

21 Days of Prayer & Fasting

January 2022

Welcome to a journey that will not only help you start strong in 2022 but, more importantly, change the trajectory of your life. Please know this, there are tangible rewards when we intentionally pursue God. Perhaps the greatest one of these is an ever-growing awareness of His presence.

“Come close to God, and God will come close to you.”
James 4:8

In these next 21 days, we will draw close to Him by prayer and fasting. Please don't allow the word “fasting” to throw you off. Fasting is a decision to take your eyes off of the things of this world to focus more completely on God. Fasting is about wanting a deeper relationship with God. Check out our “Guide to Fasting” at www.christplace.church/pray.

Begin each day reading a devotional written by one of our pastors. Our devotionals are entries from their personal S.O.A.P. journals which model how simple it can be to jump into scripture and draw prayer points from the text. Follow scripture with a time dedicated to prayer. Each day, remind yourself of your purpose. Our longing is to know Him. We echo the Psalmist: “As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God.” *Psalms 42:1*

We use the S.O.A.P. process to model our daily devotionals. S.O.A.P. is an acronym that means Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. While doing this, write your thoughts down in a journal. Journaling is an excellent way to record and process what God has spoken to you.

Scripture: Take your time reading each chapter and allow God to speak to you. Look for a verse that particularly spoke to you and write it in your journal.

Observation: What do you think God is saying to you in this scripture? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Paraphrase and write this scripture down in your own words in your journal.

Application: Personalize what you have read, by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Write how this scripture can apply to you today.

Prayer: This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this scripture, or it may be a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say and journal about it.

These next few weeks together are going to be life-giving. Let's do this!

Rick Lorimer



Lead Pastor

21 DAYS OF
PRAYER & FASTING

 CHRIST PLACE.CHURCH

Day 1

“New Creation”

Scripture:

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Observation:

Did you notice that this says, “New Creation”? I think many times we can look at ourselves and think God really means “Newly Remodeled.” After all, the old me wasn’t that bad, and I feel comfortable holding on to some of my old habits. God is really forgiving, right? It’s like the Apostle Paul knew we would think that way and drives the point home by reminding us that “the old has passed away.” We can then look at the struggles and failures that used to define us and say that we are no longer the old person we were. They no longer have the power to define us! I am now and for the rest of my life defined by my relationship with Christ!

Application:

To be a New Creation in Christ, we must put Christ at the head of our lives, or we will just be like someone that joins a gym and never goes. Nothing changes; we will just feel better for having good intentions. Let’s embrace it and live like we follow Christ. Let Him instruct us through the reading of His Word, the Bible. Lean in and learn from good sermons. Pray to God often and speak to Him sincerely, allowing Him to speak to us. I challenge all of us to pray these three prayer points at least three times today.

Prayer:

- Thank God for making me a “New Creation”
- Ask God to reveal to me what it looks like to be a “New Creation” in Christ
- Ask God for the strength and wisdom to live the life He has called me to

Day 2

“Men and Women of Faith”

Scripture:

Luke 16:10

“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.”

Observation:

I have heard it said that the definition of character is doing the right thing even when no one is watching. What do you think is easier? Being faithful in doing the right thing, even if it means putting other people first? Or being dishonest and making sure you come out on top with minimal effort? That’s why they call it exercising faith because it takes effort. The things in life that take the most effort pay out the best dividends. Faith is like a muscle. The more you use it today, the stronger it will be tomorrow. To be our best selves, we must follow God’s plan and be faithful. We don’t just owe it to God to choose correctly, but we also owe it to ourselves so we can be all that we can be.

Application:

Every day we have many choices to make. Some are big ones. Some are little ones that no one even notices. Making the right choice in the small ones builds a track record and a foundation to rely on when the hard decisions come. Psalm 37:5 says, “Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will act.” Be aware and choose correctly so God will act in your life. If being a Christian is to be Christ-like, it also is like Christ to have God acting in every part of your life.

Prayer:

- Thank God for trusting me with the small things
- Ask God for the strength to do what’s right
- Ask God to make me into the person He created me to be

Day 3

“Perspective is Everything”

Scripture:

Job 1:6-8, 20-22

One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. “Where have you come from?” the Lord asked Satan. Satan answered the Lord, “I have been patrolling the earth, watching everything that’s going on.” Then the Lord asked Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.”

Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship. He said, “I came naked from my mother’s womb, and I will be naked when I leave. The Lord gave me what I had, and the Lord has taken it away. Praise the name of the Lord!” In all of this, Job did not sin by blaming God.

