

Gratitude

21 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING

2024

Blessed and Grateful

ALL NATIONS COMMUNITY CHURCH



WYTHENSHAW COMMUNITY CHURCH

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Welcome to 2024

Happy New Year! I send you my warmest wishes for a joyful and blessed New Year. May 2024 be a year where you grow closer to God than ever before, deepening your understanding and living out His teachings in every aspect of your life.

Let us make this year a time of significant spiritual growth, where we not only seek God in the sanctuaries of our church but also in our everyday lives.

As your pastor, I am here to support each of you, sharing in your happiness, helping through tough times, and always guiding us towards Jesus Christ's love and grace.

As we step into this new year, we do so with grateful hearts and hopeful eyes fixed on the blessings God will bring. Let's celebrate this year by being thankful and reflecting on ***Psalm 107:1 (NLT)*** ¹ *Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.* This verse inspires us to appreciate God's constant love and goodness in every part of our lives.

I once read a story of a blind boy who sat on the steps of a building with a hat by his feet. He held up a sign which read, "***I am blind, please help.***" There were only a few coins in the hat, spare change from folks as they hurried past.

A man was walking by. He took a few coins from his pocket and dropped them into the hat. He then took the sign, turned it around, and wrote some words.

Then he put the sign back in the boy's hand so that everyone who walked by would see the new words. Soon, the hat began to fill up. A lot more people were giving money to the blind boy.

That afternoon, the man who had changed the sign returned to see how things were.

The boy recognised his footsteps and asked, "Were you the one who changed my sign this morning? What did you write?"

The man said, "I only wrote the truth. I said what you said but in a different way." I wrote, "***Today is a beautiful day, but I cannot see it.***"

Both signs spoke the truth. But the first sign simply said the boy was blind, while the second sign expressed to everyone walking by how grateful they should be for their sight.

When your life seems full of troubles, it seems difficult to maintain an attitude of gratitude, doesn't it? All we see are our problems.

And the times when everything just seems to be going smoothly? We often take these precious moments for granted too, don't we? It's easy to forget to be grateful when we are comfortable in our routine.

So, what is gratitude? Gratitude is a habit, a way to see the world and be thankful, no matter the situation.

Gratitude is about finding peace with yourself and being thankful for what you have. It brings even more blessings into your life.

Here's to a year of love, joy, peace, and endless blessings from God. I can't wait to see the amazing things God has planned for us.

With love and blessings,

Pastor Ras

21 Days of Prayer & Fasting

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 (AMP) ¹⁸ In every situation [no matter what the circumstances] **BE THANKFUL** and **CONTINUALLY GIVE THANKS** to God; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

Welcome to our 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting Devotional for 2024. Our theme this year is all about "**Gratitude**".

First, let's understand why we are dedicating the first 21 days of 2024 to God through prayer and fasting. Doing this is like giving the first and best part of our new year to God. It's a way of showing Him that He is the most important part of our lives. By starting our year like this, we are putting God at the forefront, trusting Him to lead us through the rest of the year.

Gratitude – being thankful – is our focus. Gratitude isn't just a feeling; it's a way of life that God encourages us to adopt. Gratitude isn't just saying 'thank you.' It's about seeing and appreciating the good in our lives and recognising that all these good things are blessings from God. When we concentrate on what we are thankful for, our outlook becomes more positive, and we feel more satisfied and joyful. It's about looking at the bright side of things rather than the negative.

During these 21 days of fasting, we are not just abstaining from food or certain activities; we are also creating more space in our lives for God. Fasting helps us shift our focus from our own desires to what God wants for us. It's a time to be still, to increase our prayers, and to really listen to God's voice.

Prayer is our direct conversation with God. It's where we share our daily experiences, hopes, dreams, and even our worries with Him. When we pray, especially combined with fasting, it strengthens our connection with God, almost like plugging into a divine source of strength and guidance.

This year, as we focus on gratitude during our fasting and prayer, we aim to be more aware of all the blessings around us. The big blessings and even the small ones. This helps us remember that, even in difficult times, there is always something to be thankful for. Focusing on gratitude also helps us to see God's hand at work in our lives more clearly.

As we begin our 21-day journey, let's open our hearts to the transformative power of gratitude. By learning to view the world through a lens of thankfulness, we can recognise God's hand in every aspect of our lives. This isn't just a path of learning, but a way to become more like Christ: generous, loving, and profoundly grateful. It all starts with building a strong foundation for whatever lies ahead.

Welcome aboard this incredible journey! Together, let's discover the joy and peace that comes from having a grateful heart toward God. May these 21 days deepen your relationship with God, fill your heart with gratitude, and give you a hopeful outlook for the year to come.

How to Use This Devotional

Before we start our prayer and fasting, it is very important to ask God's direction for what you will fast for during these 21 Days. What you fast for should be significant enough to remind you several times daily to seek God's increased power in your life and ministry.

Set aside time daily to slowly read through the devotional. (Each devotional should take about five to ten minutes to read the passages and devotional thoughts.)

WHAT IS PRAYER?

The most basic definition of prayer is “**talking to God.**” Prayer is not meditation or passive reflection; it is a direct address to God. It is the communication of the human soul with the Lord who created the soul.

Paul wrote in ***Philippians 4:6–7 (NLT)*** ⁶ *Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done.* ⁷ *Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*

Don't worry about anything. Yes, God wants us to talk with Him about everything. How often should we pray? The biblical answer is found in ***1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NLT)*** ¹⁷ *Never stop praying.* This does not mean eyes closed and hands together.

Prayer can be audible or silent, private, or public, formal, or informal. You can pray any time of day, whilst doing chores, working, resting, during family time or alone time. We should keep a running conversation going with God all day long. Eyes open or closed, out loud or in our hearts, we can be creating a continual dialogue with God.

Your prayer life is not measured in minutes. Prayer is a lifestyle. Prayer is a constant two-way communication with God. There is no special formula for how to pray.

We should just do it. We can pray under all circumstances. Prayer develops our relationship with God and demonstrates our trust and utter dependence upon Him.

WHY FAST?

The goal of fasting is to draw nearer to God. Biblical fasting always has to do with eliminating distractions for a spiritual purpose; it hits the reset button of our soul and renews us from the inside out. Fasting allows us to create space in our minds and hearts for more of God's presence.

Fasting is one of the oldest and most prevalent spiritual practices in the Bible. Great leaders in the Bible fasted routinely, including Moses, David, Jeremiah, Isaiah, John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples.

Jesus expects that we will fast regularly. In **Matthew 6:16**, Jesus addresses fasting specifically when he tells the disciples, *“When you fast...”* Notice Jesus says “when” not “if.” Jesus assumes that we will fast.

Though fasting is assumed, it is not required. We don’t have to fast. We choose to fast. Like all intentional spiritual practices, fasting should not be legalistic – we are not earning approval from God through fasting.

TYPES OF FASTS:

Biblical fasting almost always concerns food. Since the purpose of fasting is to focus on God, to humble ourselves and to remind ourselves that we are sustained by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, then the task in fasting is connecting our “going without” to “hungering for God.”

This takes time, focus and prayer. Please do not expect to be an “expert” at fasting right away. Fasting is a discipline that can take a very long time to understand well. Also, do not let this fact deter you or intimidate you. There are several different ways you can practice fasting. Here are some examples:

Complete Fast: In this type of fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option. Start slowly. Begin with fasting for only a part of a day (lunch, or lunch and dinner). Do this for one day a week, or perhaps three days a week. You determine the timing and duration. Take a step of faith. Fasting is risky and involves our faith.

Selective Fast: This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits and vegetables for food.

Partial Fast: This fast is sometimes called the “Jewish Fast” and involves abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This

can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6:00 am to 3:00 pm, or from sun-up to sundown.

Non-Food Fast: This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

Please note: If you have any health issues, are pregnant or breastfeeding, or are worried about fasting from food, you should talk to your doctor or consider a non-food fast.

Sunday Message Note

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Lined writing area for notes.

Day 1: Embracing The Gift of Life

Monday, 1st of January 2024



Psalm 139:13-14 (NLT) ¹³ You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ **THANK YOU** for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvellous—how well I know it.

