change, because forgiveness is difficult and necessary. Remember what the Bible says about Jesus. He willfully suffered unimaginable pain; He was betrayed by His dearest friends, when He was at His weakest moments. Jesus was insulted, mocked, and crucified. He is the King and could have stopped all the horror He endured in an instant but chose to move forward so He could provide salvation for us. In Luke 22:34, while on the cross Jesus said, “*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.*”

Prayer – Lord, I choose to forgive (name the person) for (what they did or failed to do) because it made me feel (share the painful feelings). I choose not to hold onto my resentment. I thank You for setting me free from the bondage of my bitterness. I relinquish my right to seek revenge and ask You to heal my damaged emotions. I now ask You to bless those who have hurt me. In Jesus’ Name, I pray. Amen (Anderson, Neil T. The Bondage Breaker.)

Day 30, February 3 – PUT GOD FIRST IN YOUR LIFE

*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,
and all these things shall be added to you.*

Matthew 6:33

In 1849, gold was discovered in California, and this noteworthy occasion was called the “California Gold Rush.” Men left their homes in search of fortune; they came from the United States, Turkey, and China. To get to California they had to leave wives and children and venture out for a four-month-long walk or a ship ride that would take about four months as well, not knowing when or if they would ever return. Many died along the way from malaria and other diseases. Regardless of the cost, others continued to rush to the West in their quest for great wealth, not taking into consideration who would be lost along the way. Sadly, many of those who participated in the Gold Rush allowed the lust of greed to take over, and there were increased incidents of stealing, violence, and even murder. A great number of helpless widows and children were left behind in poverty because the father of the home left on a whim and never returned. It’s never right to take chances with your life and the lives of others without seeking God’s will first! We must be guided by the wisdom of God to make the best decisions. In order to be led by God’s divine wisdom, a right relationship with God must be our priority.

“When I have learnt to love God better than my earthly dearest, I shall love my earthly dearest better than I do now...When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased.” C.S. Lewis

In the life of a Christian, God’s Word tells us that our goal should be to put God’s kingdom and His righteousness first. Seeking implies importunity or persistence. The miners tirelessly searched for gold that perishes, how much more should we passionately pursue the things of God who promises that those who seek Him will find Him? Seeking the Lord involves a sacrifice of time that always pays off with great dividends. *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded”* (James 4:8).

Prayer – Dear Lord, I praise You for guiding me to the holy pursuit of putting my relationship with You first. Please give me a heart that hungers and thirsts for more of You! Your Word states that the way we can get closer to You is to draw near to You. Thank You for loving me. In Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.





Day 31, February 4 – HAVE AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

*Rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.
Colossians 2:7*

Followers of Christ are to be like fountains that continuously pour out appreciation for the goodness of God. The goodness of God is never ending. So, our appreciation to God should be never ending. God doesn't change; therefore His goodness has no beginning and no end. We may become more aware of God's goodness when we experience spiritual mountain peaks and praise Him for extraordinary blessings during those times. It is right to be grateful for amazing answers to prayer. However, the mountain peaks do not depict God's character any more than the valley experiences do. The highest level of thankfulness is to rejoice in His character, which never changes. This is what the Lord says about Himself in Malachi 3:6, *"For I am the Lord, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob."*

Believers often view God as occasionally intervening for their good, and when that happens, they express thanksgiving. Sometimes our tendency is to only recognize and be grateful for God's more spectacular gifts. It can be hard to admit, but that is often what happens. There are two disadvantages to this response. The first, and more importantly, is that it reveals that our attention is on self and the size of the blessing is limited by whatever satisfies self. Secondly, when we are only grateful for sensational blessings, we can fail to be aware of the little blessings and remember to give thanks to God. The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 103:2, *"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."* We are to be continually grateful for all things, both big and small.