Observation:

To read this passage, if you don’t know or have confidence in the just character of God, it’s as if this was a casual bet or business transaction between God and Satan. Yet, after all his loss, Job had the presence of mind to express grief and then articulate his perspective.

Application:

We will likely never get a good enough answer, this side of heaven, as to why God allowed unjust and tragic events to occur. But we can read God’s Word and spend time with him so that we can gain an understanding of his character and his ways. We may not always understand him, but we can always trust him.

Prayer:

- God’s provision, grace, favor, and presence in the lives of Afghan refugees resettling in the U.S.
- God’s help, grace, favor, and presence in the lives of Afghans still in Afghanistan and in danger
- Boldness and wisdom for Afghan Christians still in Afghanistan

Day 4

“Remembering Where he Came from and Looking Ahead to his Reward”

Scripture:

Hebrews 11:24-26

It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of Christ than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his great reward.

Observation:

Moses, who grew up in privilege, upon realizing his roots as an Israelite, embraced the identity of his Hebrew kinsman. Yet his upbringing gave him instant recognition when he returned to the palace to plea for his people's freedom. He didn't forget where he came from but was confident God would reward his faith.

Application:

There is no sin in having privilege and luxury. Yet, most of us admire someone willing to sacrifice their wealth and/or position, even temporarily, to defend the oppressed. That is the heart of God.

Prayer:

- May God's people be marked by generosity
- May 2022 be a year of remarkable provision for God's remarkable generosity from His people

Day 5

“God’s Faithful Love Will Always Remain”

Scripture:

Isaiah 54:10

“For the mountains may move and hills disappear, but even then, my faithful love for you will still remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken, says the Lord, who has mercy on you.

Observation:

Even if God’s good and wonderful creation, like hills and mountains, disappear, the goodness and wonder of His love will never vanish.

Application:

I can’t look to the mountains, hills, or anything else God created for love and fulfillment. It is our Creator, not His creation, that will never fail me or leave me. It is our Creator alone who deserves our honor and praise.

Prayer:

- Thank God for his unfailing love that will never leave us
- Ask God to help us keep our eyes focused on Him, our Creator
- Ask God to help us surrender our lives to Him as the author and Creator of our lives

Day 6

“Search My Heart”

Scripture:

Psalm 139:23-24

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.”

Observation:

In Psalm 139, David shares his awe of God’s greatness and the truth that God knows him better than David even knows himself. His prayer that follows basically says, Lord, you are welcome into my life, all of my life. You have complete permission to correct me and guide me to lead the most God-honoring life for you. This is a beautiful but scary prayer. Only people who are truly in awe of God and truly trust Him and know Him as their Lord are brave enough and wise enough to pray this prayer.

Application:

Let my ability to pray this prayer be the litmus test for my perception of who God is, and my own willingness and desire for God to be Lord over every area of my life.

Prayer:

- Thank God for being too wonderful to even comprehend
- Ask God to carry the burden of your anxious thoughts
- Ask God to search your heart and offer correction and guidance

Day 7

“He Will Make Your Paths Straight”

Scripture:

Proverbs 3:5-6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not lean on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take.”

Observation:

To be led where you want to be will require the full surrender of where you currently are.

Application:

I have to trust that Lord is who He says He is. I can't trust in the little understanding that I have. I have to seek God's Kingdom above my own. When I ask God to lead me, I need to expect Him to faithfully lead.

Prayer:

- Thank God for His understanding being greater than our own
- Ask God to make His ways known to you as you trust His greater plan
- Ask God for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done in your own life

Day 8

“God’s Faithful Love Will Always Remain”

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Day 9

“Be Still”

Scripture:

Psalm 46:10

Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world.”

Observation:

The Hebrew word (Be Still) can also be translated; “enough!” To quit holding on to things that may be distracting or weighing you down. We can rest in knowing that God has everything under control; even when it seems like the world is going on round us.

Application:

This scripture has been a foundation for me to stand on over the past two years. There has been so much that we have faced; as a family, as a church, and as a nation. God has continued to bring me back to this scripture to remind me He is still in control and that I can rest in that truth!

Prayer:

- Pray over areas in your life that you need to let go of and allow God to have control
- Pray over the unrest in our city, country, and world today

Day 10

“Strength”

Scripture:

Ephesians 6:10

A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Observation:

- Strength rarely happens by accident
- Even a natural talent must be work to attain a higher standard of excellence

Application:

We should always be looking to grow in our relationship with Christ to be strong in him. We also must understand that this strength is not a momentary event but a daily pursuit and foundation for us to live our lives. Finally, humility demands that we admit there is no antidote for time. This leads us to continually strengthen the spirit because it is the only part of us that will endure from this life to the next.

