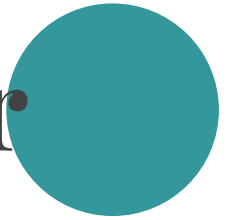


New Life Fellowship

21 Days of Prayer

Daily Devotional



2025



Day 01

Prayer is not a normal part of the life of the natural man. We hear it said that a person's life will suffer if he doesn't pray, but I question that. What will suffer is the life of the Son of God in him, which is nourished not by food, but by prayer. When a person is born again from above, the life of the Son of God is born in him, and he can either starve or nourish that life. Prayer is the way that the life of God in us is nourished. Our common ideas regarding prayer are not found in the New Testament. We look upon prayer simply as a means of getting things for ourselves, but the biblical purpose of prayer is that we may get to know God Himself.

...Ask, and you will receive...(John 16:24) We complain before God, and sometimes we are apologetic or indifferent to Him, but we ask Him for very few things. Yet a child exhibits a magnificent boldness to ask!

Our Lord said, "...unless you change and become like little children..." (Matthew 18:3) Ask and God will do. Give Jesus Christ the opportunity and the room to work. The problem is that no one will ever do this until he is at his wits' end. When a person is at his wits' end, praying no longer seems to be a cowardly thing; in fact, it is the only way he can get in touch with the truth and the reality of God Himself. Be yourself before God and present Him with your problems, the very things that have brought you to your wits' end. But as long as you think you are self-sufficient, you don't need to ask God for anything.

To say that "prayer changes things" is not as close to the truth as saying, "Prayer changes me and then I change things." God has established things so that prayer, based on redemption, changes the way a person looks at things.

Prayer is not a matter of changing things externally but working miracles in a person's inner nature.

The Purpose of Prayer "...one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray..." Luke 11:1

Matthew 7:7-11

Prayer

Father, help us to be sensitive to Your voice; to ask in unity with Your promptings, allowing Your empowering Spirit to work in us and through us. Receive Your glory while finishing Your work in the world around us.

What is God saying to you?

Day 02

Jesus did not say, "Dream about your Father who is in the secret place," but He said, "Pray to your Father who is in the secret place." Prayer is an effort of the will. After we have entered our secret place and shut the door, the most difficult thing to do is to pray. We cannot seem to get our minds into good working order, and the first thing we have to fight is wandering thoughts. The great battle in private prayer is overcoming this problem of our idle and wandering thinking. We must learn to discipline our minds and concentrate on willful, deliberate prayer.

We must have a specially selected place for prayer, but once we get there this plague of wandering thoughts begins. We begin to think to ourselves, "This needs to be done, and I have to do that today." Jesus says to "shut your door." Having a secret stillness before God means deliberately shutting the door on our emotions and remembering Him.

God is in secret, and He sees us from "the secret place" —He does not see us as other people do, or as we see ourselves. When we truly live in "the secret place," it becomes impossible to doubt God. We become more sure of Him than of anyone or anything else. Enter into "the secret place," and you will find that God is right in the middle of your everyday circumstances all the time. Get into the habit of dealing with God about everything. Unless you learn to open the door of your life completely and let God in from your first waking moment of each new day, you will be working on the wrong level throughout the day. But if you swing the door of your life fully open and "pray to your Father who is in the secret place," every public thing in your life will be marked with the lasting imprint of the presence of God.

***Battle in "The Secret Place"** "...when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly." Matthew 6:6*

Matthew 6:5-15

Prayer

Father, help us to shut the door when we enter our closet. We surrender our emotions and thoughts to focus on You and all You have done for us. Thank you for bearing with us as we develop our diligence and focus on You and Your Kingdom. Coming to You in prayer, with all of our hearts is where You meet us. We want you in the middle of our everyday circumstances, navigating us to see and experience Your glory on display.

What is God saying to you?

Day 03

"Watch with Me." In effect, Jesus was saying, "Watch with no private point of view at all, but watch solely and entirely with Me." In the early stages of our Christian life, we do not watch with Jesus, we watch for Him. We do not watch with Him through the revealed truth of the Bible even in the circumstances of our own lives. Our Lord is trying to introduce us to identification with Himself through a particular "Gethsemane" experience of our own. But we refuse to go, saying, "No, Lord, I can't see the meaning of this and besides, it's very painful." And how can we possibly watch with Someone who is so incomprehensible?

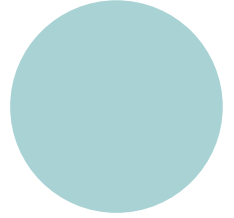
How will we understand Jesus sufficiently to watch with Him in His Gethsemane, when we don't even know why He is suffering? We don't know how to watch with Him. We are only used to the idea of Jesus watching with us.

The disciples loved Jesus Christ to the limit of their natural capacity, but they didn't fully understand His purpose. In the Garden of Gethsemane they slept as a result of their own sorrow, and at the end of three years of the closest and most intimate relationship of their lives they "all...forsook Him and fled." (Matthew 26:56)

"...they were all filled with the Holy Spirit..." (Acts 2:4)
"They" refers to the same people, but something wonderful has happened between these two events—our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension—and the disciples have now been invaded and "filled with the Holy Spirit." Our Lord had said, "...you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you..." (Acts 1:8) This meant that they learned to watch with Him for the rest of their lives

Watching with Jesus "...stay here and watch with Me." Matthew 26:38

Matthew 26:36-46



Prayer

Lord, thank You for eternally inviting us to watch with You. Enlighten the eyes of our understanding and help us see as You see. We want to BE about Your business and passion continuously.

What is God saying to you?