"Nothing turns us into bitter, selfish, dissatisfied people more quickly than an ungrateful heart. And nothing will do more to restore contentment and the joy of our salvation than a true spirit of thankfulness." Billy Graham

Prayer – Dear Lord, I praise You for giving me big and small blessings! Please convict me of selfishness when I do not thank You for every blessing. I ask that I become more aware of everyday blessings that often go unnoticed. Help me to mature in the area of praising You for who You are, not just what You can perform for me. You are a holy and loving Father and I thank You that You are always guiding me to learn how to live biblically. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 32, February 5 – GOD’S WORD IS PURE

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
2 Peter 1:19-21

Scientific research results are generally accepted as fact. But there are limitations to research results. For instance, the researches don't always have the perfect input of the things they are researching. Often it can prove helpful, but the results can be tainted as well.

“The scientific method is the best system we have for discerning reality, but its mortal adherents are not immune from making mistakes. Though scientists do their best to shirk off the flawed modes of thinking that plague humanity, they are not perfect. They make errors just like the rest of us.” (www.realclearscience.com)

The Bible is never flawed, because it is inspired by God. Picture a sailboat moving along on the water, empowered by the wind in its sails. The Holy Spirit moved on men to write God's Word. When you begin to doubt or become troubled, remember that the Word of God was written to help you learn God's ways and keep you walking in truth. Living with the Bible as your supreme authority is contrary to the world's system of thinking. What will you do with this information? All Christians will be held accountable for the truth they have been given at the judgment seat of Christ. Never think you can't live good enough, or do enough. God enables us to do what He requires of us. *“Make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”* (Hebrews 13:21). Let's not wait until we "feel" like obeying. That day may never come because our emotions can be fickle. Let's obey now, for our life goes by quickly, and we only have one life to use for the glory of God.

Prayer – Dear Lord, You alone are worthy of our obedience to You! Thank You for the perfect Word of God You have given us, and I pray that I will not take it for granted. May I grow to respect and love the Bible as You would have me to. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 33, February 6 – RELY ON GOD’S POWER

*The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.
Proverbs 29:25*

When David was a young man, he faced one of the greatest challenges of his life: a literal giant, nine feet and six inches tall, the warrior named Goliath. For forty days, Goliath continued to threaten and put fear in the hearts of the Israelite army. David witnessed Goliath’s intimidations and could have turned and ran away, but he had the right mindset. David entered the conflict with Goliath by looking at the situation through the eyes of faith. David knew that the battle was the Lord’s and that God would give him the victory. David stated that, “*all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands*” (1 Samuel 17:47). David chose five smooth stones for his slingshot. He wore no armor but was clothed with a strong faith in the true God. David ran toward Goliath with a stone in his slingshot, swung it and hit Goliath in the forehead, and he fell dead.

David wasn’t the only one who had giants in his life. We have symbolic “giants” that need to be conquered as well. Whatever challenges we face presents us with the opportunity to witness the Lord’s faithfulness to us, even when we may not have any idea how God could possibly work on our behalf. We need to learn to not base our faith on what we perceive, but to look beyond our perceptions, and ask God to show us what He sees. God can give you insight as to what the true nature of the battle is. David knew that the battle was the Lord’s, and went on in faith to defeat Goliath.

When you put your faith in man instead of God, it opens your life up to disappointment and a world of failed expectations. People will fail you, that’s a fact, but God won’t. (www.beliefnet.com)

Prayer – Dear Lord, thank You for the timely and true story of David and Goliath! I ask that You help me as I expose myself daily to Your truth and live as an overcomer through the power of Christ. I confess the giants in my life (name them, such as fear, pride, lying, anger etc...) that have held me back from being the Christian You desire for me to be. I will follow Your guidance as You mature me in my weak areas. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Day 34, February 7 – GOD IS TRUSTWORTHY

