



Dear Legacy Family,

Since prayer is the foundation on which Legacy Church is built, what better way to begin the New Year than to join together in prayer.



Included in this 21 Day Prayer guide is a brief daily scripture, life application, and a daily prayer focus.

In addition to prayer, you may choose to fast as a way to develop an increased ability to hear God during these twenty-one days. We've included some basic information on fasting as a tool to assist you.

Consider the following as you prepare for these 21 Days of Prayer:

- Determine a specific time each day you will connect with God.
- Listen as He speaks to you through His Word.
- Record some of your thoughts.

Legacy Church will host prayer services Monday – Friday, 6:30-7:30 AM, and Saturdays 7:00-8:00 AM during these 21 days of prayer and fasting. As a body of believers, we have much to seek God for, both on a personal level and as a church. I'm believing that this is going to be the year of 'Advancement.' Where God moves us forward with His leading into new ventures, new opportunities, and new challenges. I can't think of a better way to begin 2020 than to wait on Him, worship Him, and call upon His name in prayer. God's word is clear, 'If my people, who are called by name would humble themselves and pray...I will hear!'

Looking forward to seeking Him...with you,

Gary and Patty Moreno, Lead Pastors
Barbara Fetter, Prayer Team Lead

A WORD ABOUT FASTING:

What is Christian fasting? Biblically, fasting is abstaining from food, drink, sleep, or anything meaningful on a personal level to focus on a period of spiritual growth. Specifically, we humbly deny something of the flesh to fine tune our ability to hear God and respond to his promptings.

Although fasting in Scripture is generally demonstrated as fasting from food (Ezra 8:21, Nehemiah 1:4, Esther 4:3), there are a number of other ways one may fast. In fact, anything you temporarily give up in order to better focus on God can be considered a fast. Fasting should be limited to a set time, especially when fasting from food. It is not intended to punish our flesh, but to elevate our focus on God.

Here are ways one might fast:

- **One Meal Fast** – A decision to skip a meal and spend that time focusing on God
- **The Daniel Fast** – Consuming only vegetables and water
- **A Partial Fast** - Consuming liquids only
- **Complete Food Fast** – Water only (ONLY do this with doctor supervision or consultation. Extended periods of time without eating can be harmful to the body.)
- **Technology Fast** – Abstaining from social media, TV, gaming, etc. to focus your attention on God.

DAY 1 – JANUARY 6, 2020

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

COLOSSIANS 3:12 – 17 NIV

The Canadian spring had been especially cold in 1844, but the hearts of a young couple were warmed by the birth of their third son, Elijah, on May 2nd. George and Mildred McCoy had survived brutal conditions as slaves in Kentucky before escaping to Canada by way of the Underground Railroad and eventually settling in Detroit, Michigan. They soon recognized in their son an unusual proclivity for building and mechanics. As a young man, Elijah studied in Edinburg, Scotland and became certified as a mechanical engineer. Despite his talents and qualifications and the fact that the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed prior to his return to America, Elijah was prevented from securing a position as an engineer due to racial tensions. Instead, he took a physically demanding and dangerous position as a fireman and oilman with the Michigan Central Railroad. At that time, railroad workers were constantly in danger from explosions and fires. The friction of steel against steel at high speeds was enormous and trains had to be stopped frequently for oilmen to lubricate the many moving parts with a handheld oil can. In spite of this practice, many trains were derailed, consumed by fire, or destroyed by explosions.

Uniquely skilled and motivated to invent a solution, Elijah eventually developed and patented an automatic lubricating cup that could be fitted into the steam cylinders of a locomotive. The Michigan Central Railroad recognized the remarkable value of this invention and installed these on all of their trains. Other railroads attempted to duplicate McCoy’s invention, but were never successful to produce one of the same superior quality. Railroad engineers, whose lives often depended on this invention, were known to inquire whether or not the train was fitted with *the real McCoy*. This phrase has become today an accepted idiom questioning whether or not something is genuine.

So how do those with whom I connect each day know whether or not I am the *real McCoy*; whether or not my Christian commitment is genuine? As I reflect on the many interactions in which I am involved each day, I often ask myself whether or not I have faithfully reflected Christ’s character in my words and actions. Although I recognize this is only possible through the work of the Holy Spirit in me, I find myself needing to yield to His authority in my heart and mind each day; and sometimes, moment by moment.

Prayer Focus: Thank God for the many blessings He has given and for the plans He has for You. Trust Him with your life. Ask Him to keep your humanness from getting in the way of His work in you and through you. Ask Him to faithfully reflect His character to those you get to do life with; so that others see His Spirit in you and so that He is glorified.

