

# Pray

WITHOUT CEASING

1 THESS 5:17



'Never stop praying.' 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Three simple yet profound and challenging words that can dramatically alter our lives. Simple in that praying shouldn't be a problem for a believer right? Profound because we're never really fully aware of all the things we can accomplish in our lives and the lives of others through prayer. Challenging because as simple as it appears, consistent prayer is one of the things believers struggle with the most as it's one of the primary areas the enemy never ceases to attack.

How do we know if we're praying correctly and in line with God's plan? We know that God watches over His word to perform it, so one of the best prayer strategies will be to bring His word back to Him in the specific areas we want to see results in.

This series we're looking at praying the scripture for every area that concerns us – our personal lives, families, ministries assignments, careers/businesses – the Bible has it covered.

Stay connected this series as we pray through and see the changes God will bring into our lives.



## Day 1

### You and Jesus

'And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth.' John 17:3

The only relationship that transcends this life and into eternity is our relationship with Jesus. During one of their many engagements Jesus asked his disciples, men who had walked closely with Him for some years: “But who do you say I am?” (Matt 16:15). The exchange between Jesus and Peter in response to this question was quite enlightening:

“Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being.” Matthew 16:16-17 NLT

This shows us that we can't really know Jesus from a human perspective. The most that can happen based on our humanity is that we may read about Him or hear about other people's experience of Him. But our relationship with Jesus is meant to be a very personal one.

Allowing others to define who Jesus is without getting to know Him for ourselves creates a risk of imbibing a faulty or limited perception of Jesus. And even if the perception is accurate, we will lack personal conviction of who Jesus is if we've only seen Him through someone else's eyes. Jesus wants a one-on-one relationship with us and there are so many depths and dimensions to Him that only the Holy Spirit can reveal Him to us. Let's not be satisfied with what others have said. He's standing at the door of our hearts knocking, let's open the door to let Him in and really get to know Him.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus be my greatest delight and Your word my greatest treasure. Your word teaches me that I need the Holy Spirit to reveal who you are because there are too many depths and dimensions to you that no human being can accurately capture. So I ask Lord for the spirit of wisdom and revelation to give me a deep, personal and intimate insight into the true knowledge of You (Eph 1:17). Fill my heart with a hunger for you so I never tire of getting to know you better (Ps 63:1). Envelope me with a hunger for Your word (Job 23:1) so I prioritize You over everything.

## Day 2

### Peace

'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.' Philippians 4:6-7

There seems to be a constant onslaught against our peace nowadays. Online or offline, the news making the rounds fastest almost always seems to be negative and fear-filled, which may lead us to wonder if anything good is happening in the world. Regardless of whatever's going on around us, it's critical for us to know that heaven isn't in anyway disturbed by what's going on now either in our personal lives or the world at large. In fact, Jesus gave us a heads-up over 2000 years ago, so we know that peace is one of the things He has given us victory over.

'I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.' John 16:33

We're not going to pretend the world is a great place right now, but we have an assurance that regardless of what is going on we have access to peace that passes all understanding – meaning things around us may not look peaceful, yet in the midst of it all we're at peace internally because we have a covenant with the Prince of peace Himself.

**Prayer:** Lord your word says you will keep in perfect peace those who keep their minds fixed on you (Is 26:3). You are the one who spoke to the storm and commanded it to be still (Mk 4:39) so we ask Lord that every storm brewing in our lives causing anxiety be still in the name of Jesus. Wherever the enemy is coming like a flood in our lives, we raise the standard of the blood of Jesus against the flood (Is 59:9). Lord let your peace which passes all understanding flood our hearts and minds as we stay connected to you.

### Day 3

#### Divine Capacity

'Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.' Ephesians 3:20

When we plan our lives, we may be tempted to depend on our experience, networks, intellect and things we believe have worked for us in the past. Yet as believers we have access to a higher power that we have largely left unattended. The Holy Spirit who lives in a believer is the same power who brought structure to a formless world, that enabled Jesus to perform miracles during His earthly ministry and also raised Jesus from the dead. This is who we carry within us, but we don't always recognize it. The Holy Spirit within us isn't limited to just giving us a heavenly language and helping us to pray. He is our helper in every way – in our daily lives, family, careers, business – and every single area of our lives.