Day 04

A river reaches places that its source never knows. And Jesus said that, if we have received His fullness, "rivers of living water" will flow out of us, reaching in blessing even "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8) regardless of how small the visible effects of our lives may appear to be. We have nothing to do with the out-flow—"This is the work of God, that you believe..." (John 6:29) God rarely allows a person to see how great a blessing He is to others. A river is victoriously persistent, overcoming all barriers. For a while, it goes steadily on its course but then comes to an obstacle. For a while, it is blocked, yet it soon makes a pathway around the obstacle. Or a river will drop out of sight for miles, only later to emerge again even broader and greater than ever. Do you see God using the lives of others, but an obstacle has come into your life and you do not seem to be of any use to God? Keep paying attention to the Source, and God will either take you around the obstacle or remove it. The river of the Spirit of God overcomes all obstacles. Never focus your eyes on the obstacle or the difficulty. The obstacle will be a matter of total indifference to the river that will flow steadily through you if you simply remember to stay focused on the Source. Never allow anything to come between you and Jesus Christ—not emotion nor experience—nothing must keep you from the one great sovereign Source.

Think of the healing and far-reaching rivers developing and nourishing themselves in our souls! God has been opening up wonderful truths to our minds, and every point He has opened up is another indication of the wider power of the river that He will flow through us. If you believe in Jesus, you will find that God has developed and nourished in you mighty, rushing rivers of blessing for others.

The Far-Reaching Rivers of Life "He who believes in Me...out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." John 7:38



John 7:37-42

Prayer

Jesus, help us to stay focused on You as our source of Truth, Life, and empowerment, especially when it appears we're not being as productive and effective as Your followers. Help us to be steadfast, and appreciative and to grow in your grace during these times of resistance.

What is God saying to you?

Day 05

The picture our Lord described here is not that of a simple stream of water, but an overflowing fountain. Continue to "be filled" (Ephesians 5:18) and the sweetness of your vital relationship with Jesus will flow as generously out of you as it has been given to you. If you find His life is not springing up as it should, you are to blame—something is obstructing the flow. Was Jesus saying to stay focused on the Source so that you may be blessed personally? No, you are to focus on the Source so that out of you "will flow rivers of living water"—irrepressible life (John 7:38)

We are to be fountains through which Jesus can flow as "rivers of living water" to be a blessing to everyone. Yet some of us are like the Dead Sea, always receiving but never giving because our relationship isn't right with the Lord Jesus. As surely as we receive blessings from Him, He will pour out blessings through us. But whenever the blessings are not being poured out in the same measure they are received, there is a defect in our relationship with Him. Is there anything between you and Jesus Christ? Is there anything hindering your faith in Him? If not, then Jesus says that out of you "will flow rivers of living water." It is not a blessing that you pass on, or an experience that you share with others, but a river that continually flows through you. Stay at the Source, closely guarding your faith in Jesus Christ and your relationship with Him, and there will be a steady flow into the lives of others with no dryness or deadness whatsoever.

Is it excessive to say that rivers will flow out of one individual believer? Do you look at yourself and say, "But I don't see the rivers"? Through the history of God's work, you will usually find that He has started with the obscure, the unknown, and the ignored, with those who have been steadfastly true to Jesus Christ.

***Fountains of Blessings** "...the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14*

John 4:7-23

Prayer

Lord, help us remain devoted to listening to Your voice and quickly surrendering to Your directives even when what we see is a direct contradiction to Your instructions. Help us to remain unified in Your Spirit, and Your faith, fitly joined into Your body as committed members.

What is God saying to you?

Day 06

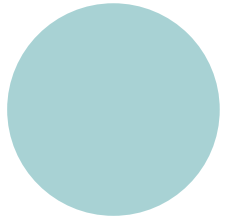
Determinedly Demolish Some Things. Deliverance from sin is not the same as deliverance from human nature. There are things in human nature, such as prejudices, that the saint can only destroy through sheer neglect. But other things have to be destroyed through violence, that is, through God's divine strength imparted by His Spirit. There are some things over which we are not to fight, but only to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord..." (Exodus 14:13) Every theory or thought that raises itself up as a fortified barrier "against the knowledge of God" is to be determinedly demolished by drawing on God's power, not through human effort or by compromise. (2 Corinthians 10:4)

It is only when God has transformed our nature and we have entered into the experience of sanctification that the fight begins. The warfare is not against sin, we can never fight against sin.

Jesus Christ conquered that in His redemption of us. The conflict is waged over turning our natural life into a spiritual life. This is never done easily nor does God intend that it be so. It is accomplished only through a series of moral choices. God does not make us holy in the sense that He makes our character holy. He makes us holy in the sense that He has made us innocent before Him. Then we have to turn that innocence into holy character through the moral choices we make. These choices are continually opposed and hostile to the things of our natural life that have become so deeply entrenched—the very things that raise themselves as fortified barriers "against the knowledge of God." We can either turn back, making ourselves of no value to the Kingdom of God, or we can determinedly demolish these things allowing Jesus to bring another son to glory. (Hebrews 2:10)

Do It Yourself "...casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God...2 Corinthians 10:5

II Corinthians 10:1-6



Prayer

Jesus, we make our goal to neglect every human emotion that is not subject to Your nature. Through Your empowering Spirit, we join with Your passion to rule and reign over every thought and theory that exalts itself above Your knowledge by being obedient to Your prompting and leading.

What is God saying to you?

Day 07

Determinedly Discipline Other Things. This is another difficult aspect of the strenuous nature of sainthood. Paul said, according to the Moffatt translation of this verse, "I take every project prisoner to make it obey Christ." So much Christian work today has never been disciplined, but has simply come into being by impulse! In our Lord's life, every project was disciplined to the will of His Father. There was never the slightest tendency to follow the impulse of His own will as distinct from His Father's will "...the Son can do nothing of Himself..." (John 5:19. Then compare this with what we do, we take "every thought" or project that comes to us by impulse and jump into action immediately, instead of imprisoning and disciplining ourselves to obey Christ.

Practical work for Christians is greatly overemphasized today, and the saints who are "bringing every thought [and project] into captivity" are criticized and told that they are not determined and that they lack zeal for God or zeal for the souls of others. But true determination and zeal are found in obeying God, not in the inclination to serve Him that arises from our undisciplined human nature. It is inconceivable, but true nevertheless, that saints are not "bringing every thought [and project] into captivity," but are simply doing work for God that has been instigated by their human nature, and has not been made spiritual through determined discipline.