SUBMITTED BY JANALEE ISAACSON

DAY 2 – JANUARY 7, 2020

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

PHILIPPIANS 2:3-8 ESV

It is easy and often human nature to think of oneself prior to others. We need to meet our own needs, yes, but in Scripture, God calls us to look out for others and “count others more significant than yourselves.” What a tough ask! It is often challenging to put others’ needs above ours but God calls us to have this “mind” [set] among us. This scripture is one of the most beautiful illustrations of how God not only steps down among us, but even below us by “taking the form of a servant.” And in this case it meant sending his Son to take on human form to serve us by dying a brutal death ON THE CROSS for OUR sins. WOW! Consider what you would be willing to give up for your family or even your best friend let alone a stranger. It’s a little easier to sacrifice for a family member or friend but much more difficult for a stranger. Now consider that God is sending His Son to die while we are still sinners and prior to receiving Jesus. His love was extended to us first.

God calls us to serve others before ourselves but he does not leave us without an amazing example to follow. God also initiates this love and service while it is not justified or deserved. And it takes resting in the truth and peace of this sacrifice by a loving God that fills our hearts up so we can love and serve others as He calls us to.

Take up a heart of thanksgiving and service will likely follow.

Prayer Focus: Pray for God to help you to feel the overwhelming level of sacrifice and love that was poured out when Jesus became flesh and died on a cross for you. As a response to this amazing sacrifice, take up a heart of appreciation, love, and thankfulness. Thank the Lord for the sacrifice he has made and ask Him to give you a servant’s heart to serve others as He has done. Pray that your service is done out of an overflowing of the love you have received from God, and not of your own efforts.

SUBMITTED BY KURT SIGLER

DAY 3 – JANUARY 8, 2020

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

JOHN 15:5 NIV

If we want our lives to count, here, Jesus gives us insight on how to do just that. The emphasis is on living for and relying on Jesus. Just as a branch is wholly dependent on the vine to be nourished and sustained, so we need to be dependent on Christ. This is our focus – each day. When our attention and reliance are on Jesus, our actions will naturally be aligned to His work and a blessing to others. How is this accomplished? Only through Him. This is evident when He says, “apart from me you can do nothing” as it pertains to bearing fruit. Bearing fruit is only accomplished through a living union with Christ as He refines our character. Jesus is our lifeblood. Rather than living life on our own power and by our own means, we grow to live His way with all of His goodness flowing out.

Prayer Focus: In recognition that God has called each of us to live in union with Him, pray that He will fill you with His life and His Spirit. Ask God to reveal opportunities for His goodness to flow through you, and be a blessing to others today!

SUBMITTED BY MATTHEW LAMBERT

DAY 4 – JANUARY 9, 2020

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 NIV

It’s not easy for any of us to delight, celebrate or embrace our weaknesses and personal struggle. We find ourselves pursuing lives that are successful and pain free. Our prayers are often filled with requests for God to eliminate our struggle. But right in the middle of our loss, weakness, and frustration is where He invites us to trust. Trust that His grace is enough to sustain, carry, and comfort us. Trust that the eternal purpose and fruit of our struggle would become evident. Trust that our struggle, when placed in His faithful hands, will become our greatest testimony. Trust that the power of the Holy Spirit will equip us so we may walk in God’s strength instead of white-knuckling it in our own.

When you choose to do this, people will no longer see your weakness, they will see the power of God’s grace at work in your life. It offers hope and encouragement to those who are despairing. Humbly allow God to shine through your cracks! It is far more powerful than trying to put your best foot forward. His manifest goodness to you will be seen best when you are relying on Him for your strength.

Prayer Focus: Pray that God will show you the areas of your life that you are attempting to do in your own strength. Ask Him to help you trust Him with those things. Ask Him to start giving you an eternal perspective of your struggle or weakness.

SUBMITTED BY ANGELA BARNES

DAY 5 – JANUARY 10, 2020

“So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them, male and female He created them...God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”

GENESIS 1:27 & 31 NIV

This is the time of year when we start to think about changes, resolutions, and improvements in our lives. Some of us have goals to lose weight, stick to a budget, or even run a marathon. It is a wonderful thing to set goals and seek to move life in a positive direction! But have you ever stopped to look at the source of the desire behind your resolutions? While creating positive habits in our lives is a good thing, there are times when our resolutions may stem from some not-so-positive places. Shame, frustration, failure, or the desire to please others may be the deceitful motivators for change. Sometimes, we spend so much effort at the beginning of the new year thinking about who we wish we could be, that we lose sight of who are truly are.

The verses in Genesis remind us that we are God’s unique workmanship, created in His very image. In the very beginning, God looked back at His creation and He declared it very good. That creation includes you! No resolution met, weight loss goal accomplished, or money management plan kept could give you any more or less value in the eyes of your creator. As you look at your goals for the coming year, start with the truth that you are loved and valued just as you are.