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.
Proverbs 3:5-6*

When we have a medical problem, we go to a reliable doctor. The doctor performs an examination to determine the best approach for a cure. Since we want to feel better and trust the doctor's opinion, we utilize the cure. Proverbs 3:5-6 encourages us to trust God in everything. To accomplish this, we must scrutinize our lives for areas where we have not yielded complete control to the Lord. Just as the doctor must examine and test the body, we must examine the content of our minds. Are you allowing yourself to dwell on past hurts or injustices? Are there areas of your mind that you use on activities that waste time and are not profitable for the kingdom of God? Do you expose your mind to toxic input? Some examples of this can come in the form of media, pastimes, or choosing to associate with people who are bad influences. We should close the door to negative influences and replace them with things that would grow our character to become more like Christ. If some areas are under our control, they need to be turned over to the Lord's control. Allow the teaching of Scripture to influence your choices, and trust God to reveal to you the areas you need to let go of.

“Jesus encourages His followers to turn to Him when hard times hit. He’s not disinterested, letting you work out your problems for yourself. He’s not powerless, unable to do anything for you. He’s “gentle and humble,” and He’s able to bring rest to your soul. He may not always change your circumstances, but He will bring a peace to your heart even in the midst of the most difficult situations if you will trust Him. –Henry Blackaby, author of Experiencing God

God promises us that when we submit all our ways to Him, He will remove obstacles in our way or show us a way around them. He will lead, guide and direct His children to accomplish His will. Do not allow laziness, in trusting God, rob you of fulfilling His plans for your life.

Prayer – Dear Lord, thank You for this truth and I confess that there are areas of my life that I retain control. I accept Your forgiveness and ask You to purify me of anything I am participating in that does not please You. I need Your guidance every day and commit to do my part by making my relationship with You my primary focus. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





Day 35, February 8 – GOD LOOKS AT THE HEART

For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7b

King Saul disobeyed the Lord's instructions more than once, and thereby, disqualified himself to be the king of Israel. The prophet Samuel was faced with the assignment of locating and anointing the future king of Israel. The Lord led Samuel to the family of Jesse who had eight sons. Samuel asked to see Jesse's sons and the oldest son, Eliab, was the first in line. When Samuel saw Eliab, he thought to himself, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him!" (1 Samuel 16:6). God said in 1 Samuel 16:7, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." God rejected all seven sons of Jesse's that passed before Samuel. Then Samuel asked Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" (1 Samuel 16:11). Jesse told him that there was one more son, the youngest, and he was a shepherd. By request, Jesse fetched his son from the pasture. When Samuel saw David, the Lord confirmed that he was the chosen king, and Samuel anointed him. From that time on, the Spirit of the Lord came upon David.

In this story God, teaches us that our heart, our true character, is always more important to Him than our outward appearance. Most of the time we can be satisfied if we meet the expectations of society and requirements of God by our outward visible actions. But God is looking straight at our heart. The heart is the ruling center of the whole person, the source of all desires and center of spiritual activity. Is God pleased with the current condition of your heart?

"Would it appall you or delight you if Christ revealed your thoughts? We unconsciously assume that our outer, physical, visible actions are going to be the basis for our judgment. In the Bible, though, God places the emphasis on the inner, invisible actions of the mind."

T.W. Hunt, The Mind of Christ: The Transforming Power of Thinking His Thoughts

Prayer – Dear Lord, You are always faithful to teach us what You require of us and provide the Bible as our guide. I ask You to forgive me for any mental impurities. Please show me any thought patterns that are grieving your Holy Spirit and keeping me stuck in my life. You are a God who makes all things new, and thank You for renewing my mind In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 36, February 9 – SPIRITUALLY PROSPEROUS LIVING

Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.
Psalm 1:1-3

The first three verses above are the introduction to the book of Psalms. They are giving vital instructions on how to live a contented life. This passage explains the contrast of how Christians are to live and how the wicked lives. There is only one way to live a godly life, and to foolishly ignore the wisdom of God is to accept death. Verse one speaks of how a person that acts foolishly goes deeper into involvement with “wickedness.” Notice the progression of seduction that happens when someone keeps company with evil-hearted people. First, “walking in step,” then “standing with,” and thirdly “sitting beside.” Satan will use the wicked to subtly drag you away from God if you choose to make them your close associates and follow their ungodly counsel. Christ followers are to be in the world, but not of the world. The imagery of verse two shows the life pattern of a righteous person who is in the world, but remains strong and unaffected by the world.