Welcome to the first day of our 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting! Today, on our first day of prayer and fasting, we want to boldly declare our gratitude to God for the gift of life. Our verse reminds us that God has carefully and thoughtfully created each of us, including our bodies, minds, spirits, and personalities. This means that we are all unique and deserving of love and respect. This truth teaches us that we are all valuable works of divine art deserving respect and love.

When we compare ourselves to others and feel the pressure to conform, it can be easy to forget that we are each unique individuals with different talents, dreams, and paths in life. The Bible reminds us that God has made us "wonderfully complex," our diversity reflects God's love for variety. Celebrating our differences and recognising them as part of God's intentional design is important. By doing so, we can appreciate God's creativity and love for everyone.

Gratitude comes from recognising how God has blessed us. He intentionally created us with worth and purpose. This understanding can help us see life's challenges and successes in a new light, knowing that we are lovingly crafted by God.

Life itself is a gift from God. Every breath we take is a reminder of His love and care. In moments of doubt or struggle, remembering that our existence is a testament to God's goodness can uplift and strengthen us.

Our design is not random but purposeful. As we engage in prayer and fasting, let us seek to understand the specific purpose God has for each of us. In the stillness and sacrifice of fasting, we often hear God's voice more clearly, guiding us towards our divine calling.

Let's celebrate the fact that we are all unique creations of God. By recognising our talents and embracing our identities, we can live a life that

honours our Creator. Our journey to discover our true selves is an important part of this process. Over the next 21 days, let's take the time to reflect on how we can align our lives more closely with God's plan. Remember, we should be confident in our worth and proud of who we are.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with hearts full of thanks. As we begin our 21 days of prayer and fasting, we take a moment to acknowledge the incredible gift of life You have given us. You have created us with such care and complexity, not only our bodies but also our minds and spirits, making us truly unique and precious in Your sight.

Lord, we give You thanks for the breath in our lungs, the beating of our hearts, and the complex beauty of our thoughts and dreams. You know us intimately, and yet You love us unconditionally. For this love, this incredible, unfailing love, we are forever grateful.

As we dedicate these next 21 days to seek Your face, may our hearts overflow with gratitude. We thank You for the opportunity to come together as a church, support one another, and grow in faith and understanding. Bless our time of prayer and fasting, that it may bring us closer to Your heart and Your will for our lives. In Jesus' Name, we pray with gratitude, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

During these 21 days of prayer and fasting, I pray that you will feel closer to God and understand how special you are.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT) ¹¹ *For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.*

Psalms 150:6 (NLT) ⁶ *Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord!*

May these verses guide you and provide a source of strength, comfort, and thankfulness as you draw closer to God in this time of devotion.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 2: Embracing The Gift of Grace

Tuesday, 2nd of January 2024

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT) ⁸ God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

On the second day of prayer and fasting, let's take a moment to reflect on God's grace. Grace is God's unmerited favour towards us. It's a gift, freely given, not because of anything we have done but because of who He is. Imagine a present wrapped in love and extended to you without strings attached. This is grace. We neither earn it nor deserve it, yet it is ours if we choose to accept it.

Our part in this divine exchange is belief. To believe is to trust and rely on God, acknowledging that our salvation comes not from our efforts but from His sacrifice.

Salvation, as described in these verses, is a gift, not a wage. It's not something we work towards; it's something we receive. This distinction is crucial. We often strive to earn approval or prove our worth, but salvation is freely given in God's kingdom.

Since salvation is a gift and not a result of our deeds, we have no grounds for boasting. This is humbling and liberating. It removes the pressure to be perfect and the fear of not being good enough. Our worth isn't based on our achievements but on Christ's achievement on the cross.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, today I want to express my gratitude for Your grace. Often, I overlook Your grace, for which I ask forgiveness. Help me to recognise Your grace more clearly in my life. Lord, please remove the blinkers from my spiritual eyes so I can fully appreciate all the blessings You have generously provided.

It is only through Your grace that I'm spared from eternal punishment and assured of spending eternity with You in heaven. Thank you for saving me from my sins and from Satan's grip. Your death gave me a chance to live a whole and abundant life. I'm grateful for Your sacrifice.

Thank you for each new day of life. In the morning, help me to think of You first. At night, as I go to sleep, remind me of all You have given me that day. Help me see Your gifts and say, "Thank You" in return.

Thank You for Your incredible grace. Without it, I would be lost. But with Your grace, I have so much to be thankful for today and every day. I love You, Lord. In Jesus' precious name, I pray, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

Remember, church, our journey with God isn't about being perfect. It's about His perfect love and the grace He gives us. This should make us feel comforted, especially when we feel like we are not good enough.

God's grace isn't just there to save us; it's there to help us every day. It's in our doubts and in our happy moments. It's a reminder that we are never alone and that we are loved more than we can ever understand.

As we keep praying and fasting, let us try to be more aware of the grace God shows us. It can give us strength, make us thankful, and remind us of just how much God loves each of us.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

James 1:17 (NLT) ¹⁷ *Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.*

John 10:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ *The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.*

2 Peter 1:2 (NLT) ² *May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.*

Let these Bible verses inspire us to fully accept and cherish the Gift of Grace in our lives.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 3: Embracing The Gift of New Beginnings

Wednesday, 3rd of January 2024

Lamentations 3:22-23 (NLT) ²² The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. ²³ Great is his faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning.

Welcome to day three of our 21 days of prayer and fasting. Today, we will focus on the gift of new beginnings. Each day is a precious gift from God, filled with fresh opportunities and His grace.

In our Christian walk, sometimes we lose our connection with God, whether through our own sins or simply by being distracted by everyday life. This can cause negative feelings like anxiety and darkness. It's important to spend quality time with God to avoid these feelings. We can learn from Jesus Christ, who often wanted privacy to connect with His Father. We should make similar efforts to prioritise our relationship with God, even if it means reducing our online activities or watching less TV.

You see, our God is always kind and forgiving. Today is a new beginning, no matter what happened yesterday. We can always count on God's mercy, even if we make mistakes. Every morning is a chance to start fresh.

God's faithfulness is a recurring theme in the Bible. His consistency, dependability, and steadfastness in His promises offer great comfort. It assures us we can trust Him to be true to His word and actions. God's unwavering faithfulness is a source of hope and stability in a world of uncertainty.

Today, I encourage you to adjust your daily routine to make time for God. By dedicating time to Him, we can displace negative emotions with His love, joy, and peace. Remember, prioritising God is an investment in ourselves.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, on this day of new beginnings, I come before You with a heart full of gratitude for Your unceasing mercies and faithfulness. Forgive me, Lord, for the times I have allowed the distractions of life to create a

distance between us. I acknowledge those moments when I turned my back on You, either deliberately through sin or gradually through neglect.

Today, I ask for Your divine empowerment to make a change. Holy Spirit, stir within me a deep desire to offer the best part of my day to the Lord. Please help me to understand the importance of this sacred time and to make it a non-negotiable priority in my life.

Lord Jesus, as You took time with the Father, grant me the willingness to make similar sacrifices. Whether it means waking up earlier, setting aside leisure activities, or reducing my time on digital devices, let my heart be drawn to You above all else.

I thank You, Lord, for this opportunity to start anew, rekindle my relationship with You, and place it above every other priority. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

Today, as we welcome a new beginning, let's remember the powerful change God's presence brings to our lives. By prioritising Him, we welcome a world filled with His divine love, peace, and joy beyond our comprehension. Let this day mark the start of a renewed dedication to closely follow God, letting His light lead us in every part of our journey.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Matthew 28:20 (NLT) ²⁰ *Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

Psalms 143:8 (NLT) ⁸ *Let me hear of your unfailing love each morning, for I am trusting you. Show me where to walk, for I give myself to you.*

Isaiah 43:19 (NLT) ¹⁹ *For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.*

May these Bible verses inspire us to embrace new beginnings with confidence and hope.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 4: Embracing The Gift of Unconditional Love

Thursday, 4th of January 2024

Romans 8:38-39 (NLT) ³⁸ And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Today, on the fourth day of our prayer and fasting, we want to focus on God's unconditional gift of love. In a world where love often comes with conditions and, at times, with expectations, the concept of unconditional love can seem strange. Yet, as believers, we are embraced by a love that goes beyond all human understanding: the unconditional love of God. Today, let us open our hearts to God's unwavering love for each of us.