We tend to forget that a person is not only committed to Jesus Christ for salvation, but is also committed, responsible, and accountable to Jesus Christ's view of God, the world, sin, and the devil. This means that each person must recognize the responsibility to "...be transformed by the renewing of [his] mind..." (Romans 12:2)

Do It Yourself "...bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5

John 5:19-24; Romans 12:1-2

Prayer

Father, deliver us from ideas of what we think is good and what honors You. Helps us to Be and to believe, so that You can do through us Your perfect Will.

What is God saying to you?

Day 08

Worshiping in Everyday Occasions. We presume that we would be ready for battle if confronted with a great crisis, but it is not the crisis that builds something within us—it simply reveals what we are made of already. Do you find yourself saying, "If God calls me to battle, of course I will rise to the occasion"? Yet you won't rise to the occasion unless you have done so on God's training ground. If you are not doing the task that is closest to you now (which God has engineered into your life), when the crisis comes, instead of being fit for battle, you will be revealed as being unfit. Crises always reveal a person's true character.

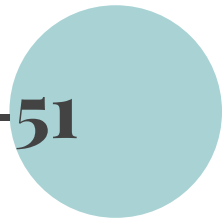
A private relationship of worshiping God is the greatest essential element of spiritual fitness. The time will come, as Nathanael experienced in this passage, that a private "fig-tree" life will no longer be possible. Everything will be out in the open, and you will find yourself to be of no value if you have not been worshiping in everyday occasions in your own home. If your worship is right in your private relationship with God, then when He sets you free, you will be ready. It is in the unseen life, which only God saw, that you have become perfectly fit. And when the strain of the crisis comes, you can be relied upon by God.

Are you saying, "But I can't be expected to live a sanctified life in my present circumstances; I have no time for prayer or Bible study right now. My opportunity for battle hasn't come yet, but when it does, of course, I will be ready"?

No, you will not. If you have not been worshiping in everyday occasions, when you get involved in God's work, you will not only be useless yourself but also a hindrance to those around you.

God's training ground, where the LifeChanger's weapons are found, is the hidden, personal, worshiping life of the saint.

Life Changer Weapons "...when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." John 1:48



John 1:43-51

Prayer

Jesus, help us to yield to Your making of us on Your training ground today, in every moment. Make us fit in our developing relationship with You! When the challenge and pushback of life in this world comes, we can be relied on by You.

What is God saying to you?

Day 09

Ministering in Everyday Opportunities. Ministering in everyday opportunities that surround us does not mean that we select our surroundings; it means being God's very special choice to be available for use in any of the seemingly random surroundings that He has engineered for us. The very character we exhibit in our present surroundings is an indication of what we will be like in other surroundings.

The things Jesus did were the most menial of everyday tasks, and this is an indication that it takes all of God's power in me to accomplish even the most common tasks in His way. Can I use a towel as He did? Towels, dishes, sandals, and all the other ordinary things in our lives reveal what we are made of more quickly than anything else. It takes God Almighty Incarnate in us to do the most menial duty as it ought to be done.

Jesus said, "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you." (John 13:15) Notice the kind of people that God brings around you, and you will be humiliated once you realize that this is His way of revealing to you the kind of person you have been to Him. Now He says we should exhibit to those around us exactly what He has exhibited to us.

Do you find yourself responding by saying, "Oh, I will do all that once I'm out on the mission field"? Talking in this way is like trying to produce the weapons of war while in the trenches of the battlefield; you will be killed while trying to do it.

We have to go the "second mile" with God. (Matthew 5:41) Yet some of us become worn out in the first ten steps. Then we say, "Well, I'll just wait until I get closer to the next big crisis in my life." If we do not steadily minister in everyday opportunities, we will do nothing when the crisis comes.

LifeChanger Weapons "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." John 13:14

Matthew 5:40-42

Prayer

Father, we ask that You help us be available for use in any of the seemingly random surroundings that You have already engineered for us today. We depend on Your power and inspiration to facilitate Your Will in every seemingly insignificant task today. We want to support and serve in every detail You Will for today.

What is God saying to you?

Day 10

The illustration of prayer that our Lord used here is one of a good child who is asking for something good. We talk about prayer as if God hears us regardless of what our relationship is with Him. (Matthew 5:45) Never say that it is not God's will to give you what you ask. Don't faint and give up, but find out the reason you have not received; increase the intensity of your search and examine the evidence. Is your relationship right with your spouse, your children, and your fellow students? Are you a "good child" in those relationships? Do you have to say to the Lord, "I have been irritable and cross, but I still want spiritual blessings"? You cannot receive and will have to do without them until you have the attitude of a "good child."

We mistake defiance for devotion, arguing with God instead of surrendering. We refuse to look at the evidence that clearly indicates where we are wrong. Have I been asking God to give me money for something I want, while refusing to pay someone what I owe him? Have I been asking God for liberty while I am withholding it from someone who belongs to me? Have I refused to forgive someone, and have I been unkind to that person? Have I been living as God's child among my relatives and friends? (Matthew 7:12)

I am a child of God only by being born again, and as His child, I am good only as I "walk in the light." (1 John 1:7) For most of us, prayer simply becomes some trivial religious expression, a matter of mystical and emotional fellowship with God. We are all good at producing a spiritual fog that blinds our sight. But if we search out and examine the evidence, we will see very clearly what is wrong—a friendship, an unpaid debt, or an improper attitude. There is no use praying unless we are living as children of God. Then Jesus says regarding His children, "For everyone who asks receives..." (Matthew 7:8)

The Spiritual Search "...what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?" Matthew 7:9

Matthew 7:7-11



Prayer

Father, help us to be "good children" today. To demonstrate Your attitude and character in our relationships. Help us believe and not argue with Your plan for us. To not owe anyone or hold others captive with our judgement. We want to represent you well today. Help us to examine the evidence of what is wrong in our friendships, unpaid debts, and improper attitudes. We want to be obedient children and have our prayers answered.