Prayer Focus: This time of year there are so many loud voices telling you that you need to change-that who you are today isn’t good enough. Ask God to protect you from the lies of comparison, self-doubt, and shame. As you look to the new year ahead, ask Him to let you begin all things with a sense of worth rooted in Him. Thank Him for reminding you today that you are created in His image, exactly as you are supposed to be.

SUBMITTED BY HOLLY KIMM

DAY 6 – JANUARY 11, 2020

“As for the rich in this present age... they are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”

1 TIMOTHY 6:18-19 ESV

For many of us, January 1st doesn't just mark a new year, but a fresh go at a perpetually lengthening list of resolutions. Most people write down some kind of physical goal to be met, lifestyle change to be implemented, or financial burden to be relieved. And the first month or two (if you're really disciplined) is spent grinding away at that list with a fervor that typically fizzles out by Valentine's Day. Why do we set resolutions for ourselves? For most of us, it is because we are attempting to build a better future than the present we live in. We see some version of life out there that we want to reach and so we make our resolutions and strive for them.

But what did Paul write to the Thessalonians about how to obtain a life that was rich and full? He challenged them not to focus on improving themselves, but the lives of those around them. A truly rich future will not be acquired by hiding away our wealth, obsessing over body image, or trying to better our lifestyles. In the Kingdom of God, these things pass away. But the work of generosity, love, and open-handedness builds a life that will never be taken away. This year, let us take hold of “that which is truly life” by opening our hands to others.

Prayer Focus: Pray for a generous spirit to take root in your life. Ask God to show you ways of blessing others with the wealth (big or small) that he has given you. And in your conversation with Him, begin to cultivate thankfulness for his generosity towards you. This will strengthen the generous spirit in you.

SUBMITTED BY DEMPSEY JORGENSON

DAY 7 – JANUARY 12, 2020

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

JOSHUA 1:9 NIV

We can only imagine the great fear that Joshua had to overcome when God told him to prepare to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land. This land of great promise was also full of enemies and had to be fought for! In verse 7 He said, “be very strong and courageous.” In verse 9 he asked the question, “Have I not commanded you? Be very strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Did you notice that it is a command? As we follow God’s word, He will carry us through life’s difficulties and we can live a life full of courage. This does not mean that we will never be fearful, but that we can trust God. We can be assured that no matter what happens, He will never leave us or forsake us. There will be times that God will lead us to a land of promise that is full of danger. It will require us to follow His command. Where is God leading you to today that will require you to be strong and courageous? Have you missed God’s best because you were afraid? I know that at times I have... be bold, face your fear, be strong and courageous for the Lord your God is with you!

Prayer Focus: Pray for boldness and for God to take away any spirit of fear. Ask God to reveal to you the Promised Land that He has for you and your family. A land of promise and danger! *“For God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”* 2 Timothy 1:7 KJV

SUBMITTED BY MARK BARNES

DAY 8 – JANUARY 13, 2020

“And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God’s mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God’s ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.”

EPHESIANS 6:19-20, NLT

Legacy Church believes in what the Apostle Peter referred to as the priesthood of all believers. Through Jesus Christ, we all have been given access to our Heavenly Father and thus an opportunity to join him on the mission of rewriting futures for generations to come. A significant part of Legacy becoming the church that Christ has called us to be is a pastoral team entrusted with the responsibility to equip us to serve in our community.

As the church, we should pray for our pastors. Even the Apostle Paul, one of the greatest missionaries and church planters in history, asked for prayer on numerous occasions. Despite the depth of his training and experience, he still asked his friends to pray for him to stay dependent upon the Spirit so that he might speak the right words, at the right time, and with the right heart.

Prayer Focus: Take time to pray for our pastors and leadership. Ask Jesus to guard their integrity, protect their family, and multiply their ministry. Pray that each of them lives out their unique callings with God-honoring conviction, clarity, and creativity.

SUBMITTED BY JUSTIN FARLEY

DAY 9 – JANUARY 14, 2020

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

ISAIAH 55:8-9 NIV

One day a dear friend shared this verse with me. I was struggling with something. A thing, which while important to me, was likely not on the forefront of God’s mind for me at this time. I’m not suggesting that God doesn’t care about what I want! His word tells me to give him all my anxieties because *HE CARES*. My friend also asked if maybe I was making this thing an idol. This was asked with the greatest of love and that is how I took it but, still, I winced. So I had a choice to make. I could either continue being sad and depressed or I could turn it over to God, again, knowing He truly does have a plan for my life and it is good. I may not understand it but I know it is good. If I don’t turn it over it has the potential to kill me and my relationships too! So I made the decision to ask God to take this thing from me. His word says he will give me the desires of my heart. So my prayer became, *God you know my heart’s desire. I give this thing to you again. If this is not your will for me, would you please change the desire of my heart to line up with your will? I want to be who you created me to be and I can only do that with Your Holy Spirit.*

Is there something you are struggling with? Seek out a trusted and loving friend who will speak God’s truth, in love, to you. Then get your Bible and search through His Word. He loves you, He will always love you. It’s who He is. He is your loving Heavenly Father and he wants good for you! Trust that truth.