At times, our earthly experiences colour our perception of love. We encounter love that is dependent on our actions, love that fades with time, and love that fails in the face of trials. Such experiences can lead us to doubt the nature of God's love, questioning this amazing truth. However, God's love is completely different to human love. It is unwavering, eternal, and unconditional.

To really understand how big God's love is, we need to remember that it's bigger than anything humans can fully understand. It doesn't change or depend on whether we do well or make mistakes. God's love comes from who He is, not because we earn it. The Bible, in **1 John 4:8**, says, "**God is love.**" This isn't just a saying; it's true in a real way because of Jesus Christ. Jesus showed us how much God loves us by living, dying, and coming back to life for us. His actions prove that God's love is huge. He took on all our sins and beat death so we could have life forever.

As we think about God's love, let it change us deeply. May it give us the power to love others with the same kindness and forgiveness we have

been given. Let God's love be the foundation of our belief, shaping how we see the world and our connections with others.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I'm grateful for Your unwavering love. Despite often doubting this fact from the Bible, nothing can take me away from Your love. I struggle to fully grasp Your boundless love, as it's unlike anything else in my life. People may disappoint or fail me, but You, Jesus, offer perfect and unconditional love unlike anyone else. I sometimes mistakenly view You through the lens of my earthly relationships.

Yet, Your love stands apart. In Your love, I can place complete trust, knowing You are always there for me, loving me without conditions. Help me understand how much You love me. I need to let that powerful truth sink into my very being. Thank You, Lord, for Your love towards me. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we conclude, let us remember that God's love is an ongoing process. The more we read His Word and spend time with Him, the more we learn how deep His love is and how much it changes us. On this journey, we should remember that learning about God's love never stops. Each day, we get new chances to feel and think about how great His love is. We should keep our hearts open and ready for these wonderful things from God, and let His love lead us in everything we do.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Psalm 136:26 (NLT) ²⁶ *Give thanks to the God of heaven. His faithful love endures forever.*

Zephaniah 3:17 (NLT) ¹⁷ *For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty saviour. He will take delight in you with gladness. With His love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.*

John 15:13 (NLT) ¹³ *There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

Let these Bible verses guide us in recognising the unconditional love of God in our lives.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 5: Embracing The Gift of The Holy Spirit

Friday, 5th of January 2024

John 14:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Today, on the fifth day of our prayer and fasting, we focus on the incredible gift of the Holy Spirit, a crucial part of our faith and daily connection with God. In **John 14:26**, Jesus tells us about the arrival of a Helper, the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in Jesus' name. This promise is not just a comforting thought; it's a powerful truth that changes how we live, think, and interact with the world around us.

When Jesus ascended, He did not leave us alone. He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us, to live in us. It's a fantastic mystery. God's own Spirit is living inside people. It's an incredible gift, but we often don't realise its importance. The Holy Spirit is our guide, leading us in truth and wisdom. He is our Helper, giving us strength when we are weak. He gives us the courage to do hard things and bravely face challenging situations. This special strength isn't only for big, unusual events but also our daily ups and downs. We are never alone. In moments of loneliness, depression, or confusion, the Holy Spirit is our constant companion, offering comfort and peace.

Yet, in our human weakness, we often grieve the Holy Spirit. We do this when we rely on our own strength instead of seeking the guidance and power that comes from God. In times of pride, self-sufficiency, or disobedience, we push away this divine gift. However, God's mercy is boundless. He invites us to repent, to turn back to Him, and to embrace again the fullness of the Spirit in our lives.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I am grateful for the beautiful gift of the Holy Spirit. Forgive me for the times I have neglected Your Spirit. Please help me to always remember and be open to Your Spirit's direction and strength. I'm so thankful to know that I am not alone. Jesus, You are by my side, God is

always with me, and the Holy Spirit strengthens me. Thank You, Lord, for looking after me in so many ways.

I'm sorry for the times I have let down the Holy Spirit by depending on my abilities. Please forgive me. I am so grateful that I am not alone in facing life's challenges. Show me how to rely not on my own knowledge but to trust in the wisdom and strength You provide. Let me live each day filled with Your Spirit, feeling Your love, guidance, and strength in every part of my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

Please take a moment to read the following scriptures. Let's build a closer relationship with the Holy Spirit by feeling His presence, relying on His strength when we are weak, and following His wise counsel in our daily lives. We should welcome His presence and allow Him to transform us from the inside out, guiding our actions to reflect God's love and purpose. Our partnership with the Holy Spirit involves accepting God's grace, love, and power. In return, we commit to following the Spirit's guidance. We show our commitment by being obedient, having faith, and staying open-hearted. We allow the Spirit to shape and guide us towards the right path.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Romans 8:26 (NLT) ²⁶ *And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.*

Acts 1:8 (NLT) ⁸ *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

Galatians 5:25 (NLT) ²⁵ *Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.*

Acts 2:38 (NLT) ³⁸ *Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit".*

Let these Bible verses strengthen our understanding of the gift of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 6: Embracing The Gift of Peace

Saturday, 6th of January 2024

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT) ⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank Him for all He has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

It's very comforting to know that a special kind of peace that surpasses all understanding is available in all life's challenges. A peace that only God can provide. On the sixth day of prayer and fasting, let's look at how this deep peace can change our lives.

The world around us is a constant source of stress and anxiety. From the daily routine to the unexpected challenges, it's easy to become overwhelmed. Yet, in the middle of this storm, the Bible reassures us that God's peace is readily available. It's a peace that calms our minds and secures our hearts in Christ Jesus.

This special peace is not just about not having conflicts or problems; it's a deep feeling of happiness and satisfaction because we know God is in control. It's the kind of peace Jesus talked about when He said in **John 14:27 (NLT)** ²⁷ *"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid."* This is the peace that we are all encouraged to accept and enjoy.

As we think about this, I want you to picture a child jumping into their dad's arms. They trust their dad completely, sure of his strength and love. In the same way, God asks us to jump into His arms, fully trusting Him and leaving behind our fears and worries. When we give our concerns to Him, it's not a sign of weakness but rather a way of recognising His great power and love.

Imagine you are in a stressful situation, holding a live grenade. Would you keep holding it, letting it harm you? Or would you throw it away to stay safe? Just like this, if we hold onto our stress and worry, it can really hurt

us. But if we give our worries to God, we are saved from their harmful effects.

So, how do we let go of our worries? By prayer! When we give our worries to God by praying, we are not just getting rid of our stress but also letting God give us His peace. This peace guards our hearts and minds, protecting us from the attack of negative thoughts and feelings that can overwhelm us.

A Prayer of Gratitude:

Heavenly Father, I want to express my gratitude for the peace You provide, which surpasses all understanding. In a world filled with stress, anxiety, and disorder, Your peace is a precious gift in my life.

I often find myself surrendering to anxiety, and for this, I ask Your forgiveness. I ask for Your strength to transform me, renewing my mind with Your peace and unwavering trust in You. Just like a child who fearlessly climbs into their father's arms, help me to trust You completely and rely on Your strong support.

Guide me to cast my stress and worries on You. Right now, I imagine myself handing over my troubles to You. I pray that You replace them with Your peace through the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we finish today's devotional, let's remember that God's peace is always with us. In a world full of trouble and worries, this peace is like a strong anchor, keeping us steady and safe.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

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

***Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)** ³ You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!*

Let these Bible verses be the foundation that keeps our souls firmly in God's unwavering peace.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 7: Embracing The Gift of Guidance and Direction

Sunday, 7th of January 2024

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NLT) ⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. ⁶ Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take.

On the seventh day of our 21-day prayer and fasting, we are reflecting on the gift of guidance and direction that God provides, for us. Trusting in the Lord is fundamental to our faith. During our faith journey, we may encounter times of uncertainty, where we don't know what to do next, and our understanding may not be enough. In such moments, we realise how much we need God's guidance and direction. Today's Bible verse emphasises the importance of relying on God's plan instead of our own.

To trust God with all our hearts, we must surrender every aspect of our lives to Him, including our decisions and fears. Instead of relying on our thoughts, we should give Him all our concerns and plans. As we fast, let us identify areas where we haven't entirely trusted God. Are there aspects we are trying to manage alone? This is the time to let go of our plans and have faith in God's superior plan for us.