What is God saying to you?

Day 11

Every time you venture out in your life of faith, you will find something in your circumstances that, from a commonsense standpoint, will flatly contradict your faith. But common sense is not faith, and faith is not common sense. They are as different as the natural life and the spiritual. Can you trust Jesus Christ where your common sense cannot trust Him? Can you venture out with courage on the words of Jesus Christ, while the realities of your common sense life continue to shout, "It's all a lie"? When you are on the mountaintop, it's easy to say, "Oh yes, I believe God can do it," but you have to come down from the mountain to the demon-possessed valley and face the realities that scoff at your Mount-of-Transfiguration belief. (Luke 9:28-42) Every time my theology becomes clear to my own mind, I encounter something that contradicts it. As soon as I say, "I believe God shall supply all [my] need..." the testing of my faith begins. (Philippians 4:19) When my strength runs dry and my vision is blinded, will I endure this trial of my faith victoriously or will I turn back in defeat?

Faith must be tested because it can only become your intimate possession through conflict. What is challenging your faith right now? The test will either prove your faith right, or it will kill it. Jesus said, "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." (Matthew 11:6) The ultimate thing is confidence in Jesus. "...we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end" (Hebrews 3:14)

Believe steadfastly in Him and everything that challenges you will strengthen your faith. There is continual testing in the life of faith up to the point of our physical death, which is the last great test. Faith is absolute trust in God—trust that could never imagine that He would forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5-6)

The Unsurpassed Intimacy of Tested Faith "Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" John 11:40

Hebrews 3:7-19

Prayer

Jesus, help me to trust Your voice and remain faithful to following You. Help me not to allow my common sense to influence my devotion to You and our growing relationship. Make my faith in You sure and steadfast.

What is God saying to you?

Day 12

He comes where He commands us to leave. If you stayed home when God told you to go because you were so concerned about your people (biological family) there, then you robbed them of the teaching of Jesus Christ Himself and became a hindrance to them becoming His spiritual family. When you obeyed and left all the consequences to God, the Lord went into your city to teach, but as long as you were disobedient, you blocked His way. Watch where you begin to debate with Him and put what you call your duty (to biological family) into competition with His commands. If you say, "I know that He told me to go, but my duty is here," it simply means that you do not believe that Jesus means what He says. Jesus was clear, "...No prophet is accepted in his own country." (Luke 4 :24) It is His passion to speak from us to those whom He loves. He commands us to go to the people of His choosing, never our choosing.

He teaches where He instructs us not to teach.
"...Master...let us make three tabernacles..." (Luke 9:33)

Are we playing the part of an amateur providence, trying to play God's role in the lives of others? Are we so noisy in our instruction of other people that God cannot get near them? We must learn to keep our mouths shut, and our spirits alert. God wants to instruct us regarding His Son, and He wants to turn our times of prayer into mounts of transfiguration where He is formed in us. When we become certain that God is going to work in a particular way, He will never work in that way again. He does this to deliver us from sin, namely, the claim to my right to myself.

He works where He sends us to wait."...tarry...until..." (Luke 24:49)

"Wait on the Lord" and He will work. (Psalm 37:34) But don't wait sulking spiritually and feeling sorry for yourself just because you can't see one inch in front of you! Are we detached enough from our spiritual fits of emotion to "...wait patiently for Him"? (Psalm 37:7) Waiting is not sitting with folded hands doing nothing, but it is learning to do what we are told.

These are some of the facets of His ways that we rarely recognize.

Learning About His Ways—What is affecting my sensitivity to hear Him?
"...when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities." Matthew 11:1

Psalms 37:3-34

Prayer

Jesus, help me to trust Your voice and remain faithful to following You. Help me not to allow my common sense to influence my devotion to You and our growing relationship. Make my faith in You sure and steadfast.

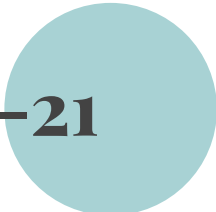
What is God saying to you?

Day 13

The Bible does not say that God punished the human race for one man's sin, but that the nature of sin, namely, my claim to my right to myself, entered into the human race through one man. It also says that another Man took upon Himself the sin of the human race and put it away—an infinitely more profound revelation. (Hebrews 9:26) The nature of sin is not immorality and wrongdoing, but the nature of self-realization which leads us to say, "I am my own god." This nature may exhibit itself in proper morality or in improper immorality, but it always has a common basis—my claim to my right to myself. When our Lord faced either people with all the forces of evil in them, or people who were clean-living, moral, and upright, He paid no attention to the moral degradation of one, nor any attention to the moral attainment of the other. He looked at something we do not see, namely, the nature of man. (John 2:25)

Sin is something I am born with and cannot touch—only God touches sin through redemption. It is through the Cross of Christ that God redeemed the entire human race from the possibility of damnation through the heredity of sin. God nowhere holds a person responsible for having the heredity of sin and does not condemn anyone because of it. Condemnation comes when I realize that Jesus Christ came to deliver me from this heredity of sin, and yet I refuse to let Him do so. From that moment I begin to get the seal of damnation. "And this is the condemnation [and the critical moment], that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light..." (John 3:19)

My Claim to My Right to Myself—The Nature of Degeneration "...just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because all sinned." Romans 5:12



John 3:14-21

Prayer

Jesus, we choose You to be our everything; to be in complete charge of our lives. Empower us today to overcome the overwhelming evidence of our human nature, and our need to be in control. Help us to be passionate and devoted to allowing You to shine through us today.

What is God saying to you?

