

WELCOME

As the Sabbath Day Prayer Ministry we are so excited to spend the next 21 days with you as we pray and fast together for the purpose of drawing closer to God. There is just something about sacrificing for God that draws His heart to us. While we don't have to sacrifice animals any longer for sin, because JESUS laid Himself down for us, there are times when it is appropriate to sacrifice our comforts to show God we are serious about drawing closer to Him.

You will find that this devotional is very practical. It is filled with advice to take the guess work out of prayer. Prayer is one of the ways we grow in relationship with God. It wasn't meant to be hard or frustrating though at times that's exactly how it feels.

The disciples (those closest to Jesus) may have felt this way, which was why they asked Jesus to "teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). At this, Jesus teaches them a model of prayer and then tells them a story. Very practical!

Our prayer for you is that you will use this devotional as a part of your next 21 days. We pray you will see God's hand in your life this year and that you will find it easy to seek God's face in prayer.

May God richly bless you this year as you seek after Him.

Holy Tabernacle of God MBC Sabbath Day Prayer Ministry
Sis. Clara Markray
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Luke 11:1-13
New Living Translation

Teaching about Prayer

¹Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of his disciples came to him and said, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” Jesus said, “This is how you should pray: “Father, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. ²Give us each day the food we need, ⁴and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation.”

Then, teaching them more about prayer, he used this story: “Suppose you went to a friend’s house at midnight, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread. You say to him, ⁶ ‘A friend of mine has just arrived for a visit, and I have nothing for him to eat.’ ⁷And suppose he calls out from his bedroom, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is locked for the night, and my family and I are all in bed. I can’t help you.’ ⁸But I tell you this—though he won’t do it for friendship’s sake, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence. ⁹“And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹“You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? ¹²Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! ¹³So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

January 10

How to Pray

Luke 11:1-13

Let's face it, prayer is hard! It's hard to find time to pray. It's hard to focus. It feels boring, and sometimes, let's be honest, we feel like we're just talking to ourselves. If you struggle to pray, YOU ARE NOT ALONE! Even those of us in the Prayer Ministry go through seasons when it is difficult to pray. That unfortunately is part of being human.

Jesus didn't see prayer that way though. He spent a lot of His time on earth praying. He taught His disciples to pray, and thankfully they wrote down what He taught them. In Luke 11:2-4 we find Jesus' model for prayer:

"²Jesus said, "This is how you should pray: "Father, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. ³Give us each day the food we need, ⁴and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation."

Jesus taught us many things from this model, let's look at four today.

1. God is our Father.

Jesus uses an Aramaic word for Father, Abba. It's a very intimate word. It basically means "Daddy." His use of this word shows us God welcomes us and has our best interest at heart.

1. God is as close as air.

2. Jesus again uses a very specific Greek word for Heaven. It's ouranos, it literally means air. Air is something that's all around us. It's in us. It's in our very blood. Jesus is saying that God is CLOSE! He is not far off or uninterested in us. He cares about us.

3. Prayer is worship.

4. The first thing Jesus says in His prayer is "may Your name be kept holy." He's speaking about God's name. Holy means "set apart." It means we should have reverence and respect for God's name. It means we understand "God, you're the only God who can..." Everything comes from God for His Glory.

5. Prayer makes a difference.

6. When we pray, we actually partner with God to see His Kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. WOW! We get to be a part of what God is doing not only in our lives but also in the lives of those around us.

Reflection Space

1. Do you see God as a loving Father or a harsh taskmaster? How do you think this affects your relationship with Him?
2. Describe how your frustration with prayer has hindered your walk with God. Now, take what you wrote and pray to God, asking Him to speak into your life.
3. Write down any loving thoughts He speaks into your mind.

Prayers:

Praises:

January 11

Jesus in an Old Mack

2 Chronicles 15:15

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Ephesians 6:18

Have you ever had a crazy season of life where nothing seems to slow down? No doubt, you've had that season. I sometimes felt like prayer was something that had to be done on my knees in some quiet spot. Like I had to be Daniel getting away and praying three times a day. Maybe it had to be like Jesus where I had to wake up every day and disappear into the hills to pray. While both examples are wonderful (we'll talk later about this), there were seasons that felt so crazy I couldn't do that. Maybe you have young kids or have a really busy season at work. Prayer can be different for everyone. Being intentional is what's important. Making a point to spend time with Him is the first step.

Sometime ago I worked for a local paving company. When you pave, you work insane hours in the summer. My job was to haul equipment, pavers, excavators, and such. I would leave really early in the morning and get home late most days. I would wake up early and try to pray, but my mind was mush. I began waking up, drinking coffee, and reading scripture but conversation was just too hard. My drive required me to drive most mornings about 45 minutes to an hour in an old Mack truck. By the time I got to work and started driving the truck I was a little more awake and the coffee had kicked in. I pictured Jesus riding shotgun with me in that old Mack. We talked about everything. I'd ask Him advice on my marriage, parenting, finance, what my Bible reading was about. Funny that truck was so loud I could barely hear the radio, but I think I heard more from God in that stretch than I had ever before.

There were a lot of mornings I actually felt like He was there waiting for me in the seat just wanting to talk. I felt like Adam walking with God in the cool of the morning. It didn't matter I was driving; it only mattered that I was intentionally spending time with Him. I got some looks from people saying "Look at that guy talking to himself" but I didn't care. It's a lot easier to handle crazy people on the road when you're riding with Jesus. I was able to open up in a way I hadn't been able to before.

I believe there are times when you need to get away from everything. I try to do this at least once a year, disappear and disconnect from everything and spend time praying. There are definitely times where you need to find a quiet room and hit your knees. Being on your knees reflects humility before an Almighty

God. Both of these ways are great ways to pray but more important is being intentional. You can come to God at anytime and with anything. He died on the cross so you could have a deep relationship with Him. Those conversations with Him don't have to happen only at a certain time or place. Pray continually as Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. Just be intentional, make it a point to seek Him. Whether it's at home, at work, inside or out, or in the cab of an old Mack. Jesus wants to hear from you! He will hear you and you'll find those conversations getting deeper and longer.

Don't forget conversations are two ways, make sure you're listening for what He has to say, too.

Reflection Space

1. Have you made it a point to talk to Jesus today?
2. Have you ever tried to make task reminders to pray? For example, when preparing dinner, pray for those who don't have food?
3. How can you be intentional in your prayer life?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 12

How to Pray Proverbs 18:24

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

The friend being talked about in this scripture is Jesus (John 15:13-15). So, if Jesus is your friend, do you treat Him like one? What do you treat your friends like? I mean your CLOSEST friend. You talk to them daily! You share stories, hopes, dreams, disappointments, feelings and thoughts. You call or text A LOT. You get together with them and spend time together. Jesus is no different. Do you share your day with Him? Hopes? Dreams? Disappointments? Feelings? Thoughts?

Deuteronomy 6:5-9 talks about knowing the scriptures so well they are part of your everyday living. Why not do the same with prayer? I talk to Jesus like He was standing (or sitting) next to me in all my daily activities.

A typical day starts with exercise for me. He is there. I put on my praise music and thank Him for all He does (did) for me and who He is. Then I have breakfast and tea with Jesus. This is a morning routine with Him. I LOVE journaling. I have been journaling for years. So, I sit, with pen in hand, read some scripture and write a letter to Him about whatever is on my mind. It may be about the scripture I just read. It may be my feelings from the night before. It may be my feelings right now. It may be a person I'm concerned about. It might be a situation I need to process. It might be gratitude. He gets it all. Then I spend the day homeschooling my children and making sure they know they can talk to Him, too. The rest of my day is not as structured, but I can count on doing the dishes and making dinner, maybe driving to do some errands or go to a meeting. Through all this I continue to talk to Him. No fancy language but like I would a friend. “What do you think about this? What did you mean by this? Are you asking me to do this? Hey, when I was reading your word and you said this, guess what I learned? Thank you for teaching that to me! Thank you for being so good to me. Thank you for loving me. I’m feeling this way right now, can you comfort me? I could really use some encouragement right now. Wow, you really had to get my attention with that. I’m sorry I sinned against you. Can you continue to teach me your ways? Thank you for forgiving me. This person is really on my mind right now. Could you let them know you love them?” Lastly, the night ends with me talking to Him. I recap my day with Him and ask for sleep and peace, thanking Him where He showed up in my day, maybe reviewing scripture as I nod off or praying for others that I told I would remember in my prayers or listening to soft worship music.

Reflection Space

1. What does your prayer time look like?
2. What is keeping you from praying?
3. Take a moment to write a short note to Jesus. What do you want to say to Him?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 13

How to Pray

1 Chronicles 16:8-11 NIV

“Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.”

Prayer is undoubtedly the most powerful tool we have as it is a direct line of communication to our omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God. Prayer allows us to develop true intimacy with Him and fulfill His desire for closeness with us. Our Father cares about the anxiety you wake up with because you have an over-booked day just as much as He cares about the deep heartbreak you're experiencing. He cares about the belly laughs you crave with your friends as much as He cares about the big promotion you've been chasing. When we pray, we invest in this relationship. His Word commands us to “pray without ceasing.” He wants to hear from us more often than a minute in the morning, evening and before our meals! Thank Him when you open your eyes and ask to be used as His hands and feet. As you get ready for work, pray for your co-workers and employers. On your way out, praise Him for your home and transportation. Lift up loved ones while you drive. Intercede for the person who hurt you when resentment comes to mind. Rebuke the enemy in His mighty name when you feel darkness creeping in. Revere His sovereignty. That's what He meant when He said, “without ceasing!”

There are many ways to pray and almost none are wrong! Some say they don't know how to pray and my response is, “If you can talk, you can pray.” If you're struggling to get started or are feeling a bit redundant in your prayer life, check out the Lectio 365 app. Their acronym P.R.A.Y. can be a simple guide to establish and maintain a connection with God.

R: Rejoice with a Psalm and reflect on Scripture

A: Ask God to help you and those you care about

Y: Yield to God's will in your life

Feel free to use this acronym as a guide or join in on the app's daily morning and evening prayers. You can even turn it on during your commute because we could all use a little more Jesus in rush hour! Personally, I love to start my day with a hot cup of coffee, a morning devotion, time in the Word, gratitude journaling and then the app for guided morning prayer. Set your alarm 30 minutes earlier to secure this precious time with our Lord! Dear friends, we can change the world by making prayer our #1 priority! Let's see what God does with our obedience and faithfulness!

Reflection Space

1. Identify where, when, and how you'll incorporate more prayer time into your day.
2. What are your current barriers to praying without ceasing?
3. Text an accountability buddy who will pray with you and for you to grow in your prayer life.

Prayers:

Praises:

January 14

Tabernacle Prayer: Outer Court Psalms 100:4 NIV

“Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name.”

This week we will be looking at a great visual to help us to pray. God knew that prayer would be a hard, so He gave us great resources, visuals, and models to help us throughout the Bible. Next week, we will be looking at how to use scripture to pray. This week though we will be looking at the Tabernacle as a visual for us to pray.

The Tabernacle was established by Moses through the plans given to him by God. It was a place for the presence of God to rest and a connection point for the Israelites to connect to God. Each area or piece drew you closer and closer to God's presence. Admittance beyond the Outer Court required you to be a part of the priesthood. Jesus, through His sacrifice on the cross, opened the door for all of us to be in the presence of God. 1 Peter 2:9 says:

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

Today during our time together let's look at the first part of the Tabernacle called the Outer Court. The Outer Court of the Tabernacle was an area surrounding the Tabernacle structure in ancient Israel. It was enclosed by a fence. Inside the Outer Court was the Altar of Burnt Offering where animal sacrifices were made to the LORD. This place was open to everyone and was meant to be a place of thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving in the fact that God had made a way for our sins to be forgiven. It was through the forgiveness of sins that we are allowed in God's presence. Later, when the Tabernacle was converted into the Temple, an area of the Outer Court was given to the Gentiles. This Court of the Gentiles was a foreshadowing of Jesus' opening the door to ALL people to find forgiveness and a relationship with God.

Today spend time thanking God for the way He provided for you to come into His presence. Also, thank Him for all the things for which you are thankful.

Reflection Space

1. How does having a visual help you in your prayer life?
2. How does having a thankful mindset help you in your prayer life?
3. Spend time today telling God how thankful you are for Him.

Prayers:

Praises:

January 15

Brazen Altar

Leviticus 1:3-5

Hebrews 10:11-22

The brazen altar was right in front of the Holy Place in the Outer Court. You would see it as soon as you entered the Tabernacle. You could not enter the Holy Place and the presence of God without atonement for your sins. An innocent lamb without blemish would bear the judgement of sin for the Israelites entering into His presence.

Today the atonement for our sins was paid once and for all by the Son of God, Jesus, willing to give Himself to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus' death on the cross was a sacrifice that paid our debt in full so we may enter into the presence of the Father with confidence (Hebrews 4:16).

¹⁶ Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

If you're like me, you can let life take your mind off this most unbelievable selfless act of love. When we make a point to focus on what Jesus did for us on the cross, every day, it keeps it fresh in our mind. It reminds me how sinful I am, and how much God hates sin. It reminds me that I'm made clean by His blood, that I am loved that much and how much the Father wants a relationship with me. Coming before the cross and repenting and seeking Christ helps set the tone for the rest of your time with your Abba Father.

Reflection Space

1. Have you ever let Jesus sacrifice on the cross become mundane?
2. Can you remember the feeling and emotion you had when you first believed that Jesus died for you on the cross?
3. Do you make it a daily habit to thank Him for making the ultimate sacrifice?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 16

Tabernacle Prayer: The Laver **Matthew 4:4**

“But Jesus replied, it is written and forever remains written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.”

I know that in my life there are seasons that I am consumed with so many difficult circumstances. It is in those moments I find that my prayer life then becomes consumed in praying for these circumstances with a temporal mindset. The scripture here, and in Deuteronomy 8:3 in which Jesus was quoting, shows me the importance of eternal factors involved.

God cares deeply for all the concerns His children have no matter what it is, and yet we benefit so much more as we seek to understand His heart. God's word is so powerful in showing us the eternal significance and how we are to model that out to the world.

It is my desire that as I pray my heart would be changed to see the eternal and allow the Lord to work in my life so that His word would be seen in and through my life.

Reflection Space

1. How can I be more disciplined to focus on the eternal and not so much on the external going on around me?
2. How can my focus be more direct in my serving the Lord simply because of my disciplined prayer life?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 17

Tabernacle Prayer: The Candlestick Isaiah 11:2

Some scholars believe the candlesticks represent all churches. Others believe the candlesticks represent the church in different stages of history. There are other meanings to consider with the candlestick as well, such as the representation of the color gold, and the number of branches on the candlestick. For this section, I want to focus on the fire that lights each candle, the Holy Spirit fire!

Isaiah 11:2 says, *“The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the lord...”* This is talking about Jesus. The Spirit rested on Jesus while He was on earth, but when Jesus left the world, He promised to send to us the Holy Spirit (John 14:26).

“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Now, this Holy Spirit fire rests on us. We cannot do what God has called us to do without the supernatural power of Holy Spirit. WOW! The Holy Spirit is with US!! He resides in US! We are equipped to do what God has called us to do because of the Holy Spirit! This is incredibly empowering and comforting.

What does it look like to carry the Holy Spirit fire within us? Well, it looks like a lot of things, but let's start with the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

During a breakfast meeting with friends, one friend said, “We should be recognized by others as Christians everywhere we go, because our behavior and responses to situations should reflect the Holy Spirit within us.” We are carrying the light of the world in us. Luke 12:35 says, ³⁵*“Be dressed and ready for service and keep your lamps burning.”*

We grow stronger in these fruits by spending time in our Bibles and praying and building our relationship with God. And as we continue to strive for growth in these areas, we should also be praying for the gifts of the Spirit found in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. ⁷Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.¹¹All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

Reflection Space

1. Where do you think you need to grow in the fruits of the Spirit?
2. What steps will you take today to grow in your relationship with Jesus?
3. What gifts will you be praying for? Wisdom? Knowledge? Faith? Gifts of healing? Prophecy...?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 18

Tabernacle prayer: Table of Showbread Psalm 51:7-8

*⁷Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean; Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
⁸Make me hear joy and gladness and be satisfied; Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.*

King David here in this scripture was full of assurance in God's mercy and ability that if he came with a broken and contrite heart that he could be clean. When we come into our time with the Lord it is important to start off with "Search me oh Lord to see if there is anything of sin or flesh that needs to be washed clean." He will not despise or look down on that, but He will prepare our hearts to receive. I remember an old chorus that is so powerful.

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary pure and holy, tried and true
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for You

Sanctuary in the Hebrew means consecrated thing (Dictionary= dedicated, devoted, hallowed as sacred).

When we pray for the Lord to cleanse us, we are preparing for Him to usher us into the next phase of His plan. Lord make me a dwelling place of your Holy Spirit, so that I may know your voice. Our joy and gladness come in fellowship with the Lord and whatever it takes for this to happen is completely worth it all. Oh, Lord make me a sanctuary of your dwelling and do what is important in us, that our time with you may be full and restore unto us the joy of our life in you.

Reflection Space

1. What do I need to lay at Jesus's feet that may be hindering my relationship with Him?
2. What is it in my life that I have not yet surrendered to the Lord that I need to give to Him so that He may dwell there?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 19

Tabernacle Prayer: The Altar of Incense

Exodus 30:1

“Make altar of acacia wood for burning incense.”

Why is this verse significant? What does it even mean? The burning of incense has a special place in my heart because the smoke arising from the burning incense symbolizes our prayers rising to the Lord. What a beautiful picture! (This incense is mentioned again in Revelation 5:8 and 8:4).

Revelation 5:8

“And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people.

Revelation 8:4

“The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God’s people, went up before God from the angel’s hand.

Our prayers matter to the Lord, so much so, it’s mentioned in the Bible! We matter to the Lord! We are significant to Him!

And what do we do with this knowledge, when we realize that we matter to the God of the universe? We worship! The altar of incense was the final stop before the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. It was a place to worship and adore our Lord. One way we can do that is by praising the many names of the Lord. Here are a few:

El Shaddai: “God Almighty,” “The Mighty One of Jacob” (Genesis 49:24; Psalm 132:2,5)

Yhwh/Yahweh/Jehovah: “Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4; Daniel 9:14) Yahweh-Jireh: “The Lord Will Provide” (Genesis 22:14) Yahweh-Shalom: “The Lord Our Peace (Judges 6:24)

Yahweh-Rohi: “The Lord Our Shepherd” (Psalm 23:1) El Roi: “God of Seeing” (Genesis 16:13)

How do we pray the names of the Lord? You could simply pray something like this: “Lord God you are mighty, my El Shaddai. Thank you for being great, mighty, and powerful. Thank you for being my strength when I am weak. Where would we be without your power and your greatness? Thank you for being so wonderful and wise.”

Reflection Space

1. What is your favorite name of God?
2. Why is that your favorite name of God?
3. What are some ways you can worship using the names of God?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 20

Tabernacle Prayer: The Ark of The Covenant– The Place of Intercession

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all Godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

In ancient days, the closest place to God was in the Holy of Holies where the blood that represented the people's sins was sprinkled on the Ark of the Covenant. This was the place of intercession, the place where all petitions of forgiveness were taken.

On the Ark is "the mercy seat." 1 Samuel 4:4 God is described as being enthroned there between the cherubim. Some translations call it "the atonement cover."

Only once a year, the high priest would be allowed to enter this Most Holy Place to make atonement for the people's sins.

As I'm re-acquainting myself with the teachings of the Ark, and it being a place of intercession, I can't help but thank God for the open heaven that we now have. We as individuals can go boldly to the throne of grace and talk DIRECTLY to Father God and King Jesus ourselves! What a difference we can make not just in our own lives but in the lives of those around us by interceding (praying) for them.

Never doubt the power of prayer. It changes things. It moves mountains. And it pleases the Lord.

Reflection Space

Today, take a moment to write down the names of those for which you are interceding.

Here are some ideas to get you started: my family, my friends, my church, my community, my relationships, my co-workers, my job, local/government officials, my adversaries.

Prayers:

Praises:

January 21

How to Pray Scripture Ephesians 6:18-19

“With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel.”

Would you love for your ‘prayer time’ with God to simply explode with more power and deeper intimacy with Him? Guess what? God wants that, too! And because God wants that for all His children, He faithfully granted us a tool to accomplish just that; HIS WORD! Hebrews 4:12a says; *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...”* Thus, when we speak His Word, we are speaking life!

When it comes to praying the scriptures, we are applying the truth of the written word to the prayer we are praying. Scripture prepares the soil of our hearts and connects us intimately with God. Throughout history, we see King David praise, cry and intercede. We see the prophets intercede for nations. Jesus quoted the Old Testament, and the Apostle Paul used God’s Word to declare His truths. The Jewish people prayed the Shema (Deut. 6:4-5) daily and also prayed ascension prayers when they ascended to Jerusalem.

4Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.¹² 5Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

How do we pray scriptures? I personally pray scriptures that I study during my private devotional time. By praying a verse ‘out loud’ (for me), I find that the Lord brings me deeper into that verse or passage and leads me to expound in my prayers.

Also, Psalms is by far one of the best books of the Bible to use when you pray. We find here: prayers of thanksgiving, protection, repentance, the greatness of God and guidance. Many times, I have used the Psalms to pray for the nations!

Praying scripture helps us to ‘stay focused’ by keeping on track, as the Holy Spirit guides our prayers.

When people are sick, I automatically ask God what promise verse of healing do You want me to pray? The same goes for financial needs, marital, for loved ones needing salvation, and the list goes on. Remember, the Bible is GOD’S WORD! And it was God’s Word that spoke this world into existence, thus, praying His Word will indeed move mountains in your life!

And the Lord cries out: “IF MY PEOPLE WILL PRAY...” 2 Chron. 7:14

Reflection Space

1. How is the Word of God a **TOOL** in prayer?
2. How is the Word of God a **WEAPON** in prayer?
3. How is the Word of God a **SOURCE** for our prayer life?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 22

How To Pray Scripture Acts 16:31

“Believe on the Lord Jesus (as your personal Savior and entrust yourself to Him) And you will be saved, you and your household (if they also believe.)”

In 1980 I wrote my families names around this scripture (Acts 16:31) in my Bible.

“They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

Then, I put it in my daily prayers. Along with this came responsibility. I needed to live a life that witnessed Jesus. I testified of all God had done for me and continue to tell them all He does and will do for them if they believed. I have seen them, one by one, accept Jesus as their Savior. I will continue to pray and trust God for my household.

When they see what God has given me, I quote Matthew 6:33:

“But seek Ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Reflection Space

1. What scriptures are you specifically praying over your own family?
2. If you don't have a scripture to pray over your family, spend some time with these, and see if God speaks to your heart.

Psalm 127:1

Colossians 2:6-7

Joshua 24:15

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Psalm 91:9-12

Mark 10:6-9

Jeremiah 32:39

Ephesians 5:22-28

Ephesians 6:4

Isaiah 40:11

3 John 1:2

Ephesians 4:26-27

Galatians 5:22

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Ephesians 4:31-32

Prayers:

Praises:

January 23

How To Pray Scripture Isaiah 6:8

⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” ⁹He said, “Go and tell this people:”

How can we pray this scripture in keeping with the invitation we have received from God to reach out to 2% of the lost in our surrounding community? We can take Isaiah's example.

Isaiah received an invitation by first listening for the voice of God and then hearing the word of God, when God asked, “Whom shall I send?” Are our ears inclined to hear God when he speaks?

Pray, God would you help me to hear you when you speak (through the Bible, the preacher, trusted Godly counsel, signs and wonders, in prayer and fasting, and so on).

Isaiah accepted the invitation. What do you do with an invitation? You either accept or reject it. The number one thing that gets in the way of accepting is self-justification to say “no.” We find excuses, sometimes pretty good ones, for why we can't do something God asks us to do. Jesus warns against some of these justifications. (See Luke 14:16-24).

¹⁶Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. ¹⁷At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ ¹⁸But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’ ¹⁹Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’ ²⁰Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’ ²¹The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’ ²²“Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’ ²³“Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. ²⁴I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’”

Pray, Father, please give me the love for you that would cause me to be obedient in following where you're inviting me, even if it costs me or if I don't see the end results. May I be one that says, “Here I am, send me!”

Reflection Space

1. What steps can I start taking now to help me hear God's voice? Maybe start by tuning out the static noise that produces no fruit and tuning in to the Word of God.
2. What steps can I start taking now to be obedient to what God is calling me to do? Start with prayer. If you're not praying daily and being silent before the Lord, you may miss out on what He is saying.
3. What steps can I start taking now to reach out to my community? Who is my community? What loaves and fishes (time, talent, resources) do I have to offer my community?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 24

How to Pray Scripture Isaiah 58

There is a prayer that I pray several times a week, and I have been doing so for many years now. This prayer is for those who are taking God's Word (the Sword of Faith) and using it with full force!

I would encourage you to read and meditate on:

Isaiah 58; Joel 2; Daniel 9:3; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

The largest portion of this prayer will be from Isaiah 58. Pray this for yourself, family, loved ones, and God's People! Let's pray.

"Lord, I believe in the power of Your chosen fast. Let my prayer and fasting destroy the yokes that the enemy has set up against me. Let Your light come into my life. Let health, healing and miracles be released in my life, and let me see breakthroughs of salvation and deliverance in my life. Through You, I drive every stubborn demon out of my life! Let every assignment of hell against me be broken (**Is.59:19/2 Cor. 10:4-5**): all pride and rebellion operating in my life be destroyed!

¹⁹From the west, people will fear the name of the Lord, and from the rising of the sun, they will revere his glory. For he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the Lord drives along.

⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

I DECLARE! [Declare means that I make a clear announcement and proclaim officially!] I declare the blessings of God in my life. Let Your favor exalt me that Your anointing increase in my life. Let me enjoy restoration. Let Your covenant blessing and mercy be released on me. Lord, let my impossibilities become possible through You! Guide me and manifest Your glory to me. I will set my face toward God (**Isaiah 58:1**), to make my requests by prayer, with fasting. (**Dan.9:3**) I pray and fast to: Loose the bonds of wickedness, undo heavy burdens, let the oppressed go free, by breaking every yoke! [**Is. 58:6**] As I pray in the secret places, Lord, You shall reward me openly! (**Matt. 6:1**).

¹Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins. (Isaiah 58:1)

³ So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. (Daniel 9:3)

⁶Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? (Isaiah 58:6)

⁶Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. (Matthew 6:1)

Reflection Space

1. Recalling the definition of the word declare; list five things you feel led to DECLARE today:
2. This is a well-rounded portion of scripture to pray, not only for us but also for others. Each week, ask the Holy Spirit to place on your heart people of whom you can pray this prayer for and write their names down here.

Prayers:

Praises:

January 25

How to Pray Scripture Psalm 40:11-12

“Do not withhold your mercy from me, Lord; may your love and faithfulness always protect me. For troubles without number surround me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me.”

Many times, I have felt like my sins have overtaken me. They're not obvious sins, but sins nonetheless: selfishness, impatience, unloving, judgmental, the list goes on. The sins produce rotten tomatoes. Then I wonder why I have rotten tomatoes without looking at what my part was in the production. The only release is to confess my sins and ask God for forgiveness with a repentant heart. Stop putting the blame on people and circumstances (which, if I look back hard enough, I can find my part in poor decisions at minimum to create those circumstances).

During this time of fasting and praying, let's examine our hearts (*Psalm 139:23-24 “Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”*)

Pray: Father, help me see where I am holding on to sin that has not been confessed. Help me to confess it/them and repent. Allow me to receive your forgiveness. Have mercy on me.

Reflection Space

1. What sins are you running away from?
2. Read Psalms 139:23-24 over yourself today? How do these verses speak to your heart?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 26

How to Pray Scripture

Psalm 91

Father God, I thank you that Your word declares that because I live under Your authority, and I call You Lord of my life, that I will find rest in you. You are my place of safety, and in You I don't need to fear. You are my shelter, my protector, and the great warrior for my heart. Thank you Father, for the rest I can have knowing that You will conquer all evil, all plagues, and all wicked that tries to come against me. Please help me to keep my focus on You. Please keep me from any distractions that might try to take my focus off of Your leading. (Psalm 91)

Thank you, Father, for my children. They are a gift from You! (Ps. 127:3, Proverbs 17:6, Gen. 33:5) Thank you for the gifts and talents that You have given to them. Thank you that I have the honor of seeing how you are growing them and shaping them into mighty men and women for Your glory! Father, I ask that nothing this world has to offer would ever be more attractive to them than You. I pray that should this world pull on them and make them question their faith and who they are in you, that you would give them dreams and visions of whose they are! Remind them, Father, that they are marked, that You have called them by name, that they are Yours. Send others that are their ages that love you and call you King to come along side of them to help lead their hearts back to You. And, Father, I choose to praise You and declare victory over the enemy in every area of my children's lives. I declare that they WILL lead lives centered in Christ. They WILL do the things that God has prepared for them to do. They WILL be righteous and as bold as lions (Proverbs 28:1) for their generation, in Jesus' name!

Father, I ask that you continue to be a shield around my church family (Psalm 3): every person, every marriage, every family, every relationship, all staff and everyone in leadership. Close the mouths of the enemy that would try to spread any slander or false accusations regarding your people. You alone are the lifter of our heads when the enemy tries to use these tactics against us, and it is You alone that we look to for justice. I pray that we place high value on obedience to Your word, and unity among us. I ask that you continue to help us to have teachable hearts and start every thought believing the very best about one another. Teach us to love like You.

Thank you, Father, for supplying our every need according to your Your riches, not mine (Philip. 4:19). I know that I don't need to allow anxious thoughts and worry to consume my thoughts because You are my provision for each new day (Philip. 4:6-7, Matt. 6:26). Help me to be uplifting, encouraging, and a blessing to everyone around me (Romans 15:13). Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me (Ps. 51:10). I ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection Space

1. These prayers and Scriptures are given as an example of how to pray scripture over yourself and your family.
2. Continue to use these prayers in your quite time before the Lord or use them to come up with your own.

Prayers:

Praises:

January 27

How to Pray Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Have you ever felt overwhelmed trying to figure out how to repair relationships that feel broken? Are you confused about how best to address issues with your significant other or worried about your children's future? Do you struggle with in-security, self-doubt and anxiety? Today's world can bombard us with so much conflicting information about how best to address these issues from self-help books to guided meditations, social media influencers and even memes. The ways of the world will never quell our angst over these situations the way our Lord can and will. We need only ask, believe and receive! This isn't a magic formula to getting everything we want. We must first fully surrender our lives to God and constantly seek to align our bodies, minds and spirits with His will. When we live in full surrender, we can approach the throne with confidence that whatever we ask for in prayer, God will bring to fruition, in His time. When you're lost and don't know where to turn, **OPEN YOUR BIBLE!** God gives us the perfect guidebook for addressing all of our issues. Not only can we find clear direction when feeling confused, but His grace, mercy and power are released when we use His word to bless ourselves and others. Using His Word brings Him glory, honor, and praise and He rewards our faithfulness. Here are a few of my favorite scriptures I rely on in difficult times:

When conflict arises in relationships:

In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. **Ephesians 4:26-27**

When fear strikes about my family:

Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you... All your children will be taught by the Lord, and great will be their peace. **Isaiah 54:13,17**

When the enemy is speaking lies to me about myself:

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. **Psalm 139:14** (do yourself a favor and memorize all of Psalm139!! You won't regret it.)

When marital issues arise:

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **Colossians 3:12-14**

Reflection Space

1. List your top five concerns with yourself and your family.
2. Find one verse for each concern.
3. Pray these over all of your concerns for the next 30 days and watch God work!

Prayers:

Praises:

January 28

How To Pray Scripture

1 John 4:17

"And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world."

Use your keys!

One of my favorite scriptures to pray over myself is from 1 John 4:17 – *...just as Jesus is, so are we in this world.* Jesus is the risen king of kings. He is royalty. He is no longer a human suffering for our sins. We are to live as Jesus is, not as He was. We are princes and princesses of the Most High! Jesus revealed to me that He provides each of us a pair of keys. He wants us to use the first key to escape the prison cell we trap ourselves in. We achieve this through repentance, forgiveness, fasting, turning away from sin and singing praise to the Worthy One.

Then we must use the second key to unlock the doors to the palace of King Jesus to receive fullness of joy, peace, freedom and more! But we can't forget to lock the door behind us because we know as stated in John 10:10 – the enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy – but Jesus came to give us life to the fullest. Now it's crucial to understand that we can't avoid the attacks of the enemy forever. We will end up back in the prison cell – but these keys NEVER leave our side. We know the escape plan. We know what is required of us as sons and daughters of the King. We have authority to claim darkness MUST flee at the name of Jesus. We have been given these keys by Jesus Himself to use over and over again.