We often rely on our limited understanding, but God sees the whole picture. During our prayers and fasting, we should ask God to reveal where we have been self-reliant. Let's be receptive to new perspectives and ideas from God.

Seeking God in everything means acknowledging His control over all aspects of our lives and asking for His direction in every decision. Trusting in God and seeking His guidance assures us that He will lead us correctly. This doesn't guarantee an easy life, but it means God will be with us in every circumstance.

The Bible is described as "a lamp for our feet and a light for our path," it offers timeless wisdom, showing us God's character and His plans for us. Reading the Bible is more than just going through the text; it's about

allowing these words to deeply influence our hearts and transform our thoughts and actions.

We should focus on making Him central in every decision we make, believing that His plans for us are much greater than anything we could imagine. To follow this divine guidance, we need patience, faith, and an open heart, ready to accept and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I'm grateful for the guidance and direction You provide daily through the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, I drift from Your path and follow my own ideas without seeking Your advice. I'm sorry for making choices without You. Help me change and place You at the heart of everything I do.

You have promised to always be with me, not to leave or abandon me. You are by my side every moment, each day. I'm so thankful that You showed me the right way to go. Your Word lights my way. It's like a lamp for my feet and a light on my path.

Help me discern Your voice among the noise of the world and follow Your lead with faith and courage. I am grateful for Your presence in my life and Your promise to never leave me. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we conclude this reflection on the theme of divine guidance and direction, it's important to deeply understand God's promises that we find in the Bible. These verses are not just words; they are the very breath of God, spoken to guide, comfort, and teach us in our daily walk with Him.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Isaiah 30:21 (NLT) ²¹ *Your own ears will hear Him. Right behind you a voice will say, "This is the way you should go," whether to the right or to the left.*

James 1:5 (NLT) ⁵ *If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.*

Psalms 32:8 (NLT) ⁸ *The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."*

As we meditate on these Scriptures, let these Bible verses help us embrace God's guidance and direction in our lives.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Sunday Message Note

A large rectangular area enclosed in a black border, containing 25 horizontal grey lines for writing notes.

Day 8: Embracing The Gift of God's Divine Nature

Monday, 8th of January 2024

Psalm 19:1 (NLT) ¹ The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display His craftsmanship.

As we continue with our 21 days of prayer and fasting, we must stop and be thankful for the amazing world God made for us. The world is a beautiful gift to us. We see God's greatness when we look at the sky, the mountains, and the lakes. Today's scripture invites us to embrace God's divine nature through the wonders of the world He has made.

Nature is more than just something pretty to look at. It shows us who God is. When we see the stars, we think of how great God is. We see God's power when we see a storm or a big waterfall. The peaceful ocean and the warm sun show us God's peace.

When I travelled to Zambia and visited Victoria Falls, I was reminded of God's incredible power. The sight of the massive waterfall, with its thunderous roar and misty spray, was amazing. It was a powerful demonstration of God's strength and majesty, a reminder that He controls even the mightiest forces on earth. We often forget to enjoy nature. I want to encourage you to spend some time in nature. Put away your phones and enjoy God's beautiful gift. Let nature remind you of God's love and promises.

Nature also teaches us about God's creativity and care. Every bird, flower, and tree is made by God. They show us how creative God is. Just like nature, our own bodies show God's amazing creativity. Think about our DNA and fingerprints. Every person's DNA and fingerprints are different. This is a miracle of God's design. It shows how special and unique each of us is to God. He made us all different on purpose.

When we see how God takes care of nature, we know He will take care of us, too. Jesus said, in **Matthew 6:26 (NLT)** ²⁶ *Look at the birds. They don't plant, harvest, or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are?* This tells us that God will always provide for us.

Let's use this time to thank God for His beautiful world. Let's ask Him to help us see Him in nature and to take care of His creation.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, I come before You with a heart filled with gratitude. As I walk through Your natural wonders, please remind me of Your greatness and love. Help me see Your hand in every flower, sunset, river, mountain, and rainbow.

Thank You for allowing me to enjoy it every day, no matter where I am. Whether I am strolling on a beach, trekking through a forest, or walking on a pavement, I see Your handiwork everywhere. I also appreciate the aromas of nature: the fresh scent after rain, the sweetness of blooming flowers, and the smell of pine trees. May I always cherish Your creation and be thankful for the beauty that surrounds me every day. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we move forward in our 21 days of prayer and fasting, let's remember what nature teaches us about God; every part of nature shows God's greatness.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Romans 1:20 (NLT) ²⁰ *For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.*

Job 12:7-10 (NLT) ⁷ *“Just ask the animals, and they will teach you. Ask the birds of the sky, and they will tell you. ⁸ Speak to the earth, and it will instruct you. Let the fish in the sea speak to you. ⁹ For they all know that my disaster has come from the hand of the Lord. ¹⁰ For the life of every living thing is in His hand, and the breath of every human being.*

May these words deepen our appreciation for the divine artistry of nature and strengthen our connection with our Creator.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 9: Embracing The Gift of Hope

Tuesday, 9th of January 2024

Isaiah 40:31 (NLT) ³¹ But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

Today, on the ninth day of our prayer and fasting, we look at the wonderful gift of hope. In life, we often encounter periods that test our faith and determination. These difficult moments can feel like dark, endless tunnels without any light. Yet, as believers, we are blessed with an unfailing source of strength and hope: our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today's scripture reminds us that those who place their hope in the Lord will find renewed strength. This promise shines like a light in our darkest moments, telling us we are not alone in our hard times. In Christianity, hope isn't just wishful thinking; it's a strong belief in God's faithfulness and His promises.

When we go through tough times, it can sometimes feel like we are trapped in a dark room. The enemy tries to deceive us into believing there is no way out. But the truth is, we are not trapped; we are simply passing through a tunnel. And in this tunnel, we are not alone. God walks with us, holding our hands and guiding us through the darkness. His presence lights our way and gives us hope, even if we can't see the end yet.

Our hope in God not only assures us of a glorious future in heaven but also brings us strength and joy in our daily lives on earth. Remember, our journey with God isn't just about waiting for what's to come; it's about experiencing His love and grace daily.

Let's find comfort in knowing God is with us in our everyday challenges. His guidance and support are constant, helping us overcome any obstacle. He provides peace in storms and joy in sorrow, making our lives on earth meaningful and fulfilling.

We should remember that God's blessings are not just for the future; they are available now. This hope strengthens us for the journey we are on

today, not just for the promise of heaven. Let's live with confidence, knowing that we are never alone. We are part of a beautiful plan under God's care.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for the beautiful gift of hope. As I come to You today, my heart is filled with gratitude. Even in my most challenging moments, I know You are right there with me. Even in darkness, I trust that with You, it's just a journey through a tunnel, not a permanent trap. Thank you for guiding me with Your light of hope. Even when I can't see the end of my struggles, I trust that You are leading me towards something better.

I am filled with joy at the thought of heaven, a place without pain or sadness. Thank You for this promise. Lord, please give me strength and hope each day. With You, I can face anything. I love You dearly. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

In facing life's challenges, it's crucial to hold onto the solid hope we find in Jesus Christ. Reflect on additional scriptures to deepen your understanding of this hope.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Romans 15:13 (NLT) ¹³ *I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Hebrews 6:19 (NLT) ¹⁹ *This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls. It leads us through the curtain into God's inner sanctuary.*

Hebrews 10:23 (NLT) ²³ *Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.*

Jeremiah 17:7 (NLT) ⁷ *“But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence.*

As we reflect on these scriptures, let us be encouraged and strengthened in our faith. Our hope in Christ is not just for the future; it is a powerful force that sustains, motivates, and comforts us in our present journey.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 10: Embracing The Gift of Strength

Wednesday 10th of January 2024

2 Corinthians 12:10 (NLT) ⁹ Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰ That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

As we go through our tenth day of prayer and fasting, we are reflecting on a very important truth: when we are weak, that's when we are strong because of God. This message is especially relevant during our time of fasting, a period where our physical bodies might feel weak, yet our spirit is being renewed and strengthened.

We usually think being weak is bad. However, the apostle Paul invites us to reconsider our perspective. In acknowledging our weaknesses, we open ourselves to the power of God. It is in our moments of vulnerability that we feel the need for divine strength. When we are weak, we are more likely to lean on God, to seek His guidance and support. This is where our true strength lies.