'I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.' Ephesians 3:16

The power of the Holy Spirit is unlimited – however we are the ones who give Him permission to move in and through us. So the extent to which we see Him at work in us is the extent to which we give Him room. Giving Him room means choosing to spend time cultivating a relationship with Him, being attentive and obedient to what he says. As we do this, His power at work in us increases for as long as we keep making room for more.

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit, I recognize that your power is immeasurable and unlimited and I apologize for boxing you into a small corner of my life. Help me to keep my body a holy and an acceptable sanctuary for You to live in. Help me to hunger for more of You daily so I don't get satisfied with what You have done already. I ask that from today You take over every aspect of my life as I yield all to you because I know that Your work in my life can only be for my benefit. I exchange my weakness for your strength and ask that You strengthen me with Your might in my spirit and give me the grace and capacity to do those things I never even imagined were possible.

## Day 4

### Spiritual Maturity

'For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.' Ecclesiastes 3:1

God designed us for various seasons in life based on the levels of spiritual maturity we should have attained at various points in time. However, it's very possible for us to age spiritually without necessarily maturing. Meaning if we were to count from the day we accepted Jesus into our lives to date, some time would have passed. However our level of spiritual development may not be commensurate to the time that has passed.

'When we were at Mount Sinai, the Lord our God said to us, 'You have stayed at this mountain long enough.' Deuteronomy 1:6

What keeps us growing in the spirit is our hunger for more of God – if we are satisfied with where we are then that's where we will stay. The Lord will constantly call us to come up higher, but He won't force us. How does He call us you may ask? Those nudges to spend a bit more time in prayer, to set some time apart to go deep into the Bible, to just spend time fellowshiping with the Lord and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform our character.

Remember God has a plan for us and our ability to enter and take advantage of those seasons is dependent on our level of maturity. So it's something we need to take very seriously. Being a good Father, God may not give us some of the things we're asking for if we lack the maturity to handle them. We need to pray that the Lord will help us through the power of the Holy Spirit to not just grow but mature daily in the things of God.

**Prayer:** Lord I don't want to lose out on any of the great plans You have for me (Jer 29:11). I ask that You fill me with a constant hunger for more of You (Ps 42:1). Help me to keep my prayer alter on fire daily (Lev 6:13). Let me treasure time spent in Your word (Ps 119:103). I want to reach those depths in you where I'm not struggling to stay in control but can surrender totally to You (Ezekiel 47) and live in the fullness of all You have for me.

## Day 5

### Your Battles

'...Look, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess it, and engage him in battle.' Deut 2:24

When we receive a word of prophecy from the Lord about something He has given us, or a divine opportunity He has opened, we would be in error to think it will always manifest automatically just because we received a word telling us so. For certain things manifest, we have to battle in the spirit for them. Why the need to battle? Because we have an adversary who is constantly contending with us for what God has given us.

In the days of Moses, the Lord made it clear that He had given the Israelites the promised land, yet not only was the land occupied, Israel was meant to go into battle for it according to the Lord's instructions. Similarly in 1 Cor 16:9 Paul noted that there was a huge opportunity open for him, but with the opportunity came strong opposition. Why wasn't the land emptied beforehand? Why did Paul face opposition?

'For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.' Eph 6:12

We may not be contending with physical kings, but that doesn't mean there won't be contention. The benefit we have is that we war from the place of enforcing our victory because of the price Jesus paid for us on the cross. So if there are promises of God you're not seeing manifested in your life right now, don't let the enemy rob you. Take your position and enforce your victory.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus thank you for the price you paid on the cross and the victory You have given me. Lord Jesus you canceled the record of the charges against me and took it away by nailing it to the cross, You disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities and shamed them publicly by Your victory over them on the cross (Col 2:14-15). And so Lord I enforce the victory You have given me and declare that I am victorious in \_\_\_\_ (mention the areas). I take hold of the promises of the Lord (mention them) and declare that I will see them manifested in my life by the power of Your blood. In the Name of Jesus.

## Day 6

### Your Position

'and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus' Ephesians 2:6

We devote a lot of energy to ensuring we're well positioned in different areas of life so we try and go to certain schools, cultivate relationships and live in specific locations in order to position well. As a believer it's even more important we understand our spiritual position as that dictates what we will see in and how we engage the physical realm. The Bible tells us that we are seated in heavenly places IN Christ Jesus. The importance of this statement shouldn't be lost on us as the implications are far reaching.