Day 14

*The Nature of Regeneration "...when it pleased God...to reveal His Son in me..."
Galatians 1:15-16*

If Jesus Christ is going to regenerate me, what is the problem He faces? It is simply this—I have a heredity in which I had no say or decision; I am not holy, nor am I likely to be; and if all Jesus Christ can do is tell me that I must be holy, His teaching only causes me to despair. But if Jesus Christ is truly a regenerator, someone who can put His heredity of holiness into me, then I can begin to see what He means when He says that I have to be holy. Redemption means that Jesus Christ can put into anyone the hereditary nature that was in Himself, and all the standards He gives us are based on that nature—His teaching is meant to be applied to the life which He puts within us. The proper action on my part is simply to agree with God's verdict on sin as judged on the Cross of Christ.

The New Testament teaching about regeneration is this: that when a person is hit by his own sense of need, God will put the Holy Spirit into their spirit, and thus their spirit will be energized by the Spirit of the Son of God—"until Christ is formed in you". (Galatians 4:19) The moral miracle of redemption is that God can put a new nature into me through which I can live a totally new life. When I finally reach the edge of my need and know my limitations, then Jesus says, "Blessed are you..." (Matthew 5:11). But I must get to that point. God cannot put into me, the responsible moral person that I am, the nature that was in Jesus Christ unless I am aware of my need for it.

Just as the nature of sin entered into the human race through one man, the Holy Spirit entered into the human race through another Man. (Romans 5:12-19) Redemption means that I can be delivered from the heredity of sin and that through Jesus Christ I can receive a pure and spotless heredity, namely, the Holy Spirit.

Romans 5:12-19; Galatians 1:15-16

Prayer

Jesus, help us to yield to You while finishing what You have begun in us. We need You and the world around us needs You revealed through us. We want to BE exactly who You say we are. Help us to embrace the Truth that we need You always. Set us apart for Your glory. Have Your way in us and through us.

What is God saying to you?

Day 15

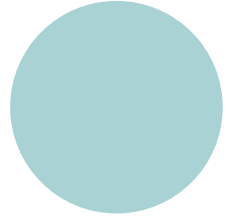
Sin is a fundamental relationship—it is not wrongdoing, but wrong being—it is a deliberate and determined independence from God. The Christian faith bases everything on the extreme, self-confident nature of sin. Other faiths deal with sins defined as wrongdoing. The Bible alone deals with sin as an inevitable nature that stems from heredity. The first thing Jesus Christ confronted in people was the heredity of sin, and it is because we have ignored this in our presentation of the gospel that the message of the gospel has lost its sting and its explosive power.

The revealed truth of the Bible is not that Jesus Christ took on Himself our fleshly sins, but that He took on Himself the heredity of sin that no man can even touch. God made His own Son "to be sin" so that He might make the sinner into a saint. It is revealed throughout the Bible that our Lord took on Himself the sin of the world through identification with us, not through sympathy for us. He deliberately took on His shoulders and endured in His own body, the complete, cumulative sin of the human race. "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us" and by doing so He placed salvation for the entire human race solely on the basis of redemption. Jesus Christ reconciled the human race, putting it back to where God designed it to be. Now anyone can experience that reconciliation, being brought into oneness with God, based on what our Lord has done on the cross.

A man cannot redeem himself—redemption is the work of God and is absolutely finished and complete. Its application to individual people is a matter of their actions or responses to it. A distinction must always be made between the revealed truth of redemption and the actual conscious experience of salvation in a person's life.

The Nature of Regeneration "...when it pleased God...to reveal His Son in me..."
Galatians 1:15-16

II Corinthians 5:17-21; 1 John 2:5-6



Prayer

Jesus, we want to BE as You walked Life out. Thank you for empowering us with Your Spirit so we can immediately be obedient to Your promptings. Help us to live in intimacy with You; to let You perfect Your love in us as we walk in Your footsteps.

What is God saying to you?

Day 16

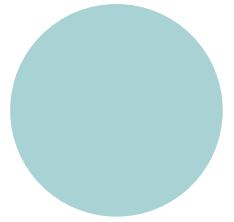
Isn't it humiliating to be told that we must come to Jesus? Think of the things about which we will not come to Jesus Christ. If you want to know how real you are, test yourself by these words—"Come to Me." In every dimension in which you are not real, you will argue or evade the issue altogether rather than come; you will go through sorrow rather than come; and you will do anything rather than come to the last lap of the race of seemingly unspeakable foolishness and say, "Just as I am, I come." As long as you have even the least bit of spiritual disrespect, it will always reveal itself in the fact that you are expecting God to tell you to do something very big, and yet all He is telling you to do is to "Come."

"Come to Me..." When you hear those words, you will know that something must happen in you before you can come. The Holy Spirit will show you what you have to do, and it will involve anything that will uproot whatever is preventing you from getting through to Jesus. And you will never get any further until you are willing to do that very thing. The Holy Spirit will search out that one immovable stronghold within you, but He cannot budge it unless you are willing to let Him do so.

How often have you come to God with your requests and gone away thinking, "I've really received what I wanted this time!" And yet you go away with nothing, while all the time God has stood with His hands outstretched, not only to take you but also for you to take Him. Just think of the invincible, unconquerable, and untiring patience of Jesus, who lovingly says, "Come to Me."

*Coming to Jesus "Come to Me..."
Matthew 11:28*

Matthew 11:28-30



Prayer

Jesus, thank you for giving us the opportunity "to come to You." You have mercifully made Yourself available to us when we are weary and burdened with life. Help us to grow in our hunger for being with You as You are with us; to include You first in everything. Search out every immovable stronghold, mindset, and attitude within us that is in opposition to Your Lordship. Empower us with Your Spirit and fire today so that we will stay with You.

What is God saying to you?

Day 17

I cannot save and sanctify myself; I cannot make atonement for sin; I cannot redeem the world; I cannot right what is wrong, purify what is impure, or make holy what is unholy. That is all the sovereign work of God. Do I have faith in what Jesus Christ has done? He has made the perfect atonement for sin. Am I in the habit of constantly realizing it? The greatest need we have is not to do things, but to believe things.

The redemption of Christ is not an experience, it is the great act of God which He has performed through Christ, and I must build my faith on it. If I construct my faith on my own experience, I produce the most unscriptural kind of life: an isolated life, with my eyes focused solely on my own holiness. Beware of that human holiness that is not based on the atonement of the Lord. It has no value for anything except a life of isolation—it is useless to God and a nuisance to man. Measure every kind of experience you have by our Lord Himself. We cannot do anything pleasing to God unless we deliberately build on the foundation of the atonement by the Cross of Christ.

The atonement of Jesus must be exhibited in practical, unassuming ways in my life. Every time I obey, the absolute deity of God is on my side, so that the grace of God and my natural obedience are in perfect agreement. Obedience means that I have completely placed my trust in the atonement, and my obedience is immediately met by the delight of the supernatural grace of God.

Beware of the human holiness that denies the reality of the natural life—it is a fraud. Continually bring yourself to the trial or test of the atonement and ask, "Where is the discernment of the atonement in this, and in that?"

Unity in Spirit "Present...your members as instruments of righteousness to God." *Romans 6:13*

Ephesians 4:16

Prayer

Jesus, help us to realize that we cannot do anything without You. Help us center our faith in what you have done. Help us to believe what You speak and not to be isolated in our idea of what we are supposedly doing for You. Our experiences can only be measured by Your sacrificial love for us. Help us to trust and obey Your leading so that we are in perfect agreement with You as Your grace works in us and through us.

What is God saying to you?

Day 18

We do not grow into a spiritual relationship step by step, we either have a relationship or we do not. God does not continue to cleanse us more and more from sin- "But if we walk in the light," we are cleansed "from all sin." (1 John 1:7) It is a matter of obedience, and once we obey, the relationship is instantly perfected. If we turn away from obedience for even one second, darkness and death are immediately at work again.

All of God's revealed truths are sealed until they are opened to us through obedience. You will never open them through philosophy or thinking. But once you obey, a flash of light comes immediately. Let God's truth work into you by immersing yourself in it, not by worrying about it. The only way you can get to know the truth of God is to stop trying to find out and by being born again. If you obey God in the first thing He shows you, then He instantly opens up the next truth to you. You could read volumes on the work of the Holy Spirit when five minutes of total, uncompromising obedience would make things as clear as sunlight. Don't say, "I suppose I will understand these things someday!" You can understand them now. And it is not study that brings understanding to you, but obedience. Even the smallest bit of obedience opens heaven, and the deepest truths of God immediately become yours. Yet God will never reveal more truth about Himself to you until you have obeyed what you know already. Beware of becoming one of the "wise and prudent". "If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know..." (John 7:17)

How Will I Know? "...Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father...that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes!" Matthew 11:25

I John 1:1-10

Prayer

Jesus, empower us to be obedient to Your leading. Deliver us from our attraction for knowledge and understanding over Your revealed Truth. Help us to focus our attention on "being" with and for You; to immerse ourselves in pursuing You so that Your truth can work into us. Help us to remain devoted to our first love commitment with You; to stay on fire with You as You have so mercifully baptized us with Your Spirit and fire.

What is God saying to you?

Day 19

Has God trusted you with His silence—a silence that has great meaning? God's silences are His answers. Just think of those days of absolute silence in the home at Bethany! Is there anything comparable to those days in your life? Can God trust you like that, or are you still asking Him for a visible answer? God will give you the very blessings you ask if you refuse to go any further without them, but His silence is the sign that He is bringing you into an even more wonderful understanding of Himself.

Are you mourning before God because you have not had an audible response? When you cannot hear God, you will find that He has trusted you in the most intimate way possible—with absolute silence, not a silence of despair, but one of pleasure, because He saw that you could withstand an even bigger revelation. If God has given you silence, then praise Him—He is bringing you into the mainstream of His purposes. The actual evidence of the answer in time is simply a matter of God's sovereignty. Time is nothing to God. For a while you may have said, "I asked God to give me bread, but He gave me a stone instead." (Matthew 7:9) He did not give you a stone, and today you find that He gave you the "bread of life" (John 6:35).

A wonderful thing about God's silence is that His stillness is contagious—it gets into you, causing you to become perfectly confident so that you can honestly say,

"I know that God has heard me." His silence is the very proof that He has. As long as you have the idea that God will always bless you in answer to prayer, He will do it, but He will never give you the grace of His silence. If Jesus Christ is bringing you into the understanding that prayer is for the glorifying of His Father, then He will give you the first sign of His intimacy—silence.

God's Silence—Then What? "So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was." John 11:6

John 11:1-44

Prayer

Jesus, prepare us for greater revelations in You as You bring us into the main-streams of Your purposes. Help us to be faithful to You when You're silent and seemingly distant. Make Your stillness contagious to us and build our confidence to know that You have heard us. Help us to recognize Your presence when You are silent; to know Your intimacy in silence.

What is God saying to you?

Day 20

The true test of a person's spiritual life and character is not what he does in the extraordinary moments of life, but what he does during the ordinary times when there is nothing tremendous or exciting happening. A person's worth is revealed in his attitude toward the ordinary things of life when he is not under the spotlight. (John 1:35-37 and 3:30) It is painful work to get in step with God and to keep pace with Him—it means getting your second wind spiritually. In learning to walk with God, there is always the difficulty of getting into His stride, but once we have done so, the only characteristic that exhibits itself is the very life of God Himself. The individual person is merged into a personal oneness with God, and God's stride and His power alone are exhibited.

It is difficult to get into stride with God because as soon as we start walking with Him we find that His pace has surpassed us before we have even taken three steps. He has different ways of doing things, and we have to be trained and disciplined in His ways. It was said of Jesus "He will not fail nor be discouraged" (Isaiah 42:4) because He never worked from His standpoint, but always worked from the standpoint of His Father. And we must learn to do the same. Spiritual truth is learned through the atmosphere that surrounds us, not through intellectual reasoning. It is God's Spirit that changes the atmosphere of our way of looking at things, and then things begin to be possible which before were impossible. Getting into God's stride means nothing less than oneness with Him. It takes a long time to get there but keep at it. Don't give up because the pain is intense right now—get on with it, and before long you will find that you have a new vision and a new purpose.