The apostle Paul speaks of taking pleasure in weaknesses, hardships, and difficulties for Christ's sake. This might sound strange, but there is a deep truth here. When we face trials with faith, we allow God's power to manifest in our lives. Our struggles become opportunities for God to show His might and for us to grow in faith.

In our journey of faith, we are never alone. God's presence is a constant assurance in our lives. As we fast and pray, let us be mindful of this divine friendship. God is with us in every step, strengthening us, guiding us, and uplifting us.

Prayer is our direct line to God. It is through prayer that we express our weaknesses, our needs, and our dependence on God. In these moments of sincere prayer, we are transformed. Our spirit aligns with God's will, and we are filled with supernatural strength.

Today, as we face various challenges and demands, let's consciously choose to lean on the Lord. As we do that, we find that His strength is not just for the unexpected moments of life but for the everyday journey as well.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, thank You for being my strength. In moments where I feel overwhelmed and exhausted, remind me of Your ever-present help. I lay down my efforts and lean into Your strength. Help me to trust in You, to wait on You, and to experience Your restoring power in every area of my life.

Sometimes, I feel just like my phone when it runs out of battery. I need to be recharged. And I know that spending time with You, talking to You, and listening to You recharges me. It's amazing that even a simple prayer like "Jesus, help" reaches Your ears and You are ready to help me. I know that without You, I can't do anything.

Thank You, Lord, for giving me the strength I need for today. Whatever comes my way, I know You are with me, helping me. I love You so much. Thank You for always being there for me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we finish today's devotion, let's remember this important truth: God's strength is there in our weakness. Let's go on, knowing that in every weak moment, God's strength is helping us. Our biggest strength is not what we can do, but how much we depend on God's power.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Philippians 4:13 (NLT) ¹³ *For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.*

Psalms 73:26 (NLT) ²⁶ *My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; He is mine forever.*

Isaiah 40:31 (NLT) ³¹ *But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.*

May these words inspire and guide us as we continue to seek His strength in our daily lives.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 11: Embracing The Gift of Protection

Thursday 11th of January 2024

Psalm 91:1-2 (NLT) ¹ Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. ² This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; He is my God, and I trust Him.

On the eleventh day of prayer and fasting, we are reminded that seeking God is more than just a routine; it is a powerful act of surrendering ourselves to His protection. By "*living in the shelter of the Most High*," we can establish an intimate relationship with God, connecting our lives with His divine presence. This sacred shelter is not a physical place but a spiritual reality we can access through faith and devotion. Even though our world is full of challenges and spiritual warfare, we can find an unshakable promise in the Scriptures, the assurance of God's protection.

When we study Psalm 91, we are reminded that those who live in God's presence experience a distinct sense of peace and protection. This is not a guarantee of a life without challenges but rather an assurance that God is our shelter even during life's difficulties. Our faith in Him serves as a shield, safeguarding us physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Have you ever experienced fear or uncertainty in your life? There may have been times when you felt like you were in a spiritual battle. But did you also feel an unexplainable sense of peace when you turned to God in prayer? This peace is a sign of God's protective presence. When you claim His promise and declare, "No weapon formed against me shall prosper," you are not just making a statement. You are taking a powerful act of faith that activates His protection.

It's important to remember that the protection offered by the Lord isn't just physical but also mental, emotional, and spiritual.

As you press on with your days of prayer and fasting, be assured of God's unwavering protection. Remember how He has shielded you in the past and have confidence in His ongoing care. Keep in mind that our safety does not depend on the absence of danger, but on the presence of God.

Let us then seek God with all our hearts and find refuge in His loving and confident embrace.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I come before You with a heart full of gratitude and reverence. In Your mighty presence, I find not only my refuge and strength but also an unending source of comfort and peace. Every step of my life's journey is guided by Your loving hand, and for this, I am greatly thankful.

Thank You for the countless blessings You shower upon me, both seen and unseen. In moments of joy and in times of hardship, Your unwavering protection and guidance are my constant companions. When I face challenges, the knowledge that You are my shield and protector, fill me with courage and hope.

Cover me with the blood of Jesus and let Your peace reign in my heart. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

Always remember that God's protection is like a strong, unbreakable shield that surrounds us. It keeps us safe from harm and helps us stand strong against anything that tries to hurt us. Just like a soldier uses a shield in battle, our faith in God protects us from the troubles and worries of life. When we trust in Him, we can be confident that He is always watching over us, keeping us safe, and giving us strength.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Isaiah 54:17 (NLT)¹⁷ *But in that coming day no weapon turned against you will succeed. You will silence every voice raised up to accuse you. These benefits are enjoyed by the servants of the Lord; their vindication will come from me. I, the Lord, have spoken!*

2 Thessalonians 3:3 (NLT)³ *But the Lord is faithful; He will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.*

Ephesians 6:16 (NLT)¹⁶ *In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil.*

May these scriptures strengthen your faith and remind you of your constant protection in Christ.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 12: Embracing The Gift of Healing

Friday, 12th of January 2024

Psalm 147:3 (NLT) ³ He heals the broken-hearted and bandages their wounds.

As we start the twelfth day of our prayer and fasting journey, let's concentrate on the powerful message found in Psalm 147:3. This verse gives us a comforting guarantee that God not only knows about our sufferings but also plays an active role in our healing journey. The representation of God as a healer who binds wounds highlights His gentle care and concern for our innermost pains, whether they are physical or emotional.

As believers, we are blessed to experience healing in various forms: spiritually, emotionally, and physically. On a spiritual level, God repairs the damage caused by sin and brings us closer to Him through the sacrifice of Christ. When we feel emotionally hurt, like having a broken heart, He carefully helps us feel happy and peaceful again. And in our bodies, we see how He can heal sicknesses and weaknesses, showing us how kind and powerful He is.

But healing doesn't always happen immediately, or in ways we can see. It's like a big picture being made one small part at a time, with each piece being part of a bigger plan that only God really understands. What we should do is trust and be patient, knowing that even if God's ways seem mysterious, they are always filled with love and a good reason.

In the New Testament, we can witness Jesus performing miraculous acts such as restoring sight to the blind, enabling those who couldn't walk to walk, and curing lepers. These weren't just displays of His power but symbols of His kingdom, where everyone is offered complete healing and renewal.

We need to understand that healing doesn't always happen in the way we expect it to. Sometimes, it is a slow process and requires faith and patience. Healing can take on different forms, such as finding peace in difficult times, gaining the strength to persevere, or unexpected outcomes.

In all these situations, we should trust God's plan and believe He is working all things for our good.

But the most important healing Jesus gives us isn't just fixing our bodies. It's saving our souls. In Jesus, we find the cure for our spiritual problems. Things like sin, guilt, and separation from God. This is the most important healing and the base for all other healings.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I am so grateful for all the ways You help and heal me. Thank You for being the source of my strength and restoration. I really appreciate how You refresh my spirit, calm my feelings, and bring peace to my heart. Thank You for fixing what's broken in my body and making me healthy again.

Lord, please help me to always trust Your timing and the way You do things. I know You are the best at healing, carefully fixing my life bit by bit with Your love and wisdom. As I go through this journey of healing, let me always be thankful to You. I hope my life shows how faithful and powerful You are in healing. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we continue in our journey, let us hold onto the promises of God's healing power.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Isaiah 53:5 (NLT) ⁵ *But He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.*

Jeremiah 17:14 (NLT) ¹⁴ *O Lord, if You heal me, I will be truly healed; if You save me, I will be truly saved. My praises are for You alone!*

James 5:16 (NLT) ¹⁶ *Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.*

As you meditate on these scriptures, may you find comfort in knowing that God is actively involved in your healing journey, working in ways beyond our understanding, always for our ultimate good.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 13: Embracing The Gift of The Body of Christ

Saturday, 13th of January 2024

1 Corinthians 12:12 (NLT) ¹² The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.

On this thirteenth day of our prayer and fasting journey, we reflect on the importance of unity within the Body of Christ. Just like the human body has many parts, each with its own function, but all working together to maintain the body's health, we as church members are all different but work together towards the same goal of showing God's love and bringing Him glory.

During this time of fasting and prayer, we may often focus on our personal breakthroughs and blessings, but it's essential to remember the interconnection of our community. Our strength should be a source of strength for others, and we should be ready to support those who need it. When we are unified, we experience the true power of the Church, a power that goes beyond the sum of its parts.