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.' John 15:5

'... because as He is, so are we in this world.' I John 4:17

What does it mean to abide/live IN Jesus? It means having a real, vibrant personal walk with Him. We engage Him daily in prayer and the study of the word and honouring Him in everything we do – there's no part of our lives He isn't Lord over. When we live this way, we enjoy the amazing benefit of being seated IN Him. Which means whatever is coming against us has to go through Him first. Whatever He has access to is what we also have access to. The same Holy Spirit that empowered His earthly ministry empowers us daily to live like this when we place a demand on His grace.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Your word tells me I am seated in You in heavenly places, so I am far above the control of the circumstances of my physical environment and permit only your counsel to stand in my life (Ps 33:11). In You I can do all things so I can't be limited from fulfilling my destiny (Phil 4:13). Because I am in You, I have your mind and reason the way You do so I can be a true representative of Yours here on earth (1 Cor 2:16). I clothe myself daily with Your presence (Rom 13:14) and come under Your divine protection and guidance so I am confident that my steps are ordered by You daily and I will always be at the right place at the right time.



## Day 7

### Winning With Wisdom

“The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding...”  
Isaiah 11:2

Wisdom is a spirit that can radically transform our lives if we let it work in and through us. Some battles can be completely avoided and others won effectively simply by applying godly wisdom. The amazing thing about wisdom is that it's available to all believers who sincerely seek it and not just as a one-off but in increasing measures.

“Does not wisdom cry out, and understanding lift up her voice?... To you, O men, I call... For wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.” Proverbs 8:1,4,11

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” Luke 2:52

Godly wisdom is always calling out for us to pay attention but we don't always heed the call. More often than not we choose to be wise in our own eyes, rather than dig into the wisdom that's guaranteed to resolve whatever the issue is, in the best way possible. Let's never forget that God has an unbelievable number of ways to handle our problems.

Jesus actually grew in wisdom over time, which tells us that it's also a possibility for us. No matter where we are now, we can pray wisdom into our lives and also pray that it grows. There's a connection between wisdom, maturity and favour. The more wisdom increases in us, the more we pay attention to what really matters which enables us mature (spiritually and in the natural) and with that maturity comes favour not just with God but He also causes men to favour us.

**Prayer:** Lord I understand that wisdom is a spirit so it can be prayed into my life. I recognise this is the same wisdom that Jesus operated in so I ask that the spirit of wisdom rest on me and grow in increasing measures in my life daily. I choose to stop trying to figure things out on my own and depend on you to lead me along the best pathway for my life (Prov 3:5, Ps 32:8)

## Day 8

### Your Health

“...and by His stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5

The Bible tells us that by the stripes of Jesus we ARE healed showing us that one of the many things Jesus already paid the price for is our health – mental, physical, emotional as such we have the right to walk in divine health. Even if some form of health challenge shows up, we have the right to address it and command the sickness to leave us. Why? Because Jesus already paid the price for our healing. His ability to heal hasn't in any way diminished and He is just as able to do today what we've seen in the Bible and more.

“And Jesus went about all Galilee ... healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.” Matthew 4:23

Jesus did so much concerning healing all forms of oppression during His earthly ministry. As believers with the Holy Spirit resident in us, we have the right and power to draw on His healing power directly both for ourselves and for others.

“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth” Philippians 2:9-10

'And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name ...they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.' Mark 16:17-18

It's important we understand Christ's lordship over all types of diseases and our designated authority as believers to believe for and call forth healing. God works in several ways and He could bring healing miraculously or working through medical professionals so we can't limit Him in how He chooses to work out the recovery. Our role is to call forth the healing in the name of Jesus.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, thank you for paying the price for my healing. Thank you that You've already demonstrated Your healing power through the Bible in several ways and I know that whatever You did then You can do today. I stand on the authority of Your name and command the sickness of \_\_\_\_\_ (name the illness) to leave my body now in the name of Jesus. I thank You because I believe that I am healed and will see the recovery that I have declared.



## Day 9

### Preservation & Protection

“The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.” Psalms 121:7-8

When we have an active relationship with the Lord and realise how much He loves us, we see how involved He wants to be in every area of our lives and the provision He’s made for preserving us in all ways. He preserves us from all evil, keeping us free from the machinations of the enemy through divine counsel and supernatural intervention. He preserves our souls by cleansing us with His word, transforming us as we consecrate ourselves through the power of the Holy Spirit. He preserves us as we go about our daily activities, journeying from one location to another.