“God surpasses our dreams when we reach past our personal plans and agenda to grab the hand of Christ and walk the path he chose for us. He is obligated to keep us dissatisfied until we come to Him and his plan for complete satisfaction.”
–Beth Moore, Breaking Free: Discover the Victory of Total Surrender

God never abandons His children, but this does not mean that you get a life of ease. We are presently in the world and He has given us instructions on how to live successfully in the Bible. We may need to redefine what we consider to be successful to what the Bible defines as success.

Prayer – Dear Lord, I praise You for warning me to be aware of the subtle progression of compromise. I long to live a contented life and I know as I obey You I will prosper spiritually by becoming more like Christ. Help me to grow in wisdom. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.





Day 37, February 10 – STAY STEADY

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

1 Peter 4:12-13

"Steady on soldier" is the cry heard by soldiers in the military when situations get tough, and there seems like there is no good answer for the crisis they are facing. On the occasion when the enemy seems insurmountable and resources are dwindling away, God says to us, "steady on soldier of the cross!" Sometimes we may think "This life is nothing like I expected! I feel disillusioned and betrayed by people I trusted. God help me!"

Peter tells us, think it not strange. Since Christ suffered, why should we be surprised when we suffer? Our endurance in suffering will be evidenced by our faith. This passage offers us the comfort that the Spirit that raised Christ, will raise us! If we are not prepared to deal with suffering, we will not endure it successfully. When a natural disaster is predicted, we must prepare by having extra food and water. It was surprising when people suffered in the New Orleans disaster. Their reality was that they lived below sea level, the levees were old and could break down, and they were in the biggest hurricane that had come. Sadly, many did nothing to prepare, and then marveled as to why the damage took place. It is the same with our faith; it must be fortified and established. God is our strength in battle and looks on us with love that never ends, never grows dim and is available to us, His children. Walk with God and give up your preconceived perceptions of what you thought "walking with God" would look like. Knowing the ways of God helps to keep you from expecting what you "imagined" the Christian life would be and to learn what it is actually like. Adventure awaits! God is with you, and you can accomplish His will, doing it His way. Steady on soldier of the cross!

Prayer – Our Father, we praise You for telling us the truth and equipping us to endure suffering for Christ's sake. I confess that I am not anxious to suffer, and I thank You that You have promised to give me everything I need to endure the trials that come my way. Oh Lord, grant us stronger backs that we may glorify You as You provide grace and strength through trials. In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.

Day 38, February 11 – STRENGTH DURING TRIALS

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.
1 Corinthians 10:13

Do you ever wonder why some people pray and are healed and others are not? In our human reasoning, we are aware that children and others are suffering. We think they deserve a miracle and yet no miracle of healing comes. This is a dilemma that has puzzled and angered people for as long as time. As you know, God has a different perspective than we do. The situation begs for a miracle and sometimes the miracle is that God will give grace and endurance in the circumstance. When there is pain and unanswered questions, we can cling to what we know is true about God. He is kind and merciful. Keep in mind not all sickness is from God. Often sickness we endure is because we live in a world that is under a curse. This curse includes sickness and pain that is caused by the effects of darkness coming from the evil one, Satan. Yet God, in His tender mercy does not “tempt us above that which we are able but makes a way of escape that we are able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). God never leaves our side and Jesus prays for us to endure. During times of pain and suffering realize that God has allowed it for a reason and know that part of that reason is to glorify God by our attitudes and actions during the trial.