Getting into God's Stride "...Enoch walked with God..." Genesis 5:24

John 1:35-51

Prayer

Lord, help us to not miss the evidence of Your presence and purpose in the ordinary things of life. Set us free from the attraction of the spotlight. We want to get in step with You and keep pace with your passion. We want to experience Your life moment by moment and be one with You. Help us to take advantage of Your empowering faith, so much so, that our trust in You comes out of the hunger and thirst we have to be with You and work from Your standpoint. Thank you for Your vision and purpose today!

What is God saying to you?

Day 21

There are times in our lives when our peace is based simply on our own ignorance. When we are awakened to the realities of life, true inner peace is impossible unless it is received from Jesus. When our Lord speaks peace, He creates peace, because the words that He speaks are always "spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63) Have I ever received what Jesus speaks? "My peace I give to you" — a peace that comes from looking into His face and fully understanding and receiving His quiet contentment.

Are you severely troubled right now? Are you afraid and confused by the waves and the turbulence God sovereignly allows to enter your life? Have you left no stone of your faith unturned, yet still not found any well of peace, joy, or comfort? Does your life seem completely barren to you? Then look up and receive the quiet contentment of the Lord Jesus. Reflecting His peace is proof that you are right with God because you are exhibiting the freedom to turn your mind to Him. If you are not right with God, you can never turn your mind anywhere but on yourself. Allowing anything to hide the face of Jesus Christ from you either causes you to become troubled or gives you a false sense of security.

Concerning the problem that is pressing in on you right now, are you "looking unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:2) and receiving peace from Him? If so, He will be a gracious blessing of peace exhibited in and through you. When you try to worry your way out of the problem, you destroy His effectiveness in you, and you deserve whatever you get. We become troubled because we have not been taking Him into account. When a person confers with Jesus Christ, the confusion stops, because there is no confusion in Him. Lay everything out before Him, and when you are faced with difficulty, bereavement, and sorrow, listen to Him say, "...Let not your heart be troubled..." (John 14:27)

Are You Ever Troubled? "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you..." John 14:27

John 6:47-67; 14:23-31

Prayer

Jesus, give us peace today through Your voice. Help us to pay closer attention to You when You speak so that we can truly receive the Spirit and Life Your words purposefully give us. Help us to turn our thoughts to You only so that we're reflecting Your peace into our soul and spirit. Help us to take You into account in every moment of this day. Help us to lay everything out before You so that when trouble arises, our hearts will not be troubled but steadfast and unmoved in Your presence.

What is God saying to you?

Day 22

If the Son of God has been born into my human flesh, then am I allowing His holy innocence, simplicity, and oneness with the Father the opportunity to exhibit itself in me? What was true of the Virgin Mary in the history of the Son of God's birth on earth is true of every saint. God's Son is born into me through the direct act of God; then I as His child must exercise the right of a child—the right of always being face-to-face with my Father through prayer. Do I find myself continually saying in amazement to the commonsense part of my life, "Why did you want me to turn here, or to go over there? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49) Whatever our circumstances may be, that holy, innocent, and eternal Child must be in contact with His Father.

Am I simple enough to identify myself with my Lord in this way? Is He having His wonderful way with me? Is God's will being fulfilled in that His Son has been formed in me (Galatians 4:19), or have I carefully pushed Him to one side? Oh, the noisy outcry of today! Why does everyone seem to be crying out so loudly? People today are crying out for the Son of God to be put to death. There is no room here for God's Son right now—no room for quiet, holy fellowship, and oneness with the Father.

Is the Son of God praying in me, bringing honor to the Father, or am I dictating my demands to Him? Is He ministering in me as He did in the time of His manhood here on earth? Is God's Son in me going through His passion, and suffering so that His purposes might be fulfilled? The more a person knows of the inner life of God's most mature saints, the more he sees what God's purpose really is: to "...fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ..." (Colossians 1:24) When we think of what it takes to "fill up," there is always something yet to be done.

Prayer in the Father's Honor "...that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God!" Luke 1:35



Colossians 1:21-29

Prayer

Jesus, we're depending on You to form Yourself in us. To exhibit the evidence of Your innocence, simplicity, and oneness with the Father in us. Thank You for empowering us to exercise our rights as Your children. Hosting You and Your presence is our honor. We want to remain committed to You on behalf of Your passion for us to be Your representative. Pray in us Your Will to be done!

What is God saying to you?

Day 23

When the Son of God prays, He is mindful and consciously aware of only His Father. God always hears the prayers of His Son, and if the Son of God has been formed in me (Galatians 4:19) the Father will always hear my prayers. But I must see to it that the Son of God is exhibited in my human flesh. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:19), that is, your body is the Bethlehem of God's Son. Is the Son of God being given His opportunity to work in me? Is the direct simplicity of His life being worked out in me exactly as it was worked out in His life while here on earth? When I come into contact with the everyday occurrences of life as an ordinary human being, is the prayer of God's eternal Son to His Father being prayed in me? Jesus says, "In that day you will ask in My name..." (John 16:26) What day does He mean? He is referring to the day when the Holy Spirit has come to me and made me one with my Lord.

Is the Lord Jesus Christ being abundantly satisfied by your life, or are you exhibiting a walk of spiritual pride before Him? Never let your common sense become so prominent and forceful that it pushes the Son of God to one side. Common sense is a gift that God gave to our human nature, but common sense is not the gift of His Son. Supernatural sense is the gift of His Son, and we should never put our common sense on the throne. The Son always recognizes and identifies with the Father, but common sense has never yet done so and never will. Our ordinary abilities will never worship God unless they are transformed by the indwelling Son of God. We must make sure that our human flesh is kept in perfect submission to Him, allowing Him to work through it moment by moment. Are we living at such a level of human dependence upon Jesus Christ that His life is being exhibited moment by moment in us?