“I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.” Psalms 91:2

“For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.” Psalms 91:11

The Lord is our refuge and fortress, an impenetrable edifice that keeps us safe through all of life’s ups and downs. He also deploys the agency of angels to perform the task of keeping us. So as believers we don’t need to be paralyzed by fear because things don’t seem to be settled in the world we live in. Remember Jesus already warned us in advance that there will be perilous times ahead (Matt 24:6-14) so we know that with the warning also came the provision for preservation.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord thank You because even before I was born, You already made provision for the preservation of my spirit, soul and body from all forms of evil, distraction and destruction. I submit my will to You and align to your counsel and instructions as I understand You see and know more than I ever can trusting Your plans for me are always good.

## Day 10

### Your Career/Business

'Be sure that you make everything according to the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain.' Exodus 25:40

Who determines the pattern we're building your business or career with – is it us or the Lord? If it's us then we're solely responsible for making sure everything goes according to our plan. When it's God, He builds according to a timeless pattern, partners with us to ensure our business or career is relevant to His agenda and supports us throughout. That's the difference between a God-led business/career versus a self-led one.

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you." Psalms 32:8

God knows the marketplace better than we ever can and how to orchestrate circumstances to align with His plans for us. This doesn't absolve us of hard work or cultivating excellence in what we do and all the requirements of our sector. However, it does mean that because we're led by the One who knows tomorrow we should always be one step ahead of the rest. The Lord already knows what the marketplace will value tomorrow so He will start leading us today to prepare for the future. His preparation may look nothing like what we may have in mind, but God's ways are not our ways.

"Thus says the LORD...: "I am the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go." Isaiah 48:17

We need to give God room to build our careers, businesses for us to progress to a different dimension of influence, reach and prosperity in accordance to His will. The Holy Spirit knows more than we ever can so believers have an added advantage if only we tap into His guidance and obey His leading. Let's put our advantage to practice in prayer.

**Prayer:** Lord your word says you will teach me to profit and I apply this to my career/business. Show me the trends of tomorrow and what I need to do to position myself today to take advantage of this knowledge. Show me the areas to build capacity in. Show me the things to take responsibility for and the things to walk away from so I'm well positioned for every new season.

## Day 11

### Your Assignment

'As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" Acts 13:2

Everyone has an assignment to complete, unfortunately we don't all know what it may be. When we talk about assignments, our thought processes tend to gravitate towards church-related activities. While that may be true for some, there are many more people who will function in the marketplace than within a church and their assignment is just as important – wherever you work, school, live is a place of assignment. We see from the verse above that the Holy Spirit already knew the assignment He had for Paul and Barnabas, however they had to pray and fast before they could get this information for themselves. There are many things God has for us that we will remain clueless about until we intentionally engage in fasting and prayer.

'You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed and placed and purposefully planted you, so that you would go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit will remain and be lasting...' John 15:16 AMP

Jesus is extremely intentional about us and our role as His representatives wherever He has placed us. Unfortunately, if we don't always engage the Holy Spirit on all aspects of our lives, we may make decisions that will take us out of His plan. Our productivity, provision, rewards and so much more are connected to our assignments, so we stand the risk of losing out on a lot when we make decisions (where to live, work, school, etc) based purely on visible factors. Even if we're in alignment with the plan, we must be mindful that life is run in seasons, so we also need to be sensitive about our timing – not over/undershooting the length of time we spend. Meditation, fasting and prayer are critical means to get the best out of our journey.

**Prayer:** Dear Holy Spirit, I see how intentional you are about me, show me what your plan is for my life so that it will count (Col 1:9-10). Keep me constantly in the center of your will, help me form the discipline of fasting and prayer so I remain sensitive to your timing and promptings for my assignment and changes in seasons.



## Day 12

### Your Records

'You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.' Psalms 139:16

Jesus was very clear about His assignment during His earthly ministry as it had all been written and spoken by prophets years before He physically came to earth (Ps 40:6). Just like Jesus, we also have the opportunity to know God's plans for our lives. Recall we said Jesus is intentional about us? So much so that there is a record of what God plans to do in our lives which was documented before we were even born. However, just because the record exists doesn't mean our lives will automatically match what was written. What causes the mismatch?