“Temptation may even be a blessing to a man when it reveals to him his weakness and drives him to the almighty Savior. Do not be surprised, then, dear child of God, if you are tempted at every step of your earthly journey, and almost beyond endurance; but you will not be tempted beyond what you are able to bear, and with every temptation there will be a way of escape.” FB Meyer

Prayer – Dear Lord, it is a great comfort to know that You will not allow us to go through anything that You will not equip us for spiritually. You always make a way of escape whether it be through supernatural peace, strength or whatever is necessary for the situation. We will trust You for this. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.





Day 39, February 12 – JESUS IS OUR ADVOCATE

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
1 John 2:1

The apostle John was older at the time of the writing of this verse and addresses the readers as children. John expresses his loving concern by warning Christ followers that there is a continual risk to sin, and he desires to help them be aware of this and guard against it. The pattern in the original Greek text does not mean we won't sin but is advice about sinning because it is assumed that we all sin. The word, 'Advocate', is referring the intercessory work of Jesus. As an Advocate, He makes prayers and petitions to God the Father on our behalf.

To obtain a clean heart before God, we need to ask Him to reveal any sin, hated or cherished. Determine to submit to the conviction of the Holy Spirit to forgive people, give back what you owe someone, make up with someone and other sins, He may bring to your mind. A partially clogged drain may be able to trickle a little bit of water down it, but there's also water standing in the sink that will become stale and rancid, unfit to drink or bathe in. Be wise, and never buy into believing you can get away with willful sin and not reap the consequences. Confess your sins continually to keep the flow of the Holy Spirit unclogged. If we don't, we are grieving the Spirit of God. Focus on God and obey the lifestyle in the Scripture. As you practice this, God's daily plan for you will unfold. You will grow in understanding how to follow God and learn His ways. Will you trust God, open yourself to Him and find true fulfillment in your life? It is a strength to be truthful with yourself and admit any sin because it is hindering you. Confess all to God and He will forgive you, guide you, and help you for you are His precious, beloved child.

Prayer – Dear Lord, I praise You for your unending patience with me! Please give me a humble and repentant heart so I don't waste my life not owning up to sin that separates me from the best life You offer me. Thank You Jesus for being my Advocate with the Father. I ask You that I would grow more sensitive to the Holy Spirit convicting me of sin that grieves You and hinders me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Day 40, February 13 – PUT ON YOUR NEW MAN

That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:22-24

Before we have a relationship with God through new birth, we live primarily controlled by our soul and body (the old nature). When we transfer ownership of our lives to the lordship of Jesus Christ by salvation, He sends His Holy Spirit to regenerate us. The KJV dictionary definition for regenerate is; “to renew the heart by a change of affections; to change the heart and affections from natural enmity to the love of God; to implant holy affections in the heart.” At salvation, the Holy Spirit takes residence in our inner being. Whereas a person before conversion was directed by the sin nature, he or she can now be directed by the Holy Spirit who works to transform us into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

“The reason why many are still troubled, still seeking, still making little forward progress is because they haven’t yet come to the end of themselves. We’re still trying to give orders and interfering with God’s work within us.” A. W. Tozer

Often many Christians think that the only important spiritual decision is their conversion and that little comes after that, except praying when in trouble and attending church occasionally. Here is the biblical point of view; Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and then said, “Loose him, and let him go” (John 11:44). Jesus wanted Lazarus to be taken out of his grave clothes, because He was no longer dead. When the apostle Paul wrote the verses above, this biblical principle was what he was communicating to the readers. Putting off our former conduct is telling us that our pre-salvation behavior was from the old nature, which is spiritually dead. The old nature and the new nature cannot work together or peacefully coexist. We can live spiritually successful lives because Christians are empowered by God to put off sins and replace them with godly virtues.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness. Galatians 5:22

Prayer – Dear Lord, I praise You that, “we are your workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). I choose to work together with You and pursue mind renewal. Thank You for enabling me to become more like Christ and usable for your service. Help me to choose wisely moment by moment to yield to the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.



ADDITIONAL NOTES:

ADDITIONAL NOTES: