

Daily God Walk  
Life of Christ

**His Ministry**

**Volume One**

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All Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version (NIV). All other translations used will be credited using these abbreviations:

(KJV) – King James Version

(NKJV) – New King James Version

(TLB) – The Living Bible

(TM) – The Message

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## Tips On Leading A Small Group

You may have noticed that for several years now we have been publishing the Daily God Walk with two pages for each devotion.

The reason for that is two-fold. First it is to help make this devotional a tool for developing a stronger faith life. And second, it is to provide a tool to be used in a small group Bible study setting.

Here are some tips on how to use the sections of the Daily God Walk as a resource for small groups:

**Message:** This is the message pulled out of the devotion for the day. Ask the group to express how they can see this principle in the devotion then use that to kick off the discussion.

**Affirmation:** The affirmation is an example of how we can begin to internalize the principle of the devotion. We can repeat the affirmation in a prayer making it personal. We can also just repeat it throughout the day while giving thought to the principle.

**Reflection:** These statements and questions are designed to help guide discussion and make application of the devotion in the daily life of the participant.

**My Thoughts:** This section is just blank lines. Encourage your group to "Journal" their thoughts on the devotion each day.

My experience is that we usually only make it through one or two of the daily devotions at one group setting, but it is good to encourage the group to work through the message, affirmation, reflection and my thoughts section for each daily devotion at home.

For more information on using the Daily God Walk Study Guide Edition for small groups, go online at: [www.dailygodwalk.org/small-groups](http://www.dailygodwalk.org/small-groups)

## One Day

### Jesus Had Authority To Preach

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit... On the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom and he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news." - Luke 4:14-19

In the years before Christ there had been many come along claiming to be the Messiah so just another preacher making that claim would not create a lot of interest. If Jesus was to be heard his credentials had to be validated. This was a period of validation for him.

It was this visit to the Synagogue in his home town of Nazareth which caught the attention of the religious leaders. He had already received some acclaim in the towns where he had been teaching, but this was the time when he would reveal the source of his authority and the purpose of his ministry.

Jesus read the prophecy concerning his ministry given by Isaiah about 700 years before that time. The message was clear, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to preach good news." His authority to preach was given him by God himself. The message Jesus came to deliver was "good news."

His good news, or the gospel as we know it today, gave hope to the poor, the hurting and the disenfranchised. His message inspired the people to have hope for a better life. No doubt people were reminded of the promise given in Jeremiah 29:11, "I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans

to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

It is interesting that others who claimed to be the Messiah tried to lead the people into insurrection against Rome with the plan to establish an independent Jewish state, but Jesus came preaching a different kind of kingdom. His kingdom was to be in the hearts of men and it would give them hope for a future. The kingdom he preached was a kingdom of the heart that no one could destroy.

**Prayer:** Father, I give thanks to you for Christ and the message you gave him that has given hope to mankind. Amen.

**Message:** Jesus came preaching a different kind of kingdom. His kingdom was to be in the hearts of men and it would give them hope for a future. The kingdom he preached was a kingdom of the heart that no one could destroy.

**Affirmation:** The kingdom message Jesus preached is good news for this life and for the life to come. The kingdom of God in our hearts opens heaven and all of its resources for us.

**Reflection:** Do you think the religious leaders had a right to be suspicious of this "Johnny come lately" carpenter's son who joined the crowd of those who claimed to be the Messiah? Think on some of the reasons they rejected Jesus.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Two

### *Jesus Had Authority Over Disease*

Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go. It will be done just as you believed it would.” And his servant was healed at that very hour. - Matthew 8:13

This story of Jesus healing the servant of a centurion without even seeing the servant is very interesting. It is a story of faith on the part of the Roman soldier, but it is also making the point that Jesus has power over sickness and disease.

Because of his experience in the military this centurion, who would be the equivalent of a captain in our military today, had learned the principle of authority. In verses 8-9 he says, “Just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

Jesus declared that this man had great faith, and he did, but in truth he had learned the greatest principle of faith. He had learned that when a person is functioning within the arena of his responsibilities and abilities conferred upon him by a higher authority he has the same authority to perform as those who authorized him.

The soldier recognized that Jesus was under the Father’s authority and was commissioned by the Father to establish the kingdom of God. Jesus had the right to function in the authority the Father had given to him. Jesus had been given authority over disease and all he had to do was use the authority he had been given.

There is a structure of authority in God’s kingdom just as there is in the kingdom of men. When men live under that authority and fulfill the responsibilities of

the position they have been given in the kingdom, all of the power and authority of the kingdom is given to them.

Jesus, who has authority over disease, has given authority to believers to heal as he healed. Mark 16:17 reads, "These signs will accompany those who believe. In my name... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

***Prayer:*** Lord, give me courage to function within the authority you have given me as a believer. In Jesus name, amen.