Prayer Focus: Ask the Lord to guide you in His will today. Seek His wisdom and discernment in how to walk that will out.

SUBMITTED BY BARBARA FETTER

DAY 10 – JANUARY 15, 2020

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand”

ISAIAH 41:10 NIV

“Do not fear”. Easy to say, difficult to accomplish. In an ever-changing world where we are constantly being pulled in different directions, having to make difficult decisions, and walking into unknown circumstances, fear and anxiety can start to feel like second nature. They can start to dictate our moods, actions, and relationships. They can cause us to hesitate or give up too easily. But you, as God’s child, do not have to fear. You need not be dismayed because the Lord your God is with you. His presence in your life is the strength needed to endure every trial and courageously persevere through every affliction. God assures us that he is always with us and there is no limit to the strength he offers us. When we feel most defeated, unable to move, or as if we have lost the will to stand, He promises to uphold us and care for us. He reaches down with his mighty right hand to lift us up.

Prayer Focus: In your prayer today, boldly proclaim that your anxieties and fear have no place in your mind, for the Lord your God is with you. Pray that whatever might be holding you back from living a life of freedom may be vanquished in the name of the Heavenly Father, and that you will experience the strength he promises.

SUBMITTED BY KARISSA ALTMAYER

DAY 11 – JANUARY 16, 2020

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

MATTHEW 11:28-30 NLT

This passage is a personal invitation from Jesus to step out of the frenzied pace of life-as-we-know-it, and into one of rest. The word *rest* is a Greek word (pronounced 'anapū-ō') which means calm, comfort, and refresh. It's the word Jesus picked to explain the kind of rest He wants to give to any and all who would seek Him when life becomes difficult or wearisome. And frankly, life can get heavy and it can feel a bit overwhelming at times. This invitation comes to you today if you're walking through a difficult time, not to go it alone, and not to embrace busyness and hurriedness as a sort of elixir to medicate pain.

Walter Adams, the spiritual director to C.S. Lewis reminds us: *'To walk with Jesus is to walk with a slow, unhurried pace. Hurry is the death of prayer and only impedes and spoils our work. It never advances it.'*

The invitation to you and to me today is to 'yoke up' with Jesus and find refreshment in Him. To walk at a pace that keeps you in perfect step with Him. It means communion with Jesus is sweet and causes your soul to be revived and renewed. It means freedom from guilt over sin, deliverance from fear and despair, and the promise of help and direction for your life.

Eugene Peterson best captures the essence of this invitation from Jesus. Read it, embrace it, and live it today.

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Jesus

Prayer Focus: The first of the year is always a good time to consider the pace and pattern of your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment in bringing order and margin to your day to day planning. Focus in prayer on resting and hiding in Him. Consider reading the 23rd Psalm as a prayer and allow the words to sink deep into your spirit.

SUBMITTED BY GARY MORENO

“... before Phillip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

JOHN 1:48 ESV

Jesus called twelve common men to be His disciples while He walked here on earth. Twelve different individuals with no clerical training and no formal education; the men He chose were not rabbis, politicians, or leaders in any way. Among them were least six fishermen, a tax collector, who was culturally despised, and a zealot, who had chosen violence as a path to glorify God. One of the disciples was a man named Nathanael Bartholomew, about whom we are told very little. We read that another disciple, Philip, brought this man to meet Jesus. When Jesus saw Nathanael walking toward him, He said... *“Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit.”* (John 1:47). Nathanael was stunned by this greeting. How does this “man” know me? Jesus replied... *“I saw you under the fig tree....”* Jesus knew Nathanael, had heard his prayers, felt his pain, and listened to his heart... before ever meeting him face to face. How was this so? Nathanael had developed a relationship with God through prayer, preparation and quiet time alone... under a fig tree. So, when Nathanael heard Jesus’ greeting, he knew... instantly KNEW... verse 49, *“Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”* Nathanael had prepared his heart and was ready to receive a blessing. So, here is my question... Are you prepared? Have you spent the quiet “fig tree time” in prayer and reading the Scriptures; time alone with Jesus? Are you prepared for that moment in your life when Jesus asks you to step forward and serve?