Prayer:

- Growing in strength in the Lord
- Identity in Christ

Day 11

“Fulfilling Your Ministry”

Scripture:

Mark 1:8

“I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!”

Observation:

John was fulfilling his ministry of calling people to baptism and repentance.

Application:

We, like John, have a ministry to fulfill and should be prayerfully and daily pursuing God’s calling on our life. But there is something that only Jesus can do. Only Jesus can baptize us in the spirit. This means that despite all the collective giftings in a group of people, they still have to completely depend on Jesus to fulfill the ministry that only He can do.

Prayer:

- Grow in dependence on Jesus
- Fill me with more of your spirit

Day 12

“Believe”

Scripture:

John 2:11

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Observation:

To be a disciple means that you trust and follow Jesus. It’s interesting that even after they were already disciples, they “believed in him.”

Application:

- Jesus doesn’t require us to have it all together. He will take you on a journey, and you’ll learn as you go.
- Don’t get discouraged in the season you are in. It is easy to feel that you should be further along.

Prayer:

- Grow in faith
- Strengthen our belief in Your promises

Day 13

“Righteousness”

Scripture:

Romans 1:17

For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

Observation:

Our position of righteousness before God began with faith, continues with faith, and ends with faith. As we grow as believers, it is easy to go from faith to works. That’s not how it goes. It is all God, period.

Application

- Lean into the faith that saved me
- Trust that the Lord loves me because of who He is, not because of what I do or
- don’t do

Prayer:

- Grow in understanding of Your grace
- Reveal the parts of my life that I have made performance-based

Day 14

“Biblical Comfort”

Scripture:

2 Corinthians 1:3

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”

Observation:

Comfort: a state of physical ease and freedom from pain or constraint. That’s the Google definition of comfort. It’s the kind of comfort that many find themselves in pursuit of. Much has been accumulated to result in comfort that crumbles at the first sign of trouble in the pursuit of such comfort. Because it’s a comfort that seeks to eliminate any DIScomfort.

In this letter to the church in Corinth, Paul calls the believers to a different kind of comfort. He is calling them to biblical comfort. In this one verse, he uses the word COMFORT four times. But rather than painting a picture of comfort as we might know it, he paints the picture of comfort that coexists with suffering. It’s a comfort that points to reliance on God. It’s a comfort that sustains and extends that same comfort to others.

Application:

And so, let us not get lost in the pursuit of worldly comfort. Rather, let us rejoice in discovering the God of all comfort. His comfort will find us even when circumstance makes our worldly comfort hard-pressed.

Prayer:

- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal where you’ve been pursuing worldly comfort
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you discover the comfort that God brings
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you can be a comfort to others

Day 15

“Restful Confidence”

Scripture:

Psalm 131

“Oh Lord, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.”

Observation:

This Psalm is a picture of contentment in the Lord. The metaphor of a weaned child who at one point ravenously clung to the mother to fill a need now resting content in her warm embrace. The same place the baby only knew only for its sustenance is now the place of a greater connection with the mother.

Application:

Let us move past the point of viewing God simply as one who can meet our needs. Let us put aside our need for God to give an account or explain his ways to us...because these things are “too great and too marvelous.” But let us come to a place where we can rest content in the confidence of his presence. To know him at a deeper level. Not only for what he does for us, but who he is in connection to us.

Prayer:

- Surrender your agenda and your list of needs to the Lord
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you rest in the presence of the Lord

Day 16

“Set Your Past on Fire!”

Scripture:

Luke 9:57-62

As they were walking along, someone said to Jesus, “I will follow you wherever you go.” But Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head.” He said to another person, “Come, follow me.” The man agreed, but he said, “Lord, first let me return home and bury my father.” But Jesus told him, “Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead! Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God.” Another said, “Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say goodbye to my family.” But Jesus told him, “Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.”

Observation:

In July of 1987, Pam and I “set fire” to everything we had known: family, friends, a great paying job with an equally great retirement and medical plan. “Set fire? Really? You set fire to your family and history and finances and...and...?” Yep, that’s what we did! Well, we didn’t literally set fire to those things, but we “walked away from them” to do something we’d never done in a place we’d never been! It felt like we were “setting fire” to all the relationships and securities that we had built together over 12 years of our lives.

You see, the journey into your best future always passes through the furnace of sacrifice! The fire found there both “*forges*” us to who we must become and “*frees*” to live the life for which God created us! And none of it is easy, but what it produces in us as we follow the Lord’s leading will be undetected at the moment but revealed in the years to come!