***Message:*** When a person is functioning within the arena of his responsibilities and abilities conferred upon him by a higher authority he has the same authority to perform as those who authorized him.

***Affirmation:*** I can do the works that Christ did because he has authorized me, as a believer, to do them.

***Reflection:*** Jesus had authority over disease and he has given that authority to those who would believe. In John 14:12 he says, "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these." Think about the authority God has placed in you to do the works of the kingdom.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Three

### *Jesus Had Authority Over Nature*

Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!” - Matthew 8:26-27

Do you know the difference between Moses parting the sea, Jesus walking on the sea and Jesus calming the seas? Moses did not part the sea, he simply submitted to God’s authority. God had told him to stretch out his rod and hold it over the sea, he did and the waters parted. Moses obeyed God and God parted the water. Jesus did walk on the sea and he did calm the sea.

How did Jesus do that? There is really only one way; he had the authority to command the elements to obey him. In John 1 it is written, “Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.” Creation dripped from his fingers and worlds were born at his command as he stood on the balcony of heaven declaring it to be.

How did Jesus have the authority to command the elements to obey him? He had created them. At some point in eternity, as the hand of God outstretched, the divine person which existed in the man Jesus simply spoke the worlds into existence. In eternity before time he was the Word, the expression of the Almighty God.

The Word was not separate from God, neither was the Word another God; The Word itself was and is God. Jesus, the one John calls the Word made flesh, came to earth with the authority to access all the resources of heaven. When Jesus spoke the very Word of God proceeded from him for he himself was that Word.

“What kind of man was this?” is the question his disciples asked. He was a man who was God; he was a



man born of woman by divine will; he was man, yet so much more than men. He chose to submit his deity to become a man, a man sent from God to redeem men.

He submitted his form as God to become in form a man; yet he was the manifest Word of God. When he spoke God was speaking.

**Prayer:** Father God, I thank you for the Word, your Word who came to man as a man so that we could know you as redeemer. Amen.

**Message:** The Word was not separate from God, neither was the Word another God; The Word itself was and is God. Jesus, the one John calls the Word made flesh, came to earth with the authority to access all the resources of heaven. When Jesus spoke the very Word of God proceeded from him for he himself was that Word.

**Affirmation:** The creator of all that is became man and dwelt in his creation. He was God manifest in flesh, the very incarnate Word of God. I can trust him for He is the Word of God made manifest.

**Reflection:** We cannot fully comprehend the Word - the Logos - becoming flesh but we accept that as fact. He was the very expression of God on earth and his words were the very words of God. Something to think about.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Four

### *Jesus Had Authority Over Demons*

Two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. “What do you want with us, Son of God?” they shouted. “Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?” - Matthew 8:28-29

This passage clearly defines the authority that Jesus had over the world of demons. The first thing we notice is that Jesus was just walking by and the demons that were in the men recognized who he was; they called him “Son of God.” The next thing we notice is that they recognized his authority to do them harm; “Have you come here to torture us?”

Then the demons began to beg. “If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.” Jesus responded with just one word; “Go!” “So they came out and went into the pigs.” Even the demons were subject to him.

It appears to me that the importance of this passage is that when we recognize who Jesus is he then is able to do his work in us. The result of the demonized men recognizing Jesus is that they confessed their own condition and begged Jesus for redemption.

Luke shows us another aspect of this deliverance. He wrote, “When [the people who lived in the region] came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus’ feet, dressed and in his right mind” (Luke 8:35). When he was freed from demons he wanted to learn from the master.

Mark gives another important aspect of the event. Mark records that Jesus told the man to “Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much

Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed” (Mark 5:18-20).

What is the message? When we recognize who he is, and submit to him, he will free us from our demons and restore us to the person he intended us to become. Then we must share the story with others.

**Prayer:** Lord, you have freed me, now grant me the grace to remain free and the grace to share the story of freedom. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** When we recognize who Jesus is, and submit to him, he will free us from our demons and restore us to the person he intended us to become. Then we must share the story with others.

**Affirmation:** I m free, I am being restored, and I am sharing that good news with others.

**Reflection:** It should be noticed that the voice which came out of the possessed men was the voice of the demons. It was the demons who had control of those men. How does that apply to you and I when behaviors, or substances, have control of us? How are we to regain control?

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Five

### *Jesus Was Rejected In His Hometown*

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff.

- Luke 4:28-29

Jesus had made a hit with the people who met in the synagogue. He had just read Isaiah 61 which was a prophecy of his purposes and the people were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. After all, this young teacher, though he had a lot to learn, was a hometown boy. They talked among themselves, “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?”

We can almost see the joy on the faces of those who had been teachers in the synagogue at Nazareth. They had endured much bad press and it was common to think that Nazareth didn’t produce anyone worth noticing. Then comes this young man, Jesus. He speaks well and he is well versed in the scripture.

Ah, but alas, Jesus is not content with being patted on the back by religious pacifiers. Rather than accepting their flattery Jesus went straight to the heart of the issue. “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum’.”

Jesus knew that as long as he followed the established traditions he would be accepted and even given position in the synagogue, but he also knew that when he began to speak the truth about the hypocrisy of religious leaders he would be rejected as a blasphemer.

The synagogue leaders were not accustomed to being challenged by the truth. They were used to carefully crafted words that would not offend anyone, but Jesus

was more interested in the truth than he was in protecting the establishment.

Things have not changed much today. People content with the status quo build fortresses of tradition to protect themselves from those who would preach the true Christ.

**Prayer:** Lord, give me ears to hear the truth about my own belief system. Grant me grace to follow you into new things. Amen.

**Message:** Jesus knew that as long as he followed the established traditions he would be accepted and even given position in the synagogue, but he also knew that when he began to speak the truth about the hypocrisy of religious leaders he would be rejected as a blasphemer.

**Affirmation:** I know that compromise will get me favor with man, but only standing steadfast for the truth will get me favor with God.

**Reflection:** Reflect on the closing statement of this devotion. "People content with the status quo build fortresses of tradition to protect themselves from those who would preach the true Christ." How do you see that statement being fulfilled today?

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Six

### ***Repentance is the Door to the Kingdom of God***

Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum... From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." - Matthew 4:12-17

Jesus was run out of his hometown so he went to Capernaum to live and minister for a while. In the early days of his ministry Capernaum seemed to be a center of activity. It was there that he called Peter and Andrew to follow him. Soon afterward and not far away he calls James and John.

It appears that during these early days of ministry Jesus became very popular. Matthew records, "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases... Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him" (Matthew 4:23-25).

Everywhere Jesus went the miracles attracted people who listened to what he had to say about the kingdom of God. His preaching about repentance affected the common people because the religious leaders continually told them they were not worthy to be a part of the kingdom. The problem was that Jesus challenged even the religious leaders to repent and they weren't ready to admit their need for change.

In a later time, when his rejection by the leaders was obvious, Jesus speaks of judgment on Capernaum. "Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you

will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day” (Matthew 11:23).

Why was Jesus now condemning Capernaum? Capernaum missed God’s best because they would not repent and follow Christ. We are still being called today to repent of our ways and commit to his kingdom so that his purposes can be fulfilled in us.

**Prayer:** Lord, I have seen the miracles, now grant me the grace to live a life surrendered to kingdom principles. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** Everywhere Jesus went the miracles attracted people who listened to what he had to say about the kingdom of God and they repented. He challenged even the religious leaders to repent and they weren’t ready to admit their need for change.

**Affirmation:** I have heard the message of the kingdom of God and I have seen the miracles, signs and wonders which confirm the truth of that message. I have repented and embraced the kingdom of God.

**Reflection:** In his early ministry Jesus preached and did many miracles in Capernaum and throughout Galilee convincing many that the kingdom of God was at hand. Yet, he cursed Capernaum in Matthew 11. Why was that?

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Seven

### *Jesus Calls Working Men to Work For Him*

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” At once they left their nets and followed him. – Matthew 8:18-20

For most of us today fishing is a sport, but in the time that Christ walked the shores of Galilee it was survival. Many along that lake made their living by casting nets into the water to catch the fish which would later be sold in the marketplace. Simon, later called Peter, and his brother Andrew were two such men.

As he walked along Galilee Jesus was beginning to put together a team that would change the world. We are made curious by those he chose to be world changers. He did not go to the marketplace to find those who were best at selling their goods. He did not go the banker to recruit those who were good at handling money. He went after fishermen.

These were men who were not accustomed to having others do the work for them. They were like those today who would roll up their sleeves and jump into the work with all that they had. These fisherman were not schooled in the finer things of life. Their hands were rough, and no doubt their speech was just as rough, but Jesus saw something in them that others may not have seen.

He saw that they understood the kind of commitment that was required to get a job done. He could also see that they were loyal to each other and to family. Not only was Simon and Andrew working the family fishing business, but so were James and John, the sons of



Zebedee. These were men who knew hard work and the rewards of working hard.

Jesus is looking for men and women today who have the same characteristics. He looks for people who are committed to the task at hand, who will be loyal in times of hardship, and who understand the value of the work to be done. Can you hear him say, "Come, follow me"?

***Prayer:*** Lord, grant me the grace to surrender my own desires and ambitions to follow you and do my part to change the world. Amen.

***Message:*** Jesus looks for people who are committed to the task at hand, who will be loyal in times of hardship, and who understand the value of the work to be done.

***Affirmation:*** I am committed to serving God in whatever capacity he calls me and when I don't have a particular leading I will just do the things I already know to do.

***Reflection:*** Have you heard of the 20/80 rule? 20% of the people do 80% of the work. That is why Jesus chose people who were already busy to follow him. He doesn't call people who are sitting around waiting to be called - He calls people who are already busy. Think about it.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Eight

### *The Big Catch*

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch. Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so I will let down the nets.” When they had done so they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. - Luke 5:4-6

Simon and the others had already been exposed to Jesus. We know this because Simon called him “Master.” He had become known in that region beside the lake of Galilee as a great teacher who healed every kind of disease that was brought to him. The locals were convinced that this man was special, but they weren’t quite sure of why he was special.

We should notice that Jesus approached these fisherman when they were working. Almost all of the disciples were called from a job they already had. Jesus didn’t call those who were sitting around waiting for something to happen; he called those who were busy working until something happened. There is a lesson to be learned in that.

Another lesson to be learned is that Simon, who seems to be the leader among this group of fishermen, respected the authority that Jesus commanded as a teacher and even though he had fished all night without success he was willing to give it another try just because the master said to do it.

Jesus was looking for men who would follow him even when their common sense told them it would not produce a good result. These men obeyed out of respect, then they were amazed at the results. Not only were they amazed but Jesus used the opportunity to invite them to

fish in a different pond. He called them to be fishers of men.

There are three things we need to remember about this story. First, working men caught the attention of Jesus teaching us that God uses those who are committed to service. Second, Obeying him does not always make sense to us, but obey him we must. Third, when we obey him the purposes of the kingdom are fulfilled through our labor.

***Prayer:*** Father, help to keep working, not to stay busy, but so that the purposes of the kingdom might be fulfilled. In Jesus name, amen.

***Message:*** Obeying the Lord does not always make sense to us, but obey him we must and when we obey him the purposes of the kingdom are fulfilled through our labor.

***Affirmation:*** Even when God calls me to do something that doesn't make sense to me I know that obeying him will release kingdom power and his purposes will be fulfilled.

***Reflection:*** What happened when these tired fisherman cast their nets one more time in the same water where they had fished all night and caught nothing? Give some thought to how this story might apply to your life.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Nine

### *Jesus Ate With Tax Collectors and Other Sinners*

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. - Matthew 9:9-10

Can you imagine that! Jesus was sitting down with sinners to break bread. Doesn't he realize that these people will corrupt him? Doesn't he know that he isn't even supposed to talk with these people much less eat with them. Everything their hands have touched is unclean and that makes him unclean. You would think he would know better.

All of that and more was in the conversation that religious people around him were having.

When Jesus saw the sinners around him he did not see who they were, he saw what they could become. His whole purpose in coming was to find messed up people and get them fixed up. When Jesus saw Matthew he didn't see a tax collector he saw a man who would become an apostle and who would write the story of Jesus in a book which would be listed as the first book in the New Testament record of Jesus.

Jesus did not have fellowship with sinners to endorse their lifestyle, he had fellowship with them because he was more interested in who they could become than in who they were.

When the Pharisees were condemning Jesus for eating with sinners he rebuked them by saying, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (v13). Jesus never let religion get in the way of his purpose. If the

religious leaders didn't like the way he ministered to the needy people around him he was not concerned.

One thing that becomes obvious as we look at the religious leaders of the day is that they suffered a disconnect from the common people. When Jesus saw the crowds he was moved with compassion; when the Pharisees saw the crowds they were angered by their lack of sanctity and piety. What do you see when you see the crowds today?

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to see in others what you see in them and to treat them as I would want them to treat me. In Jesus name, amen

**Message:** When Jesus saw the sinners around him he did not see who they were, he saw what they could become. His whole purpose in coming was to find messed up people and get them fixed up.

**Affirmation:** I desire to be like Jesus in not seeing people as they appear to be but seeing them as they can become.

**Reflection:** What becomes obvious as we look at the religious leaders of the day is that they suffered a disconnect from the common people. When Jesus saw the crowds he was moved with compassion; when the Pharisees saw the crowds they were angered by their lack of sanctity and piety. What do you see when you see the crowds today?

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Ten

### *God Desires Mercy More Than Sacrifice*

When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners? On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

- Matthew 11-13

When I read this passage I wonder how long it had been since these Pharisees had a friendly conversation with one they would call a “sinner.” These “righteous” ones had long before washed their hands of any association with people who might cause them to be unclean. Not only did they not associate with such riff raff but they would certainly not sit down to eat with them. But Jesus did.

There is one major point of the law that these religious leaders missed. They missed mercy. They got the part about “Thou shalt...” do this or do that, and, “Thou shalt...” not do this or not do that - but they forgot God’s intent in all of the law.

God’s intent was not to put man in a box of do’s and don’ts, but his intent was to show how a person could live when he is filled with His Spirit. God’s plan was to offer rest for the weary and hope for the hopeless. He never intended that his law would become a stick with which to beat those who didn’t live up to religious expectations.

The problem the Pharisees had was that they well understood the letter of the law but they did not have a clue when it came to the spirit of the law. Jesus reminded them of the passage in Hosea chapter six where God is rebuking Israel because they did not understand mercy, or love. Their faith was not in the

lawgiver but in the law itself. They served the law while God was calling them serve him in love.

We must be careful that we do not become so religious that we miss the point Jesus was making. It is true that we are to live righteously, but it is his righteousness that should be in us, not our own. His righteousness will move us to have mercy on others.

What does this mean: I desire mercy, not sacrifice? Does mercy replace sacrifice, or does mercy move us to sacrifice?

***Prayer:*** Lord, help me to not be so focused on the law that I forget mercy. Grant me the ability to love the unlovely. In Jesus name, amen.

***Message:*** God's intent was not to put man in a box of do's and don'ts, but his intent was to show how a person could live when he is filled with His Spirit.

***Affirmation:*** I am convinced of the righteousness of the Law of God and I am committed to being filled with his Spirit so that I might live out his righteousness.

***Reflection:*** Religious leaders tend to either teach a rigid law that excludes most people, or, too often, they teach a "grace" which condones a lifestyle that is not righteous. Think about what Jesus was talking about when he reminded them that mercy carries more weight with God than sacrifice.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Eleven

### Jesus Was The Man

Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda... An angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first... was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. ¶When Jesus saw him lying there... he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. - John 5:2-9

Of all the sick people who waited around the pool of Bethesda, just waiting for the angel to stir the waters, Jesus chose this one man to heal. We don't know why, unless it was to point out to us that everyone needs a little help sometime.

We don't know how long he had waited at the pool, but we do know that his affliction had left him a cripple for the last 38 years. We can also surmise that he had no close relative or friends who would wait with him for the opportunity to help him into the water. He was crippled, alone, and in need of a man to help him.

Jesus was that man. When Jesus came by there was no need to even wait for the angel to come stir the water. Jesus was the man. This poor man who had no friend or relative to help him was found by Jesus.

Many of us have been just like the crippled man who waited, hoping for something to happen, but always being disappointed when the opportunity came because we were unable to take advantage of what was being offered. In fact, many of us have watched others receive



the blessing so often when we were so close that we have finally decided that it was never going to work for us.

Then, Jesus came by. We didn't need an angel now, Jesus was there. We didn't need another man because Jesus was the man.

**Prayer:** Lord, I thank you for being there for me. When I needed you most you were there. Thank you again. Amen.

**Message:** Many of us have watched others receive the blessing so often when we were so close that we have finally decided that it was never going to work for us. Then, Jesus came by. We didn't need an angel now, Jesus was there. We didn't need another man because Jesus was the man.

**Affirmation:** In the times of my greatest need, when there was no one else to answer my cry, Jesus came by. Jesus has been my help in times of need. Jesus is the man.

**Reflection:** Take some time to remember those times when you had nowhere else to turn then Jesus showed up. That's not to say we won't have difficult times that we will have to endure, but he is always there to give us comfort.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twelve

### **Jesus Is To Be Honored As The Father Is Honored**

Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner... For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. - John 5:19-23

The Pharisees were very angry at Jesus because he didn't fit their pattern of what the Messiah, or even a prophet, should be. He healed on the Sabbath, and he even forgave sin. Only God could forgive sin and they knew he wasn't God. They just didn't know.

How could one blaspheme, as they thought Jesus had done, and still do the miracles he did? How could one speak with such authority, and wisdom, yet not be of God? The Jewish leaders were perplexed. Their entire belief system was being challenged by this carpenter's son from Galilee. How could this be?

Jesus tried to explain that he was sent from the father to do the works of God, but this only infuriated them more. They realized that if they accepted that line of reasoning they would have to concede that he was God and that concept just did not fit into their belief system.

I know people today who have the same dilemma. They are willing to concede that Jesus was a good man. Many accept him as a prophet and some call him an ascended Master, but all of those miss the point. Jesus

did not come to show man what man could become - he came to show man how God loved him and what God's plans for man are.

The works that Jesus did as a man were the works that only God could do and the hope that he gave to man is the hope that only God can give. If we acknowledge him as a good man, a prophet, or even an ascended master and we don't recognize and honor him as God is honored then we miss his whole point in coming to man.

**Prayer:** Lord, Thank you for revealing yourself to me. I give you honor as the only source of life and hope in this world. Amen.

**Message:** The works that Jesus did as a man were the works that only God could do and the hope that he gave to man is the hope that only God can give.

**Affirmation:** The works Jesus did confirms that he was sent from God and the truth of his teaching was confirmed by the miracles which accompanied them. Therefore, I am convinced the Jesus is the Son of God.

**Reflection:** Here is an interesting thought. If Jesus only did what he saw the Father do, and only said what he heard the Father say; and, if the same Spirit that dwelt in him dwells in us then shouldn't we only do and say what the Father has done and said?

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Thirteen

### **The Sabbath Was Made For Man**

And the Pharisees said to Him, “Look, why do [your disciples] do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ... And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.” – Mark 2:23-28

For years I thought Sabbath meant seventh. I knew that the Seventh day Adventists worshiped on Saturday so I just assumed that Sabbath meant seventh, or the seventh day, but I learned that it actually means rest and that God ordained that man should work six days and take a Sabbath, or a rest, on the seventh day.

As is with many of the laws and rules of the Bible, the Sabbath was ordained for the sake of man, not for the sake of God. God really doesn't need to rest, but we certainly do. Many of the dietary laws in the Bible are there because God wanted mankind to be healthy. There is really not a lot of spirituality about what kind of meat one eats, but there are certainly health considerations.

The Pharisees did not understand those principles. In fact, they were just looking for any reason to condemn Jesus because they were convicted by his teaching. They couldn't refute his wisdom so they attempted to discredit him as a law breaker.

At one point Jesus warned his Disciples, “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy” (Luke 12:1). We should be alert today for the same “yeast” that easily begins to work in our own lives. We must remember that when we make our understanding of righteous living the standard for others we make it easy to justify our failures in other areas.

The Sabbath, along with a lot of other instruction, was given to guide us to righteousness, not to be a measuring stick for others. The Pharisees had many pages of rules regarding what one must and must not do on the Sabbath. It is easier to measure ourselves by a rule book than it is to live by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to keep my own life pure before you as I follow the Holy Spirit, and not to judge others. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** Jesus said, “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy” (Luke 12:1). We should be alert today for the same “yeast” that easily begins to work in our own lives. We must remember that when we make our understanding of righteous living the standard for others we make it easy to justify our failures in other areas.

**Affirmation:** I have made certain consecrations to God that I do not expect others to make and I do not condemn others who live by a different standard than I.

**Reflection:** The question was not whether the Sabbath was honored, but Jesus made the question of the purpose of the Sabbath. That principle applies to all of the commands of God. If we here the command and don't understand the underlying principle then we miss the point altogether.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Fourteen

### **The Pharisees Plot to Kill Jesus**

He said to them, “If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

- Matthew 12:11-14

The Pharisees were getting worried. Those who believed the teachings of Jesus were growing in number and they saw their own power base beginning to erode. Every time they thought they had Jesus trapped he turned it back on them. By this time they were furious with him.

It was the Sabbath and Jesus had just entered the synagogue when he saw a man with a shriveled hand. Using this man as an example the Pharisees asked Jesus, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” They thought they had him this time. They had so finely defined what one could and could not do on the Sabbath that even healing someone was “work” and couldn't be done.

Jesus knew the law better than even the Pharisees. He knew the exception clause. Jesus knew the law taught that if an animal fell into a pit on the Sabbath that it was necessary and good to pull it out of the pit, even if it was on the Sabbath. Using that logic Jesus declared, “How much more valuable is a man than a sheep!”

The Pharisees were being confronted with a crossroads of choice. They could submit to Jesus and confess him as the Christ, or they could turn away and

seek for a way to neutralize him. They chose to turn away.

How often people have made the same choice these religious leaders made. When confronted with their own failures they would rather reject truth than admit that they were flawed themselves. If we are to grow in grace then we must be willing to follow our master, even when doing so goes against the grain of our own traditions.

***Prayer:*** Lord, grant me the humility to accept your will above my traditions. In Jesus name, amen.

***Message:*** People often make a wrong choice when confronted with truth. When confronted with their own failures they would rather reject truth than admit that they were flawed themselves.

***Affirmation:*** If I am to grow in grace then I must be willing to follow the master, even when doing so goes against the grain of my own traditions.

***Reflection:*** Traditions are often the enemy of present truth. The religious leaders of the time rejected Jesus because he did not fit into their tradition of what the Messiah would be. Can you think of any traditions that are being challenged by present truth today?

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Fifteen

### Jesus is the Christ of Hope

Jesus withdrew from that place. Many followed him, and he healed all their sick, warning them not to tell who he was. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah. - Matthew 12:15-17

At first glance it seems strange that Jesus would perform miracles in a crowd then warn people not to tell who he was, but there was good reason for doing so. When the people began to declare that he was the Messiah, the anointed of the Lord, the religious leaders became very angry and began to plot against him.