'...We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care. If only you would listen to his voice today! The Lord says, "Don't harden your hearts..." Psalms 95:7-8

There are times we don't align with what was written about us because we simply don't know what we're supposed to do. The Bible addresses this in several scriptures, especially Col 1:9 where we see we can pray for God to give us the complete knowledge of His will for our lives. There are other times where we may know what God's plan is, but we don't align our will to His leading because we erroneously believe we know better. Submitting to God's will is a choice that we need to continuously ask the Holy Spirit to help us with because it may not always look/feel good in the immediate term, and it's often in hindsight that we see and appreciate the full picture. By that time we may have missed valuable seasons. Let's pray for alignment so we live fulfilled lives according to God's plans.

**Prayer:** Father I thank you for your plans for me and I know all you have in mind for me is for my good (Jer 29:11). I desire to know Your will for my life (Col 1:9-10) so my life will mirror what is contained in your records for me. I know I may not always be willing so I ask for your help in advance to see the benefit of what you have planned for me (Heb 12:2) so I am encouraged even in the times I may not have full clarity. Help me to live a life that is consistently spiritually accurate.



## Day 13

### Your Finances

“And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.” Deuteronomy 8:18

God delights in His children and it’s His desire that we do well in all areas including our finances. But it’s important we constantly bear in mind that He is extremely intentional about all things, so even the wealth He gives us is for a purpose. And that purpose is primarily for the expansion of the frontiers of His kingdom here on earth.

“For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.” Matthew 25:35-36

We aren’t servants who work for pay, we are children who partner with our Father in heaven to bring His desires to existence here on earth. The Lord has no problem getting wealth in people’s hands, rather the challenge is largely in getting us to use what He’s put in our hands for the right reasons. When we have a financial breakthrough, is our first thought enhancing our personal lifestyle or meeting God’s agenda? From God’s perspective how relevant are our finances when it comes to His program? When we act as good stewards of what we have by being faithful in the little areas, then the Lord knows we can be entrusted with much more especially when we step out of our comfort zones to make the heart of God glad.

**Prayer:** Lord please help me to be financially responsible when it comes to meeting kingdom needs. Help me to always remember that you have given me wealth for a purpose. Help me not to be insensitive to the needs of those around me and the things You bring to my attention. Help me to consistently play my part in whatever way I can so that lives are changed for the better and Your name is glorified. Help me to be selfless and step out of my comfort zone and empower me Lord to be a kingdom treasurer.



## Day 14

### Your Companions

“Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.” Proverbs 13:20

Have you noticed how it's much easier to do something (good or bad) when those closest to you are doing the same thing? Consequently our lives will almost always reflect the company we keep. When we choose Godly company, it's easier to do the things that please the Lord and the opposite also holds true. The people we surround ourselves with help keep us accountable for the things we collectively agree are important to us, helping us achieve and sustain the vision.

“Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?” Amos 3:3

'And being let go, they went to their own companions...' Acts 4:23

Close relationships are vital. Daniel had his three friends, David had Johnathan and Jesus had Peter, James and John as close circle members, the Apostles in the Book of Acts had their own companions they always related with. There's something to be said for having the right God ordained relationships at work in our lives because they are there for us when we need to be encouraged, chastised or just companions always ensuring we're pushing towards the ultimate goal of pleasing God and living lives that ring Him glory.

It's important we seek God for His guidance on having the right people in our close circles so we're not led astray. The people we may have to say goodbye to may not necessarily be bad, but the direction they're headed may not align with God's plans for our lives and that could lead to us being potentially derailed. Discernment is also critical because just because some people are close to us at a point in time does not necessarily mean they are meant to be with us through all the seasons of our lives.

**Prayer:** Lord I see how important having the right relationships are in achieving anything meaningful both here and in eternity. Help me to be led by the character traits that please You when picking my circle. Holy Spirit I ask that you audit my close friendships in line with the Your plans for my life and bring alignment. Where I'm in a friendship that may have gone past it's season, Lord please show me how to withdraw from the relationship amicably. Please give me discernment for every season I'm in and position me in the right company for each season.



## Day 15

### Guarding Your Thoughts

'Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.' Proverbs 4:23

The Bible cautions very strongly that we guard our hearts because our hearts are filled with the thought patterns we allow to take root in our minds and it's only a matter of time before we start acting out whatever we've been thinking about. How do the thoughts get there? It's either we open ourselves up to the leading and thought patterns of Jesus (for we have the mind of Christ) or we allow the enemy to determine what we think. Negative thoughts will always come, but we have the power to determine if we will accept those thoughts or not.