As we move into this new year, often a time of refreshment and recommitment, may I challenge you to examine your relationship with the Lord. Commit now to finding that “Fig Tree” in your life whether that is a location or a dedicated moment in time to set aside and commit it to meet with the Lord. Ok, now the next step... find a friend to share this commitment with and ask them to hold you accountable to help you be successful. Oh, how sweet this fruit in your life will be when you deepen this relationship with our Lord!

Prayer Focus: Ask Father God to prepare our hearts and lives to be faithful students of His Word... prepare us to know His will in our lives. Ask him to help us to be ready for that very moment He has already prepared for us to speak to a friend about the love of Jesus, to help our neighbor in pain, to simply be the hands of Jesus to those around us. Use our commonness to make an uncommon difference in this world for His glory; to reflect His light in this life today. He knows our hearts. Thank Him for listening to our prayers.

SUBMITTED BY STEVE ISAACSON

“It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents...Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God.”

HEBREWS 11:8-10 NLT

As believers we long to demonstrate faith-filled lives, pleasing God and walking in his pathways and purposes. Yet, putting our faith into action is often so counterintuitive to our intellect we end up stuck in old ruts, circling the same territory and mindsets year after year. By journeying with Abraham through these few short verses, we can become empowered to take our own steps into a life of faith.

1. When God called Abraham to leave home, **he responded**. The word *obeyed* in this passage is the Greek word *Hupokuo*- ‘responsive surrender to that which we hear.’ He walked away from what was known into the unknown, what was comfortable into the uncomfortable; from the safe into the threatening topography of the obscure.
2. *He went...without knowing where he was going*. This is the point where faith becomes uncomfortable. How often do we ask for a few assurances, confirmations before we step out, a road map, mile-markers, the assurance of our success? The New Testament disciples were also asked to *Go...into all the world...and preach the Good News to everyone*. (Mark 16:15) They were not given any specifics or assurances. Their call also required them to walk away from the security of the known. The final verse of Mark (16:20) testifies of their obedience: *And they went forth, and preached everywhere...with signs following*. It is our human propensity to long for signs preceding our act of obedience, but most often the Holy Spirit reveals himself within our story *after* we demonstrate actions of obedience.
3. Even after Abraham arrived at the destination God had in mind for him, it wasn’t comfortable: *He lived like a foreigner in tents*. Our western Christianity has equated comfort with a sign of God’s pleasure and the demonstration of our life being centered in his purpose, but this is not the case for most of these heroes of our faith listed in Hebrews 11. It certainly was not the case for Paul who was beaten, shipwrecked, left for dead, and imprisoned while walking out God’s call on his life. And yet, Abraham’s life reminds us all of our great assurance...
4. Abraham was **confidently** looking forward to a city with **eternal foundations**, a city **designed and built by God**. Why didn’t he lose his confidence? He knew wherever God was calling him, whatever would be designed and built, would not be something temporal but eternal. The cement of the foundation on which everything would be built for those in the distant future would be engraved with the signature of the Divine Architect and Builder. This would not be something Abraham could accomplish with the sum of his own strength.

Prayer Focus: As we journey with God, through the power, counsel, and comfort of the Holy Spirit, into this new year, let’s pray for hearts to be responsive to his voice. May he give us the courage to step out in faith, leaving home to point the trajectory of our lives toward His eternal purposes. As he wrote Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Rahab, Ruth, David, Esther, the disciples, and Paul into his eternal story, he includes you and me as a strategic pieces of his eternal love-letter. What does leaving home represent for you? Old mindsets? False beliefs? Selfish motivations? Unresolved pain? God gently whispers, “Surrender it to me.” Then, in the stepping forward without assurance of the pathway before us, we will have the opportunity to experience the glory of the promise He has orchestrated over our lives. He longs to bless us so that through us all the world may be blessed, futures rewritten, eternal destinies transformed.

SUBMITTED BY PATTY MORENO

DAY 14 – JANUARY 19, 2020

Do you have a few extra minutes today? Pray through Psalm 139:1-18. God knows and loves you completely.

“Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

JEREMIAH 29:5-7 NIV

Did you check the headlines yet today? Chances are they were pretty discouraging. Pain, violence, sickness, political turmoil...and that's just the local news. It is easy to feel overwhelmed in a world that seems to be spinning out of control. The desire to lock the doors, close the curtains, and unplug from the world can be tempting at times.

But God invites us into something different. Rather than withdraw from the world around us, we are called to live, and thrive, and put down roots where we are. Most importantly, we are called to pray. God has planted you exactly where you are for a purpose. Your zip code is not an accident. You are here to bring life.