Destination gets very little traction with “good intentions” and “poor excuses,” which we see in this text from these three men. One thing after another held them back from moving forward! What’s keeping you back from moving forward in your faith?

Application:

Avoid reclaiming the past and focus on creating the future! Make the Hard decision to do and go where God leads you.

Prayer:

- Ask the Lord to lead you today and then obey His leading
- Ask the Lord for grace to leave the past and embrace the future

*Additional Reading:

Genesis 12:1-5; Matthew 10:37-39

Day 17

“Show Me”

Scripture:

Psalm 139:23-24

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

Observation:

These two words have become the nickname of a neighboring state to ours. Do you know which one? Yep, Missouri; the Show-Me State! Have you ever wondered how it got that nickname? Google says that Willard Vandiver, a U.S. Representative, coined the phrase as he was contesting something said during a heated debate. He said, “Sir, I come from a state that raises corn, cotton and cockleburs! Your frothy speech does not convince or satisfy me. I’m from Missouri. You have to ‘show me!’” That caught the liking of Missourians and has stuck since!

David was asking the Lord a similar question: “Search me, O God... (or, “show me” O God...)” and know my heart. Test me and know my anxious thoughts...”

Anxious thoughts, decisions, and mindsets. Sound familiar? It’s just code for the day in which we live, right? It doesn’t have to be! In fact, David’s request of the Lord wasn’t what was wrong with him, but what was right with him! Have you had times where you could be that honest with the Lord? Have you ever asked Him to do a “search” of your heart, mind, and spirit? If not, isn’t it about time?

Well, let’s just see! What keeps you up at night? Is it hard to shut your mind down? When was the last time you had a good night’s rest? Answers to these three questions may lead you to ask as David did, “Lord, search me and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts...”

Application:

Here’s what I’ve learned about me: *What I fear most is where I trust God the least.* In the Old Testament, trust and rest were synonymous. If you were resting, you were trusting God. If you were trusting God, you were resting. God is bigger than the stuff! Not just some of it, but ALL of it! I learned to pray this little prayer to get me out of the “muck” I was in: *“Jesus, you are my strength! I will trust in you.”*

That little prayer allowed my mind to calm down, and I began to rest better! I’ve had to go back to that simple but powerful prayer numerous times since! But crying out to God isn’t what’s wrong with you; it’s what’s right with you! Cry out to Him! Declare His peace over your heart and mind!

Prayer:

- Pull God into the middle of your anxiety by praying the simple prayer I’ve been praying
- Memorize Psalm 34:4

Additional Reading:

Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:7

Day 18

“Be a Light”

Scripture:

Matthew 5:16

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Observation:

Do I give God glory when I see good working in others? It is easy to be cynical and assume selfishness and self-promotion in others’ “good works.” Rather, why not assume it is God at work in them?

Application:

- Assume the best in others
- How can I give glory to God today through my life
- Don’t forget: more of God, less of me

Prayer:

- Help me be a light to the world
- See others the way you see them

Day 19

“Ownership”

Scripture:

Ezra 10:4

Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it.”

Observation:

This scripture responds to the guilt they felt because of sin from marrying non-Israelite women. It seems like they were at a point where it was time to take responsibility for their actions and take bold moves of change.

Application:

- Don't let sin go un-dealt with. Boldly turn from it. God is still good and is all about forgiving, but when He gives the insight to change, do as He asks!
- Grace gives hope, not a free pass for continued sin.

Prayer:

- Repentance
- Revelation of grace

Day 20

“Self-Seeking”

Scripture:

Romans 2:8

But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

Observation:

Self-seeking, rejecting the truth, and following evil are all tied together. God doesn't have time for sin and hypocrisy. Self-seeking is a tough one. Maybe it's even hard to recognize

Application:

Do I have any of this in me? What does it mean to not be self-seeking in my marriage? In my finances? At my Job? In ministry? In relationship?

Prayer:

- Give me a heart for others
- Pick a region in the world and carry a burden for those people in prayer

Day 21

“Let Me Abide”

Scripture:

Psalm 91:1-2

Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him.

Observation:

This Psalm offers security for Christ-followers; those who live in constant awareness of God's presence. “Most High” is describing God to be greater than any threat we face.

Application:

Psalm 91 is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible. It is one that my wife prays over our family consistently. My goal in life to abide - to live in his presence - in the good times and in the bad. His presence is what will see us through. In this coming year, I encourage you to read and pray scripture over your life. Psalm 91 is a great one to start praying over your life today and every day.

Prayer:

- Pray for God's protection over your family
- Pray for God's protection over your community.
- Pray for a greater desire to abide in God's presence by spending time in the Word and Prayer this year