'A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.' Luke 6:45

What ends up in our hearts is the result of what we consistently think about, which eventually becomes part of us. What are those thoughts that we allow to simmer in our minds? It's only going to be a matter of time before we begin acting on them - good or bad.

'... We capture, like prisoners of war, every thought and insist that it bow in obedience to the Anointed One' 2 Corinthians 10:5 TPT

The enemy won't stop trying to penetrate our thought patterns so it's important we constantly bring our thoughts under the influence of the Holy Spirit. We don't have to accept everything the enemy suggests to us. Rather we must give every negative thought an instruction to leave our mind space and replant it with a declaration of God's word.

**Prayer:** Lord I recognise that You have given me the authority to rebuke and reject negative thoughts and speak Your word into my life in the name of Jesus. Where the enemy has planted tares in my mind I uproot them all. Where I have accepted thoughts that have now become patterns of behaviour for me I demolish those strongholds in the name of Jesus and ask for the help of the Holy Spirit to replace them with Godly habits. Help me to constantly renew my mind through your word and be strengthened in the place of prayer so I don't go back to old behaviours.

## Day 16

### Choosing A Partner

'Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.'" Genesis 2:18 NLT

God recognizes the value of marriage. For those who may currently be single and are interested in getting married, be rest assured God has the person who is just right for you. But we must bear in mind that God's version of 'just right' may vary from the version we've formed for ourselves.

'But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature... For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'" I Samuel 16:7

God doesn't make lifelong decisions based on short term parameters. He is intentional and won't leave something as critical as a life partner to chance, given the important role that person will play in helping us fulfil our God-given assignments. In preparing a partner for us, physical appearance and current circumstances may not be the highest priority because He's focused on two areas that are more important – the person's character and suitability for His call upon your life. God isn't looking at where both of you are right now, but where He's taking you if you choose to align with His plan.

'Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?' Amos 3:3

We won't want exactly the same things in 10years time as we may want today. Added to this is the fact that life by its nature is filled with many twists and turns. The Lord knows whoever we choose to marry must be adaptable to growth and the several changes we will encounter without derailing from the plan he has for us. It's not about finding someone and expecting God to rubber stamp a choice that's already been made. Rather it's about going to God and asking Him to connect the person He has chosen for His call upon our life to us.

**Prayer:** Father I ask that You order the steps of the person You have chosen for me and grant me the discernment to recognize the person and the role he/she will play in my life when we meet. I ask for the grace to treat the relationship with the wisdom it deserves that Your will may be done.



## Day 17

### Parenting with Purpose

'For all people are mine to judge—both parents and children alike...' Ezekiel 18:4

As parents – biological or otherwise – we aren't owners but stewards of our children and have been given a unique opportunity to partner with God to shape the next generation. As stewards it's our primary responsibility to find out what the owner wants to achieve in the lives of those put in our care.

'I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart...' Jeremiah 1:5

The Lord already has a plan for each of our children. While it may be tempting to form our own agenda for them, the primary purpose for our parenting should be to align our children to God's plans for their lives. Our children aren't meant to live out our dreams for us because that would mean we're essentially telling God our plans for them are better than His. So we will do well to engage God on what His plans are for the children He has put or plans to put in our care.

'Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.'  
Proverbs 22:6

Parenting God's way involves us being very intentional about fulfilling our role effectively. Our children are more likely to imitate what we do rather than what we say so we must constantly work on developing our relationship with the Lord so we can be good role models. We also need to study God's word to understand what He says about raising children and the type of adults our nurturing should produce. Thankfully God doesn't leave it all to us, especially as our children grow older and eventually leave home for longer periods of time until they are fully independent.

**Prayer:** Lord thank you for the children you have blessed me with. I do not take this responsibility lightly and I ask for your help to raise my child(ren) so they will fulfil Your plans for their lives. I recognize I can't possibly do this on my own so I ask for divine help – cover my children and speak to their spirits so that my parenting efforts will yield good results and they in turn nurture their own children in the way of the Lord. I declare that as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.



## Day 18

### Dealing with Discouragement

'Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad?' Psalms 42:5 NLT

There are days we may feel overwhelmed and discouraged when everything seems to be going wrong. Life just seems to be going wrong at the same time. There's nothing unchristian about feeling discouraged, even David who wrote many of the most encouraging words in the Bible experienced discouragement.