Take a moment to think about that city where you live. What do you notice when you drive through town? What are the needs? How can you use the light of Christ to shine hope and healing into your hometown? Ask God to speak to you today.

Prayer Focus: Call out to your Heavenly Father, tell Him it seems like the world outside your front door is too much at times. Yet you also know that God has placed you here in this city for a purpose. Lift up the leadership of your city. Pray for them to make sound decisions that reflect His will. Lift up the infrastructure- water, roads, power. Ask for our town to stay safe and sustained. Lift up the first responders. Guide their hands and provide them with strength. Lift up your neighbors, those you know and those you have yet to meet. May they experience His love today. Ask the Lord to give you eyes to see the needs of your city and help you be His hands and feet. Amen.

SUBMITTED BY HOLLY KIMM

DAY 15 – JANUARY 20, 2020

“You will guard and keep him in perfect and constant peace whose mind (both its inclination and its character) is stayed on You, because he commits himself to You, leans on You, and hopes confidently in You.”

ISAIAH 26:3 AMP

Family situations, health problems, workplace frustrations, financial crises, politics, relationships, driving in traffic...perfect peace in all of this, really? How is this possible? According to Isaiah, we have God's PROMISE of PEACE, perfect and constant, when we keep our minds "stayed" on Him. But what does this word "stayed" mean? According to Webster's dictionary, it means to continue in a place or condition, to abide in, live in, dwell in.

Take a minute, breathe, and recall a time when you went on a vacation or time away that brought refreshment to your soul, lightened some burdens and was just plain peaceful. In fact, when you got back from vacation, in the midst of a hectic day, you could imagine yourself back on that beach, or in a cabin, or on a cruise, and your whole body and mind physically responded to those thoughts and you were able to find some peace thinking about that experience. Your physical location did not change, but the focus of your mind did, and in that moment you were able to be at peace. That is what God is asking you to do – to purposefully remind yourself of His goodness, His faithfulness to you, and His character, in the midst of all that life brings, and to find rest in His promise of peace.

God is mindful of us and so He asks us to be mindful (our minds FULL) of Him because this is where perfect peace is found. In His peace, there is hope in our circumstances and confidence in the character of God to fulfill His promises to us. It is a choice on our part to commit, believe and hope, but in taking that small step of faith, God PROMISES to guard our minds and keep us in constant and perfect peace, regardless of what is going on around us.

My friend, for today, in this moment, choose to set your mind on Him and find comfort and perfect peace in His Presence.

Prayer Focus: Today, Father, I commit my thoughts to You and I thank You for Your perfect peace that guards me and keeps me in all my ways. Thank you that in this moment, You are mindful of me, exactly where I am, and You are with me. Thank You for Your love and concern towards me and that You leave nothing undone and that You are faithful and will accomplish all that You have promised. I choose to believe what You say in Your Word and I receive Your peace as my mind abides in You. Amen.

SUBMITTED BY MARLEE SKAGGS

DAY 16 – JANUARY 21, 2020

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast”

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 NIV

Amazing Grace. How often have you sung that song or heard it in church? We are all thankful for the Lord’s grace and acceptance, but it can sometimes be a difficult thing to fully embrace. At various times in life, we may feel distant from the Father, and we can fall into the trap of trying to manufacture a connection by volunteering, mentoring, and giving of our time, money, or self. However, grace is receiving the opposite of what we deserve. That means that we can’t earn it; if we did anything to deserve it, it’s not called grace. Grace was given to us as part of the free gift of salvation. Christ paid the full price for our sin when he gave his life on the cross for us. He asks only that we turn from our sin and pursue a life with him. If we are truly saved, then why do so many of us spend so much time stressing over works or trying to make ourselves seem good enough? God tells us that his grace is sufficient; sufficient to cover past sins, bitterness and hostility. We don’t have to become anything more than who we are right now for Christ to begin using us for His glory. We have been saved by grace.

Prayer Focus: Thank the Lord for his perfect gift of grace, faith, and salvation. Ask the Lord to help you rely on His grace rather than the good deeds you do. Pray that He reveals to you how He can begin to use you today (wherever you may be in your relationship with Christ) to glorify His name.

SUBMITTED BY JONATHAN ALTMAYER

DAY 17 – JANUARY 22, 2020

“As far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”

PSALM 103:12 KJV

“Come now, and let us reason together, said the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

ISAIAH 1:18 NKJV

As the fresh snow blankets this beautiful area that we live in, let's give thanks to Our Creator for our beautiful surroundings, and more importantly, for His forgiveness that He has graciously given us. The snow covering the dark, stark land with the beautiful white snow is symbolic of His forgiveness. When you see the snow fall, remember your sins are forgiven. Praise Him for that.