Every one of us is blessed with a distinct, God-given purpose. Some are called to teach, some to preach, some to prophesy, and some to serve in other capacities. As you engage in fasting, it is important to seek God's guidance to understand your calling within the Church. It is important to remember that every role holds significant value, no matter how small. Every contribution, from the least to the most prominent, is crucial for the overall well-being and effectiveness of the Church.

Different people have different backgrounds, talents, and perspectives. This is what we call diversity. We should celebrate diversity, not see it as a weakness. Diversity is our greatest strength because it helps us reach more people and understand their needs. During your time of prayer and fasting, pray to have an open heart that appreciates and learns from the diversity within our Church.

The enemy often tries to create division within the Church. However, it is essential to realise that our battle is not against physical beings but against spiritual forces. For this reason, we should refuse to allow any division to

take hold, regardless of whether it is caused by doctrinal disagreements, personal conflicts, or cultural differences. In our prayers, we should ask for a spirit of unity and reconciliation. Let's pray for wisdom to handle disputes in a way that strengthens the body.

Let's be instruments of encouragement, radiating God's grace and compassion wherever we go.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, we are so grateful to You for bringing us together as part of Your wonderful family, the Church. Thank You for giving each of us a unique job to do in Your amazing plan. You know us all by name and have a purpose for each of us. As we pray and fast, help us to care for and think of our Church family. Please forgive us for the times when we haven't been united. Teach us to be patient, kind, and understanding with each other. Let Your love work through us so we can help and encourage each other in following You. Make Your Church strong and joyful through us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

You are important to the Body of Christ. Everything you do, such as praying, fasting, and helping others, contributes to the growth and strength of the entire church. Let us all play our part, embrace our differences, work through disagreements, help each other out, and prepare to take action. Together, we are stronger. And together, we can fulfil the excellent task that Jesus Christ has given us.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Ephesians 4:2-3 (NLT) ² *Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.* ³ *Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.*

Romans 12:5 (NLT) ⁵ *so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.*

May these words inspire and guide us as we seek to live out our faith in unity and love.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 14: Embracing The Gift of God's Unchanging Faithfulness

Sunday, 14th of January 2024

Lamentations 3:22-23 (NLT) ²² The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. ²³ Great is His faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning.

Today, on the thirteenth day of our prayer and fasting, we reflect on a fundamental belief that gives us hope and stability in a world of constant change: the faithfulness of God. Even in times of deep sadness, the writer of Lamentations found hope in God's never-ending and renewing faithfulness, which we celebrate today. This faithfulness is not just an idea but a reality that affects our everyday life. No matter what situation we may find ourselves in, whether it is good or bad, happy, or sad, God's faithfulness remains constant and never changes.

It's essential to remember that God's faithfulness to us does not depend on our performance or how well we do. It's an inherent part of His character. As the Bible says in **2 Timothy 2:13 (NLT)** ¹³ *If we are unfaithful, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny who He is.* This gives us great comfort and a reason to be thankful.

In times of confusion and uncertainty, when we don't understand God's plan, it's crucial to trust in His faithfulness. This trust means acknowledging that even though we may not fully comprehend what's happening, we believe God is doing something good for us. It doesn't mean we won't have questions or worries, but we see them in the light of God's bigger and trustworthy character.

Remembering God's faithfulness also means acknowledging His forgiveness. As the Bible says in **1 John 1:9 (NLT)** ⁹ *But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.* This promise is a fundamental part of our faith and gives us the opportunity for a fresh start every time we turn to Him.

As we reflect on God's faithfulness, let's also remember that it calls us to be faithful in return. Let's demonstrate God's unchanging nature through our words, actions, and choices in a world that values things that don't last.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, as I come before You today, my heart is filled with deep reverence for Your incredible faithfulness. No matter what's happening in the world, You are always there for me. Please guide me to trust in Your faithfulness, especially when I can't see what's happening.

I'm so grateful for You being with me always, loving me, and giving me hope and strength. Please help me to show Your faithfulness through my words and actions so that others can see Your love in me. Please help me to honour You and love others with the same kind of reliability and care that You show me. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we wrap up our reflection for today, remember that God is always faithful, even when everything else seems uncertain. We should strive to exhibit the same faithfulness and become sources of hope for those around us. We must trust in God, who is always present for us, providing strength and care.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Hebrews 13:8 (NLT) ⁸ *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

Psalms 36:5 (NLT) ⁵ *Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds.*

Psalms 33:4 (NLT) ⁴ *For the word of the Lord holds true, and we can trust everything He does.*

2 Thessalonians 3:3 (NLT) ³ *But the Lord is faithful; He will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.*

Let these Bible verses always remind us how steady and unchanging our Lord is and inspire us to keep being faithful as we follow Him.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 15: Embracing The Gift and The Power of His Word

Monday, 15th of January 2024

Psalm 119:105 (NLT) ¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.

Today, on the fifteenth day of our prayer and fasting, we take a moment to reflect on a truly remarkable gift: the Bible, God's Word. This ancient book goes beyond time and culture and serves as our spiritual compass, guiding us through life's difficulties.

We might not always see how amazing the Bible is in our busy lives. This book, penned by human hands but inspired by the Holy Spirit, offers us direct communication with our Creator. It's a living, breathing testament to God's love and guidance. The Bible is like a light in the dark, comforting us and giving us wisdom for tough times.

Think of the Bible as a map. It shows us where to go, just like a map helps travellers. When we're unsure or have to make choices, the Bible allows us to see clearly. It's a reminder that we are never alone in our journey; God's voice is always there, ready to lead us.

It is truly incredible that the Bible has stood the test of time. Despite being persecuted, criticised, and attacked numerous times throughout history, it has always survived like a strong lighthouse. This is a testament to the fact that the Bible is truly from God. It is not just a book but a legacy of faith that unites all who believe.

In a constantly changing world, the Bible remains a steady and reliable source of guidance. **Isaiah 40:8 (NLT)** states, "*The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.*" This means that the truths found in the Bible will always be relevant, even for future generations.

Reading the Bible can help us understand God better and find meaning in our lives. The stories and lessons in it show us who God is, His love, and His plan for us. We can learn how we fit into God's account and discover

our identity through His words. During our prayer and fasting, let's commit to reading the Bible every day. Let's not just keep it on the shelf but use it as a guide to transform our thoughts and feelings. Doing so allows us to become more like Christ and improve our lives.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I come before You with a heart full of gratitude for the incredible gift of Your Holy Scripture. As I read it, please help it guide me like a light, showing me the right way to live. Let each verse speak to me, each chapter guide me, and each book within the Bible inspire a deeper understanding of Your will.

May Your Word continually renew my spirit, giving me a renewed sense of purpose and a stronger desire to serve in Your kingdom. Let it be a tool through which I grow in faith, deepen my relationship with You, and become more like Jesus in character and deed. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

Let's remember that exploring God's Word is an endless journey that opens doors to deeper understanding and closer communion with our Lord.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT) ¹⁶ *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realise what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.* ¹⁷ *God uses it to prepare and equip His people to do every good work.*

Hebrews 4:12 (NLT) ¹² *For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.*

Joshua 1:8 (NLT) ⁸ *Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.*

Let these verses inspire us to explore the Bible more deeply and experience its life-changing power.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 16: Embracing The Gift of Faith

Tuesday, 16th of January 2024

Hebrews 12:2 (NLT) ² We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now He is seated in the place of honour beside God's throne.

On the sixteenth day of our prayer and fasting, let's concentrate on the fundamental aspect of our Christian journey: faith. Our verse for today reminds us that Jesus is not only the founder of our faith but also its perfecter. This significant truth highlights the theme of the day, "Faith," and takes us to the core of what it means to believe genuinely.

Faith is completely trusting or having confidence in someone or something. For us, that someone is our Lord Jesus Christ. But faith isn't just saying we believe once; it's a journey where we keep trusting, growing, and sometimes facing challenges.

Many of us can identify with the father's prayer in **Mark 9:24**, where he cried out to Jesus, "*I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!*" This sincere confession reveals a common struggle that we all face: our faith can waver when we encounter challenges in life. Doubts can creep in, and our confidence can be shaken by circumstances. However, it is exactly these moments that can help us grow in our faith and become stronger.