Prayer in the Father's Hearing "...Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me." John 11:41

John 16:25-33

Prayer

Jesus, we are Your temple to work in and through us. We desire that Your sonship manifests in our human flesh to demonstrate Your pleasure, Will, Way, and Life. Help us to keep our common sense in check. We need You in complete control and prominent as Lord of our lives. We submit our humanity to You so that You can work through us moment by moment.

What is God saying to you?

Day 24

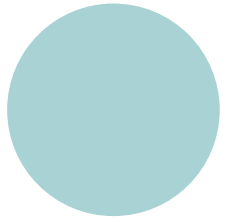
The New Testament notices things that do not seem worthy of notice by our standards. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." This literally means, "Blessed are the paupers." Paupers are remarkably commonplace! The preaching of today tends to point out a person's strength of will or the beauty of his character – things that are easily noticed. The statement we so often hear, "Decide for Jesus Christ," emphasizes something our Lord never trusted. He never asks us to decide for Him, but to yield to Him – something very different. At the foundation of Jesus Christ's kingdom is the genuine loveliness of those who are commonplace. I am truly blessed in my poverty. If I have no strength of will and a nature without worth or excellence, then Jesus says to me, "Blessed are you, because it is through your poverty that you can enter My kingdom." I cannot enter His kingdom by virtue of my goodness—I can only enter it as an absolute pauper.

The true character of the loveliness that speaks for God is always unnoticed by the one possessing that quality. Conscious influence is prideful and unchristian. If I wonder if I am being of any use to God, I instantly lose the beauty and the freshness of the touch of the Lord. "He who believes in Me...out of his heart will flow rivers of living water..." (John 7:38) And if I examine the outflow, I lose the touch of the Lord.

Who are the people who have influenced us most? Certainly not the ones who thought they did, but those who did not have even the slightest idea that they were influencing us. In the Christian life, godly influence is never conscious of itself. If we are conscious of our influence, it ceases to have genuine loveliness which is characteristic of the touch of Jesus. We always know when Jesus is at work because He produces in the commonplace something inspiring.

The Ministry of the Unnoticed "Blessed are the poor in spirit..." Matthew 5:3

John 7:37-42



Prayer

Jesus, help us to realize our poverty without You. To know that we are truly blessed in our poverty; that we have no strength of will and a nature without worth or excellence without You as our source. Deliver us from the lie that says our influence is the reason others are attracted to You. Help us to remain devoted to our need of You as Lord of our every breath.

What is God saying to you?

Day 25

Have I ever come to the point in my life where I can say, "I indeed...but He..."? Until that moment comes, I will never know what the baptism of the Holy Spirit means. I indeed am at the end, and I cannot do anything more—but He begins right there—He does the things that no one else can ever do. Am I prepared for His coming? Jesus cannot come and do His work in me as long as anything is blocking the way, whether it is something good or bad. When He comes to me, am I prepared for Him to drag every wrong thing I have ever done into the light? That is exactly where He comes. Wherever I know I am unclean is where He will put His feet and stand, and wherever I think I am clean is where He will remove His feet and walk away.

Repentance does not cause a sense of sin, it causes a sense of inexpressible unworthiness. When I repent, I realize that I am absolutely helpless, and I know that through and through I am not worthy even to carry His sandals. Have I repented like that, or do I have a lingering thought of possibly trying to defend my actions? The reason God cannot come into my life is that I am not at the point of complete repentance.

"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." John is not speaking here of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as an experience but as a work performed by Jesus Christ.

"He will baptize you." The only experience that those who are baptized with the Holy Spirit are ever conscious of is the experience of sensing their absolute unworthiness.

"I indeed" was this in the past, "but He" came and something miraculous happened. Get to the end of yourself where you can do nothing, but where He does everything.

"I Indeed...But He" "I indeed baptize you with water...but "He...will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Matthew 3:11

Matthew 7:7-17

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the work of the Spirit You are devoted to developing in us. Help us to embrace the Truth of Life; to know that we are at our end, and we cannot do anything more. Bring everything in us that is not of YOU into the light. Help us to be reminded of our unworthiness of You and Your presence so that we stop defending our actions. Help us to grow in our attitude of repentance continually so that You can do everything You desire in us and through us.

What is God saying to you?

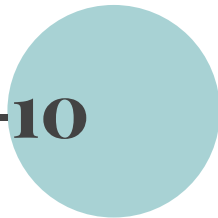
Day 26

We have all experienced times of exaltation on the mountain when we have seen things from God's perspective and have wanted to stay there. God will never allow us to stay there. The true test of our spiritual life is in exhibiting the power to descend from the mountain. If we only have the power to go up, something is wrong. It is a wonderful thing to be on the mountain with God, but a person only gets there so that he may later go down and lift up the demon-possessed people in the valley .(Mark 9:14-18) We are not made for the mountains, sunrises, or other beautiful attractions in life; those are simply intended to be moments of inspiration. We are made for the valley and the ordinary things of life, and that is where we have to prove our stamina and strength. Yet our spiritual selfishness always wants repeated moments on the mountain. We feel that we could talk and live like perfect angels if we could only stay on the mountaintop. Those times of exaltation are exceptional and they have their meaning in our life with God. However, we must beware to prevent our spiritual selfishness from wanting to make them the only time.

We are inclined to think that everything that happens is to be turned into useful teaching. In actuality, it should be turned into something even better than teaching, namely, character. The mountaintop is not meant to teach us anything, it is meant to make us something. There is a terrible trap in always asking, "What's the use of this experience?" We can never measure spiritual matters in that way. The moments on the mountaintop are rare, and they are meant for something in God's purpose.

The Place of Exaltation "...Jesus too...them up on a high mountain apart by themselves..." Mark 9:2

Mark 9:1-10



Prayer

Thank you Jesus for every mountain top experience You give us. Prepare and empower us to embrace the valleys of this world. Help us to navigate with joy the circumstances and challenges that You have ordered in our path today. Comfort us with Your voice as we serve Your Will in this world. Build Your character in us and demonstrate Your hope through us as we spread Your good news. Have Your way!

What is God saying to you?