Jesus knew the time would come that he would surrender his life to the purposes of the Father, but the time was not yet. He knew the cross was ahead of him, but he had much work to do establishing the hope of kingdom life in the hearts of the people.

Matthew records this passage coupled with the promise of Isaiah 42:1-4. Read what he quotes:

Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope.

Look closely at what Isaiah is saying. First he is saying that Jesus is the delight of the Father. Remember his baptism? A voice from heaven spoke, "This is my son whom I love, with him I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).



Then Isaiah declared a primary purpose of the Christ; He will proclaim justice to the nations. The hurting ones, the bruised reeds, will not be broken, but he offers them hope. The weak ones, the smoldering wicks, will be treated with care until they are strengthened.

Through Christ and his kingdom justice will prevail. The poor, hurting, sick and discouraged have hope in the one who declares, "This is the day of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:19). Today, about 2 billion people in the world have put their hope in his name.

***Prayer:*** Thank you father for giving us Jesus, the Christ of hope. Amen.

***Message:*** Through Christ and his kingdom justice will prevail. The poor, hurting, sick and discouraged have hope in the one who declares, "This is the day of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:19).

***Affirmation:*** My hope is set on Jesus, the Christ of Hope. He has healed my past and has given me hope for a future.

***Reflection:*** The Isaiah 42 passage well describes the purposes for the coming of Christ. Give some thought to how those characteristics of his message apply today. How should we proclaim justice to the nations?

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Sixteen

### **Jesus Still Calls World Changers to Follow Him**

Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve – designating them apostles – that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. – Mark 3:13-15

Twelve is an interesting number. Jacob had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel. Jesus called 12 to be his apostles. It just appears that 12 is the number required for a complete team to accomplish the task that Christ came to initiate.

We only get acquainted in the Scripture with a few of these men, but the world certainly got to know them. At one point it was said of the apostles, “They have turned the city upside down.” At a later time it was said that they had “turned the country upside down.” Still later it was said that they had, “turned the world upside down.” And indeed they had.

Actually, they had turned the world right side up, it was the world system that had been turned upside down. Even the religions of the world were upside down compared to the kingdom of God. Every major religion of the world, including Judaism, calls people to the path of human performance and offers salvation based upon works, but Jesus and his apostles offered, and still offer, a kingdom of grace.

Because of the twelve that Jesus chose we have the Gospel preached in most areas of the world today. The message of Christ and the kingdom of God has given hope to countless millions since that day on the mountain when he choose them.

Jesus has never stopped calling men and women to be his ambassadors in this world. As men and women accept his offer of a new life and are born into his kingdom he gives them purpose and a challenge. He asks the same today as he did then, “Are you willing to deny yourself, take up the cross, and follow me?” God's kingdom purposes are the same today, willing to deny yourself and follow him?

**Prayer:** Lord, on my own I am not worthy to be called a disciple, but through Christ, and by your grace, I am made worthy. Thank you, amen.

**Message:** Jesus still asks his followers, “Are you willing to deny yourself, take up the cross, and follow me?” God's kingdom purposes are the same today, are you willing to deny yourself and follow him?

**Affirmation:** Self denial is at the core of my faith. I have surrendered my life to God and my desires and ambitions are now hidden in God through faith in Christ.

**Reflection:** Jesus is still calling his followers to the mountain so that he might give them assignments for service. There are world changers yet to be called. This world needs men and women of destiny who will answer that call. Are you up to accepting the challenge?

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Seventeen

### The Prayer Request

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” - Matthew 9:36-38

Jesus performed many miracles as he ministered in Judea and Galilee. As people began to spread the word about his miracles and his teachings concerning the kingdom large crowds started following him wherever he went. When Jesus saw the crowds he looked past the pushing and shoving as people tried to get into position to see and hear better. What he saw was people who were harassed by the circumstances of life, helpless to change their circumstances and who wandered aimlessly like sheep who had no shepherd.

The Christ was moved by compassion as he looked upon the crowd. He was so moved that he turned to his disciples and challenged them, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” He had called twelve to preach the kingdom and set people free, but he realized that would not be enough. He needed more workers.

The crowds are not much different today than they were then. Their needs are oriented to 21st century culture, but they remain basically the same; people are harassed with the circumstances of life, they feel helpless to change, and they wander through life without a shepherd to guide them.

Christ is still calling to those who would follow him today, "Pray! Pray to the Lord to send laborers into the fields to harvest souls for the kingdom." That was the last verse of chapter 9. In chapter 10:1, "He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness."

Pray for harvesters; then get ready to enter the harvest.

***Prayer:*** Lord, give me eyes to see the needs of people, the heart moved with compassion and a will to enter the harvest. In Jesus name, amen.