The Bible verse in **Hebrews 11:6** that says, "*without faith, it is impossible to please God*" might seem daunting. However, it reminds us how much God values our trust in Him. Faith doesn't mean we have no doubts; it means we choose to believe even when doubts arise. It's about holding onto God's promises, even when circumstances contradict them.

As we continue praying and fasting, let's make a real effort to grow our faith. It shouldn't just be something we have; it should be something we are actively working on. **Romans 10:17 (NLT)** ¹⁷ *So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ.* Read your Bible, pray, and attend our morning and evening prayers to do this. We should also

commit to attending church every Sunday. When attending church becomes optional for you, it then becomes unnecessary for your children,

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, with hearts full of gratitude, we come before You today to give thanks for the incredible gift of faith. This faith, a divine treasure You have graciously given us, is the cornerstone of our relationship with You. Through faith, we can see Your hand at work in our lives, even in moments when Your presence seems hidden.

We thank You, Lord, for planting this seed of belief in our hearts. It is a source of strength and comfort, guiding us through the varied seasons of life. In times of joy and suffering, our faith in You remains a firm anchor, reminding us of Your unfailing love and mercy.

As we continue to walk in faith, please help us to always be mindful of this precious gift. May we never take it for granted but nurture it with prayer, reflection, and action. May our faith be a living, active testament to Your goodness and grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we conclude, it's important to remember that God is always with us. He helps turn our challenges into opportunities for growth. Let us take heart in His strength and grace and find our true purpose.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NLT) ⁷ *For we live by believing and not by seeing.*

James 1:3 (NLT) ³ *For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.*

1 Peter 1:7 (NLT) ⁷ *These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honour on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.*

May these scriptures guide and strengthen you as you continue to walk in faith.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 17: Embracing The Gift of Joy

Wednesday, 17th of January 2024

Nehemiah 8:10 (NIV) ¹⁰ Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Life can be complicated, and sometimes, we forget about the simple but powerful gift of joy, especially the joy that comes from God. Today, on the seventeenth day of our prayer and fasting, it's important to think about and be grateful for this joy, which is different from temporary happiness. Happiness changes depending on what's happening in our lives, but joy is deeper and more stable, coming from our relationship with God.

We are reminded of the pure and simple nature of joy when we see a child laughing. Children find happiness in small things, free from adult worries. Their laughter, free and natural, is something we often lose as we grow older. As adults, we can rediscover this childlike joy, even in difficult times, and we should be thankful for this opportunity.

Life's journey includes highs and lows, and it's okay not to always feel joyful. The Bible, in Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, tells us there is a time for everything: a time to laugh and a time to cry. Acknowledging this doesn't lessen the importance of joy; it makes joy a real and approachable part of our human experience.

The joy we seek and are grateful for isn't about denying life's struggles. It's a joy that exists alongside our challenges, giving us strength. This joy is rooted in God's presence, love, and faithfulness. The Bible teaches us that there is fullness of joy in God's presence, a gift we should cherish with gratitude. This joy is beyond our understanding and results from the Holy Spirit.

During our fast, as we give up certain comforts and draw closer to God, we open our hearts to be filled with His joy. Fasting is more than just a physical discipline; it's a spiritual journey that strengthens our bond with God.

In seeking joy, we aren't escaping reality but choosing to view our circumstances through the lens of faith. We acknowledge the hardships and recognise and are thankful for God's sovereignty and goodness. Our joy, not based on the absence of problems but on God's presence in them, becomes our strength and anchor in life's storms.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I come before You with a heart overflowing with gratitude. Lord, Your presence in my life is a constant source of joy and strength; I am deeply thankful for this.

Thank You for the gift of life, for each breath that speaks of Your endless grace. Your Word lights my path, and Your love fills my heart.

Lord, Teach me to find joy in the simple things and embrace a child-like faith that delights in Your creation and presence. Help me to remember that joy is not the absence of sorrow but the presence of Your Spirit within me. In times of difficulty, remind me that Your joy is my strength, sustaining me through every season of life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

Let us always hold onto the joy that God gives us, for it is a gift that brightens our lives and shows us His love, guiding us through each day.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Psalm 16:11 (NLT) ¹¹ *You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of Your presence and the pleasures of living with You forever.*

James 1:2-3 (NLT) ² *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.* ³ *For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.*

Romans 15:13 (NLT) ¹³ *I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

As we continue our journey of faith, let us hold tightly to the joy that God offers us. This joy serves as both our strength and our beacon of hope.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 18: Embracing Our Spiritual Gifts

Thursday, 18th of January 2024

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (NLT) ⁴ There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. ⁶ God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.

On the eighteenth day of our 21 days of prayer and fasting, let us take a moment to reflect and express our gratitude to God for the unique gifts that we have been blessed with. The Bible teaches us that God has given different gifts to each individual, and every gift is valuable. Some may have the gift of teaching and preaching, while others may have the gift of helping others or a strong faith. Regardless of the gift, each one is a divine blessing.

It's like our body, every part, big or small, has a job to do. Our gifts are like that. They might seem small or not as exciting as others, but they all help the church. If you have a gift, it's special and important. God gave it to you for a good reason.

Sometimes, we might feel that our gift isn't as good as someone else's. But every gift is needed. Maybe you're good at making people feel welcome or a good listener. These things are just as important. We all work together, like parts of a body, to help each other and to show God's love.

To use our gifts well, we need to know what they are. We can find out by praying, reading the Bible, and being with other Christians. Ask God to show you your gift and how to use it to help others.

We should also be thankful for other people's gifts. Maybe someone has helped you learn about God or been kind when you needed it. Let's thank God for these people and their gifts.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the wonderful gifts You have given each of us. Please help me to understand my special gifts and use them in the best possible way to serve others and honour You. I pray for Your guidance in

discovering my talents, whether they are visible, like teaching, or hidden, like offering a kind word at the right time. Please give me the courage to use these gifts, even when I feel shy or unsure.

I ask for Your wisdom to use my gifts not for my own glory but for the good of Your church and to show Your love in the world. Please guide me in my daily life to be an example of Your grace and mercy. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we continue to explore and use our gifts, remember that each one is a precious part of God's plan for us and the church. Our gifts are not just for ourselves; they are given to us so we can help and encourage others and, through this, show God's love.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Romans 12:6-8 (NLT) ⁶ In His grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So, if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Ephesians 4:11-13 (NLT) ¹¹ Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

1 Peter 4:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

During this time of prayer and reflection, let us dedicate ourselves to using our individual talents for the betterment of the Church and to glorify God. Let us always remember that every gift, no matter how insignificant it may seem, plays a crucial role in God's perfect plan.

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 19: Embracing The Fruit of The Spirit

Friday, 19th of January 2024

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT) ²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Today, on our nineteenth day of prayer and fasting, we will reflect on the Fruit of the Spirit, described in the book of Galatians by Apostle Paul. The Fruit of the Spirit refers to a set of unique qualities that God has given us, which serve as a guide to help us live a life that pleases Him. Unlike regular fruit that goes bad over time, these spiritual fruits never spoil and become stronger as our faith grows.

Love is essential, and it is a selfless kind of love that Jesus showed us. During your prayer time, ask God to fill you with this love so that you can share it with others. This love is full of care and sacrifice and is the most important fruit.

Joy with God is more than just being happy for a little while. When we feel joy with God, it's more than temporary happiness. It's a deep sense of happiness. This joy stays with us no matter what's happening around us. Look for this joy when you spent quiet time with God.

Peace from God helps us stay calm even when things are hard. This peace is so special that it's hard to understand, but it makes us thankful because we know God is looking after us. Ask for this peace in your prayers.

Patience is important but not always easy. Remember, when you are waiting for something from God, He is using this time to teach you to trust His plan.

Kindness and Goodness show God's care for us. Try to be kind and good in what you say and do every day, not just in big ways but in small ways.

Faithfulness means being loyal and keeping your promises, just like God always keeps His promises to us. Use this time to think about being faithful in all things, big and small.

Gentleness is being firm but also careful and understanding with others. Ask God to help you treat people gently.

Self-control is about managing what we want and what we do. It's important in how we live as Christians. Pray for God's help to have more self-control, especially while you fast.