'...I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again— my Savior and my God! Now I am deeply discouraged, but I will remember you...' Psalms 42:5-6 NLT

It's important that we don't deny what we're feeling – we can't deal with what we don't acknowledge exists. But we shouldn't stop at just acknowledging and potentially wallowing deeper in negativity. David gave us a hint about how to come out of this – he looked at what God had done in the past and based on that determined in advance that he would put his hope in God and praise Him again. The learning point is that despite what is going at the time we should choose to reflect on God's goodness to us in the past and hold on to that for now and the future. The present situation – good or bad – is always temporary, God's character is eternal.

'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

Because what we see/feel always confronts us aggressively, we need to first ask the Holy Spirit (especially when we don't feel like it – we shouldn't sugarcoat things with the Lord) to help us remember God's character, what He's said about us and give us the grace to keep this at the forefront of our minds. One way to do this is to look for some of the encouraging verses, print and paste them visibly around us or keep digital versions in places that we can't miss and speak them to ourselves consistently through the days until the weight of discouragement lifts.

**Prayer:** Lord right now I feel discouraged, but Your word says You will never leave or forsake me. I am trusting that You will make my heart glad again as You work this current situation out for my good and I believe will praise You at the end of it all.



## Day 19

### Pressing Forward

'But forget all that— it is nothing compared to what I am going to do.' Isaiah 43:18 NLT

God is always on the move and sometimes we may unknowingly limit what He's doing in our lives by being satisfied with where we are at the moment. We thank God for how far He's brought us, but His desire and ability to work in/with/through us doesn't stop until we're called back home. And He is able to do far more than we can even think or imagine

'Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us' Ephesians 3:20

The limitation of what God can do with us lies in us – it's according to the extent to which we choose to yield to Him and His power that we permit to work in us. If we're satisfied with the level of knowledge of God we have then that's where we will stay and we will be limited to the revelations and exploits of that level. We would be like people satisfied with drums of water when the ocean is available to us.

'Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.' Philipians 3:13-14

When we constantly remind ourselves of the vastness of God, it motivates us to keep pressing on for more of Him. Pressing isn't a passive activity, it involves us actively pushing through our daily busyness, past our weaknesses by the help of the Holy Spirit. Pressing on also reminds us that whatever we do on this side of eternity also impacts our eternal destination, so we're deliberate about not just increasing in the knowledge of God, but also being useful to Him while here. No matter how far we've come, there's room to know, be and do so much more.

**Prayer:** Lord I am grateful for how far you've brought me, but I know that there's much more in You than I can ever comprehend. I understand that I'm the only one that can limit You from doing more in my life so I ask Holy Spirit to help me desire more of Jesus daily. Let no day go by where my hunger for and obedience to Him doesn't increase.



## Day 20

### Heart Examination

'Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts.' Proverbs 21:2

God places a huge premium on the state of our hearts and it places high in His value system. Our achievements will not count for us in eternity if they were not inspired from a heart devoted to pleasing God. So while people may look from the outward and applaud us, God looks from inward-out. The motive is just as, if not more important than the activity.

'And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a loyal heart.' 2 Chronicles 25:2

'Then he said to them, "You like to appear righteous in public, but God knows your hearts. What this world honors is detestable in the sight of God.'" Luke 16:15 NLT

There's nothing wrong with achieving on this side of eternity, our heavenly Father delights in having His children shine (Matt 5:16). However there's a very fine line between engaging in activity (even spiritual) from an upright heart genuinely seeking to love and please God and engaging so we look good to others and please ourselves. God's honour system is very different from that of the world.

'Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.' Psalms 139:23-24

The Lord recognizes that we don't have what it takes to genuinely audit our hearts because only He can see us the way we really are. This means it's in our own best interest to constantly ask the Holy Spirit to help us check our motives in all we do because it's possible for us to even deceive ourselves. As we get used to submitting to this constant examination, it becomes easier for us to respond to the Holy Spirit as He corrects our course, because we know wherever He's leading us to is ultimately for our good both here and in eternity.

**Prayer:** Precious Holy Spirit, I ask that you constantly search and audit my heart and see where I've moved from being motivated by a love for Jesus to a love of self and looking good before others. Correct me even when my heart is right but I've taken wrong steps. Let my heart always weigh right before you Lord and help me obey your corrections so I don't stay in error.



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