Prayer Focus: Thank you Jesus for your beautiful creation. As the snow covers the landscape with your white, clean, crisp, covering we are reminded of how you have covered our sins with your blood. Our ugly past sins are now as white as snow. We are truly grateful for your unmerited gift to us. We pray for all those friends and loved ones who have not yet accepted the gift of eternal life that you have so graciously offered to them. May we show the love you have expressed to us to them, so that they too might come to know you as their personal Lord and Savior. Amen

SUBMITTED BY PAUL JAMES

“Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, “A great multitude is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the sea; and, behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar” (that is, Engedi). Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah assembled to seek help from the Lord; from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.”

2 CHRONICLES 20:2-4 ESV

Within this account we witness all the real and raw emotions of life unfold in an unforgettable and relevant way. Jehoshaphat receives word that there is a vast enemy surrounding the people of God and the situation looks bleak. There's simply not adequate time to react or solidify a viable strategy that will ensure a positive outcome for the people. What do you do with that kind of bad news? You're surrounded! Your future is in question. Your loved ones are at risk and in great peril. How do you respond? Where do you go for answers? Here's a few thoughts from Jehoshaphat's playbook.

Jehoshaphat feared. (vs. 3) That's right. He was afraid. Sometimes in the course of life, circumstances arise that stir up a very natural human response...fear. Jehoshaphat, as great a leader as he was, felt this very real emotion. This should encourage us. Even God's great warriors such as Jehoshaphat had to wrestle with moments of fear. But he didn't stay in it long. And we shouldn't either (see 1 Timothy 1:7). His response?

Jehoshaphat sought the Lord (vs. 3). I like the language of the ESV, *'he set his face to seek the Lord.'* This might mean that he bowed low, or that he placed all of himself (body, soul, mind and spirit) in a posture of seeking God's help. Nothing else mattered to Jehoshaphat other than to seek His God – He was fixed, focused and determined to go to the Lord for help. This is a good example for us. In fearful places, when it becomes difficult to find peace...we should do what Jehoshaphat did – seek the Lord with all of our heart. Then...

Jehoshaphat declared a fast: (vs. 3) He temporarily cut food from his diet (a physical pleasure) in order that his ears, heart and soul would be fixed on hearing from God with greater clarity and sacrifice. This is a hugely important discipline if we desire to better position ourselves to hear from God. Consider fasting a meal, or social media or some other habit for a series of days in order to cleanse our spiritual palette. And finally...

Jehoshaphat gathered the people: (vs.4). There really is something very powerful and very needful about community. Jehoshaphat gathered the people together to seek the living God, to find strength in one another; to hold each other up in the face of adversity. Why would we do any differently. Let's not try to 'go it alone.' There is no merit in 'suffering in silence' when there is a community of faith that can hold you up in prayer, fellowship and support.

(Read the full narrative Jeremiah 29)

Prayer Focus: Seek the Lord today with all of your heart, soul, mind and body. Ask Him for help to trust Him when you feel afraid, to lean on Him when you feel weak and to sense His leading when you're not sure what to do. Hold fast to Him today as your Lord and your deliverer!

SUBMITTED BY GARY MORENO

DAY 19 – JANUARY 24, 2020

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and Light dwells with Him. I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might”

DANIEL 2:20-23A NKJV

I love these words from Daniel. They are a testament to his unwavering faith! When Daniel and his friends faced certain death, he put his trust in God. Daniel began by praising God, declaring what he knew to be true of Him, “He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.” He testified of God’s might to both his adversaries and his friends. I believe that was an important step, admitting to those around him that while he didn’t have the answer, he knew who did. This testimony opened doors for him to give God the glory later. It is easy to respond to life, “*I was lucky how that turned out*” or “*good karma I guess*”, but Christ followers know who the glory belongs to. When we recognize and admit this, our faith and the faith of those around us increases.

Today may not be your day. Maybe it feels like nothing is going right in your life at home or at work. No matter how hard you try, you can’t seem to get ahead. “Take heart,” Jesus declared, “in this life you will face trouble, but I have overcome the world.” Don’t let discouragement, doubt or hopelessness keep you from seeking your Heavenly Father every day. That is the enemy’s plan and when you turn away from God, the enemy wins. If nothing is going right in your life, whether in your job, your finances or your family, or if you feel like you are spinning out of control and you are up against insurmountable odds, pray to our Heavenly Father who is madly in love with you. His plans are so much better than anything you or I could imagine. Jeremiah 29:11 declares, “He knows the plans he has for us, plans to prosper and not to harm us. Plans to give us hope and a future.” This promise has carried me through some dark and lonely times in my life.