The truth behind them is backed by countless testimonies of His faithfulness. Setting ourselves free is only one part of how we are to put them to use. We can't be satisfied with just being set free from our sin. We must also have a burning desire to enter His palace for intimacy with our Creator. We must not be satisfied with sinning and asking for forgiveness on repeat. We must hunger for more of His power, joy, peace and leading. We must obey ALL He commands of us because He is worthy. We must pray that obedience flows as naturally as breathing. We should awake each day with sincerity in our hearts as we pray our Father's Prayer – that His will be done on earth through us. We should pray for boldness to rise inside of each of us to reach as many souls for the Kingdom as we can this side of heaven.

Lastly, we must pray our time in the prison cell is shorter and further between, and our time in our King's palace is longer and more frequent.

Reflection Space

1. Are you using your keys?
2. Is there anything hindering your freedom and peace right now? How can you bring it to the feet of Jesus and enter into His perfect peace?
3. How are you leveraging the gifts and talents God has blessed you with to reach souls for His Kingdom on earth?

Prayers:

Praises:

January 29

How to use Worship in Prayer

1 John 5:14

“And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him.”

My personal morning and evening prayers:

First, I worship Him with song. One of my favorites is “I Love You Lord.”

“I Love You Lord and I lift my voice to worship You oh my soul rejoice.

Take joy my King in what you hear, let it be a sweet, sweet sound in Your ear.”

Then I thank Him for all He provided for me during the day or evening’s sleep. And pray as Jesus taught us with the Lord’s Prayer. I acknowledge He is my Heavenly Father. As a young child of six, my earthly father left our family. I sat rocking myself on the sofa. I looked up to God and said with complete sincerity, “God, my dad left, and every child needs a dad. Will you be my dad?” He answered me and within me I heard Him say, “Yes, my child I will.” And I believed. God who art in heaven, the King of Kings, almighty God and my Abba Father. Since then, my heart has and will always worship Him. Hallowed be your name.

I offer confession for wrongs I committed and then lift my petitions. I ask for His will to be done and return to praise and worship with a thankful heart that He hears me.

1 John 5:14 *And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, if we ask anything according to His will He hears us.*

Reflection Space

1. Are there worship songs or hymns you use during your prayer time?
2. Spend some time today writing out your favorite worship song as a prayer back to God.

Prayers:

Praises:

January 30

Summary

James 4:2-3

Wow, 21 days went fast! We've learned how to pray using the Tabernacle as a visual for prayer, and we've learned how to use scripture and worship to pray. Here are a few final thoughts.

Jesus taught us to talk **to** God, but His goal was really that we would talk **with** God. Talking **to** God is a great place to start. It gets us comfortable with the idea that God loves us and wants to hear from us. Talking **with** God shows that we've moved on to a more personal relationship. For Jesus that is the goal for us. That we move from seeing God as "over there" and talking **to** Him; but that God is **with** us, and we talk **with** Him. Like He's right next to us.

Talking with God means He wants to hear everything – the good, the bad, and the ugly. Nothing should be kept from Him, and guess what? He knows it all anyway. Nothing you say to Him scares Him off or causes Him to run away. So be honest! Let Him know what you are thinking and feeling.

Here's a challenge. DON'T STOP PRAYING! Just because we're done with this devotional and our 21 days of prayer and fasting does not mean the conversation is over. God LOVES you with an incredible unending love. He wants a relationship with you that will never end. The things you say and do now will carry over into all eternity.

As a Prayer Ministry, we are all here for you. We will join with you and pray for you when you need it. We are all just one call, text, email, or conversation away.

James 4:2b - *"Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it."*

Reflection Space

1. What has God done in your life over the last 21 days?
2. What are some of the things you are going to continue to pray for beyond the 21 days?
3. How has your mindset changed over the past 21 days about prayer?

Prayers:

Praises:

Closing Prayer for 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

Heavenly Father,

We come before You today with hearts full of gratitude and awe. Over these 21 days, we have sought Your face, lifted up our hearts, and surrendered ourselves to You in prayer and fasting. Thank You for meeting us in this sacred time, for hearing our prayers, and for drawing us closer to You.

Lord, we praise You for the ways You have spoken to us, the burdens You have lifted, and the breakthroughs You have brought. For every answered prayer and for the patience to trust You in the waiting, we say thank You. We know You are faithful, and we place our hope and trust in You.

As we transition from this season of focused devotion, help us to carry the lessons we've learned, the clarity we've received, and the intimacy we've shared with You into our daily lives. Let this not be an end but a beginning of a deeper walk with You.

Empower us, Holy Spirit, to live boldly in faith, to love others as Christ has loved us, and to shine as lights in this world. Strengthen us to remain steadfast in prayer, persistent in faith, and generous in sharing the Gospel.

Lord, we also lift up our church family to You. Unite us in purpose, guide us with Your wisdom, and use us to advance Your Kingdom in our community and beyond. May everything we do bring glory to Your name.

We offer this prayer with hearts surrendered and spirits renewed, in the mighty and matchless name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Amen.