Let's try to live with these fruits every day. They are not just things to think about but ways to live and share God's love with everyone.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to You today with a heart full of gratitude, reflecting on the Fruit of the Spirit You have nurtured in my life. I thank You for Your love, a guiding force that teaches me to love others unconditionally. Even in tough times, You bring me great happiness that never fades.

In every step, Your Spirit guides me, and for this, my heart sings with gratitude. I pray that my life will continue to be a reflection of these fruits, a testament to Your work in me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we near the end of our 21 days of prayer and fasting, let's commit to embracing and nurturing the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives. These qualities are not just for our personal growth but are also tools for ministry, to show the love and character of Christ to the world.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Galatians 5:22-26 (NLT) ²² *But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* ²³ *gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!* ²⁴ *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to His cross and crucified them there.* ²⁵ *Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.* ²⁶ *Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.*

Remember, the growth of this fruit is a lifelong journey. It takes time, patience, and dependence on God.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 20: Embracing The Gift of Freedom

Saturday, 20th of January 2024

Galatians 5:1 (NLT) ¹ So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law.

Today, on the twentieth day of our prayer and fasting, we are reflecting on the life-changing gift of the freedom we have in Christ. Our verse for today reminds us of the purpose of Christ's sacrifice, which is to set us free. This freedom is not just a theological concept but a lived reality that can transform every aspect of our lives.

Jesus took our sins on the cross, freeing us from them. Thanks to God's grace, the sins that used to control us are gone. As followers of Christ, we are no longer prisoners to sin; instead, we have been given the incredible gift of freedom in Christ.

But sometimes, it's hard to accept and live in this freedom. We often remember our past mistakes and feel bad about them. To really live in the freedom Jesus gives us, we must choose to focus on this new life and not get stuck in our old ways.

One important way to keep our freedom is by reading and understanding God's Word. The Bible is not just a book; it's God's truth. When we fill our minds with His words, we can fight against the lies that try to trap us. Jesus said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Knowing God's truth helps us stay strong against sin and temptation.

Also, being free means apologising to God for our sins daily. Every day is an opportunity to come before God, lay down our sins, and embrace His forgiveness. Confession is not a sign of weakness but rather an act of strength and humility. It keeps our hearts soft and lets us hear God better. As we say sorry, we remember how much God loves us and how forgiving He is. This helps us change and become better.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Dear Heavenly Father, I am grateful for the gift of freedom that comes through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Your love and mercy have liberated me

from the chains of sin and set me on a path of true freedom. Thank You for bearing the weight of my sins on the cross and removing the burden of my past mistakes and failures.

I am thankful for the daily renewal of my spirit through Your Word and presence. Your guidance and wisdom lead me in righteousness, and Your forgiveness washes away my guilt and shame.

Lord, I am grateful for Your strength and courage, enabling me to stand firm in my freedom. Help me to remember that this freedom is for my benefit and to serve and uplift others. Thank You for the community of believers with whom I can share this journey.

Thank You for the freedom You have given me today. May my life be a continuous song of gratitude, echoing Your goodness and mercy. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we finish our devotional, let's remember the freedom that we have in Christ. This freedom is a journey that involves growth, transformation and empowerment through God's love and grace.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

Romans 8:1-2 (NLT) ¹ *So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. ² And because you belong to Him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you[b] from the power of sin that leads to death.*

2 Corinthians 3:17 (NLT) ¹⁷ *For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

John 8:36 (NLT) ³⁶ *So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.*

Psalms 118:5 (NLT) ⁵ *In my distress I prayed to the Lord, and the Lord answered me and set me free.*

Galatians 5:13 (NLT) ¹³ *For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.*

Always remember that true freedom is found in Christ, and it has the power to transform lives.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

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Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 21: Embracing The Gift of Salvation

Sunday, 21st of January 2024

Romans 5:8 (NLT) ⁸ But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

As we reach the final day of our 21 days of prayer and fasting, we want to express our gratitude for the incredible gift of salvation. Today's scripture reminds us of the nature of God's love. It is a love that doesn't wait for us to become perfect or to rectify our ways. Instead, it is a love that reaches out to us in our most broken state. This verse captures the heart of the Gospel: Christ's sacrificial death was not for the righteous but for sinners.

Salvation comes from God rather than being a reward for good deeds. It's a gift born out of His deep compassion and mercy. This means that we cannot earn our way into God's favour. Understanding this can bring both humility and immense gratitude. Recognising our unworthiness and God's boundless grace can be humbling and uplifting.

The transformation journey from grace to glory starts with recognising our sinful nature and embracing Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. This acceptance is the foundation of our faith, which initiates a new chapter in our lives. Through Christ, we are not merely forgiven; we are reborn. Our past selves, corrupted by sin, are replaced with new beings that reflect the beauty and holiness of God.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE:

Heavenly Father, I come to You with a heart full of gratitude for the gift of salvation through Your Son, Jesus Christ. I am humbled by Your grace, which has given me forgiveness and eternal life. Your love has transformed my life, giving me peace, hope, and joy.

I ask for the courage and opportunity to share this love with others who need to hear it. Please use me as an instrument of Your grace to reach those who don't know You.

Thank You for making me a new creation in Christ and for the journey ahead with You. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

As we end our 21 days of prayer and fasting, it's important to remember the deep confidence and hope we gain from our understanding of God's love and the gift of salvation. This is not the end of our journey; it's a continuous process of learning, reflecting, and living our faith. To further enhance this journey, let's meditate on a selection of scriptures highlighting different aspects of our salvation and new life in Christ.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES FOR REFLECTION:

1 John 4:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ *This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT) ¹⁷ *This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!*

John 3:16 (NLT) ¹⁶ *“For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.*

Romans 8:1 (NLT) ¹ *So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ *For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.*

Philippians 1:6 (NLT) ⁶ *And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*

As we come to the end of our 21 days of prayer and fasting, let us remember that salvation is more than just making a decision. It is a journey of becoming more like Christ. Let us use the verses we have meditated on during this time to stay focused on God's truth.

And as we conclude this season of seeking God, let us not forget the importance of gratitude. Let us be thankful for all that God has done in our lives and for the blessings that are yet to come. May we continue to grow in our faith and deepen our relationship with Him in the days ahead.

Today, I Am Grateful For:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Write out the verse

What stands out for you?

What lessons can I take from today's devotional?

How can I apply this to my life?

Day 22: And Beyond

As we conclude our 21 days of prayer and fasting, it is essential to ask, “Now what?”

Very simply, decide to love God and seek Him. That’s right, decide. Look for opportunities to spend time with Him and to learn from Him. Daily. Decide to chase after Him and not the things of this life that quickly distract us from Him.

Daily, give Him your whole heart. Daily read His Word. Look for Him daily in each day, through people, circumstances, and creation.

It will take intention, effort, desire, and time. But it will be so worth it as your relationship with Him grows and develops, and you fall more and more in love with Him.

***Hebrews 11:6 (NLT)** ⁶And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek him.*

Will you continue to earnestly seek after the God of this universe who loves you completely and desires to walk with you daily?

LIFE GROUPS:

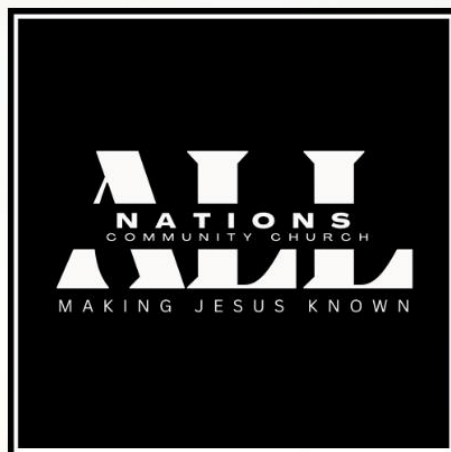
One way to do this is to be part of a Life Group. Life Groups have one simple purpose: to bring people together. We believe God created us to live in relationships with others, and only then can we live the full life He intends for us. Sharing life through community is part of our design.

You were not designed to do this Christian life alone. Being part of a Life Group will help you go deeper into God and your journey alongside others.

NEXT STEP:

Please check our [website](#) for more details under the ‘Next Step’ section.

www.wythenshawcommunitychurch.org



THIS IS MY BOOKLET 