Maybe right now you don’t feel like you have understanding of God or His Word, but don’t let that stop you from leaning into His Word. The more time you spend reading His Word, the more He will begin to reveal himself and you will also begin to recognize His voice in your life.

If today is a great day and life is going well, take a few moments to praise our Heavenly Father. If life is filled with challenges, praise Him because He is worthy. Praise Him because He calls us to worship Him.

Prayer Focus: Begin by praising Him for the wisdom He has given you in your life. Praise Him for the leaders He has raised up in your life. This could be a father, mother, mentor or dear friend. Also ask him to shine a light into the darkness of your life. Pray that He may reveal where you need to replace darkness with His Light so that you may faithfully walk in His ways as an accurate reflection of Him to those around you in your life, your work, your community and your home.

SUBMITTED BY STEPHEN ROBINSON

“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.”

1 JOHN 1:3-7 NIV

The calm of the night is shattered by the blaring fire alarm. You awaken from a peaceful sleep, valiantly attempting to make sense of your surroundings. “Where am I?” “What is that noise?” “What time is it?” As you struggle to become fully awake, neurotransmitters and hormones flood your system to cause your heart rate and blood pressure to increase, your airways to open and your energy stores to be liberated; all to provide your brain and muscles the energy and oxygen they need for peak performance. This stress response, also known as “fight or flight,” is a function of the autonomic nervous system and is built into each of us to maximize our survival when faced with any threat to our physical, emotional or psychological integrity.

The physiologic manifestations of this response serve us well in situations such as the one described above. However, evidence is emerging that we were not created to continually sustain this level of readiness. In fact, healthcare providers and scientists are recognizing the many damaging effects that constant stress is having on our overall health. Heart problems, hypertension, diabetes, cancer and depression are among the list of illnesses associated with ongoing stress.

We can each list many of the factors that contribute to stress: deadlines, financial pressures, long work hours and organizational change. One factor that researchers have recognized for decades as contributing to stress is that of social isolation. This fact came to light in a series of classic experiments conducted with monkeys in the mid- to late-twentieth century. Data collected demonstrated that the neuroendocrine response experienced by monkeys exposed to stressful situations was significantly decreased in the presence of another monkey; a “monkey buddy.”

In spite of the technological advancements that enable us to “stay connected” with others; loneliness is on the rise, contributing to our stress, and threatening to impact our very health and longevity. And yet, the One who created each of us knew the importance of developing and maintaining close relationships. In fact, God says in His word that He created and delivered me to be in relationship with Him (*Psalms 18:19*). And, I am created for fellowship with others (*1 John 1:7*). Once again, I am reminded of the importance of reading, knowing and standing on the firm foundation of God’s Word – the ultimate “Owner’s Manual” to follow for a fulfilled life that glories God.

Prayer Focus: Thank the Father for His Word, and for creating you for fellowship with others, and especially for those with whom you have the privilege of doing life – your “monkey buddies.” Ask for help to keep that perspective in mind and to be faithful to invest in the lives of others in a meaningful way. Thank Him for continually prompting you to see each person as the gift they truly are.

SUBMITTED BY JANALEE ISAACSON

DAY 21 – JANUARY 26, 2020

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

JOHN 15:5 ESV

In this part of the country, we are fortunate to have an abundance of locally grown produce, in the proper season. Crisp apples, juicy pears, sweet peaches, tart cherries, and many other delicious fruits fill our farmer’s markets and even backyards. At the peak of the season, a single tree may be filled with hundreds of pounds of fresh fruit. And what does the fruit DO in order to grow to sweet, juicy, ripe abundance? Does the fruit strain, and work, and strive, and try? Of course not. The fruit simply *abides* on the branches of the tree.

This is a beautiful example for us as we desire to produce the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control (Gal. 5:20). We are called to abide in Him in order to bear such fruit, for apart from Him we can do nothing. No amount of work, effort, resolutions, or exertion on our parts will bring about the desired fruit. We must simply abide.

Abiding in Him is not a complicated, multi-step process. But it does require that we cling tightly, steadfastly, to Jesus. Following His example, we can abide by removing ourselves from the demands of the world for quiet time and prayer, reading the scriptures, and surrounding ourselves with a community. By abiding in Jesus, our vine, the fruit of our branches will be abundant.

Prayer Focus: Ask the Lord to show you what it may mean for you to abide in Him in your current season of life. Is there a form of striving and trying that you need to give up in order to simply abide in the vine? Is there a practice from the life of Jesus that you could follow in order to abide more closely with Him? Thank Him for the beautiful reminders in nature that in order to bear fruit, we need simply to abide in Him.

SUBMITTED BY BARB KOOIMA