***Message:*** The harvest will not come in by itself. There must be laborers in the fields to bring in the harvest. God is calling laborers into the fields of this world that are ready for harvest.

***Affirmation:*** I am committed to the harvest. Serving God and his kingdom is number one in my life. Call me, send me, and I will go.

***Reflection:*** Jesus still weeps over the hordes of people in this world who are harassed, helpless and wandering without a leader. Can't you hear him cry out, "Pray! Pray! Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send laborers." Pray that prayer then be willing to be one who is sent.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Eighteen

### The Principle of Authority

"Just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he said, "I Tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith." - Matthew 8:5-12

This story demonstrates the kingdom authority given to believers as good as any in the Bible. There are two versions of this event in the Gospels. This one and one in Luke 7. We'll look at them both.

This Roman soldier, probably a captain as he was called a centurion, came to Jesus because he had a servant who was paralyzed. He appealed to Jesus to heal the servant and Jesus said, "I will go and heal him" (v7). The faith, and the soldiers understanding of authority, was shown when he said, "Just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority."

He understood the structure of authority, and he had seen enough of the ministry of Jesus to believe in his power. He knew that all Jesus had to do was give the order and the work would be done.

In Luke's record of this event the centurion sent elders to Jesus to ask Jesus to heal the sick servant. Jesus started for the house and hadn't gone far when the centurion sent friends to tell Jesus he needn't come but just to send the word and the servant would be healed (Luke 7:1-10).

Jesus, in recognizing this man's faith said, "I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith" (v10).

His faith in Christ was based in what he knew of authority and what he had seen.

God has given the same authority to believers today that Jesus exercised. In Matthew 10:1 Jesus gave authority to the 12 to drive out evil spirits and heal every disease. In Mark 16:17-18 Jesus said, "These signs will accompany those who believe. In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

**Prayer:** Lord, I believe, but I need the grace of understanding authority that I might be more effective in the kingdom. Amen.

**Message:** When a person understands the principle of authority then it becomes easy to exercise faith because it is understood that he who has authority can perform what he is authorized to do.

**Affirmation:** Jesus has given his authority to those who would believe. He has authorized me, as a believer, to do the same works he has done.

**Reflection:** A primary purpose of this story seems to be that we do not need to worry about whether we can do something. If we have been given the authority do it, or to speak it, then he has also given us the power to perform it. "These signs will follow those who believe..."

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Nineteen

### Are You The One?

When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?”

- Matthew 11:2-3

Was Jesus the one or not? This was the paramount question of the day. Jesus did not hesitate to give John's disciples the proof of his identity. Jesus said, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor” (verses 4-6).

John was pretty sure that Jesus was the Christ, but he wanted to be absolutely sure, so he sent his followers to inquire. The proof Jesus offered of his identity was not the doctrine he taught but the work he performed.

We should notice a couple of things about the times and the people of that day. First, both John and Jesus had been ministering to the Jews. These were people who had for generations been looking for a Messiah, a Christ, to come and deliver them. They believed in God, and looked for his Messiah, anointed messenger.

People today aren't much different. National surveys indicate that about 95% of people in our country believe in God. Between 75-80% believe that Jesus is God. That tells me that most of the work of reaching people with the message of Christ is done.

Even with those numbers most of us are more concerned about convincing others of our doctrine than we are in offering proof of the identity of Christ. The greatest proof of the deity of Christ is not the doctrine but the works he came to do.



If we are to fulfill the prayer request of Jesus for the Father to send laborers into the field, then we must be prepared to do the works of Christ. He still wants to prove himself by removing the curse of poverty, healing the sick, raising the dead and freeing those in spiritual prisons.

Are you willing to do the works of Christ to prove him true?

***Prayer:*** Father, I do believe Jesus is the Christ. Grant me the power to show him to the world through his works. In Jesus name, amen.

***Message:*** The greatest proof of the deity of Christ is not the doctrines concerning him but the works he came to do. There is plenty of time to teach people the doctrine after they have been converted to the faith.

***Affirmation:*** I agree with the person who said, "I believe in God and the Bible because I did what the Bible said to do and God did what he said he would do. It was what I saw being done in the name of the Lord which influenced me to trust him.

***Reflection:*** The question is still, "Are you the one?" To answer that question we must show the world a living Christ, not just the doctrine of Christ. When the world sees you living the Christ life and doing the works of Christ many will come to faith in Christ.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Twenty

### What Did You Go Out to See?

Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?... A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. - Matthew 11:7-9

What was the appeal John had to the people? Jesus was trying to cause the people to identify who John really was and what was his purpose. Why was it important to him to define John and his purpose? Because his own purposes and the purposes of the kingdom of God were intrinsically intertwined with the message of John.

The first point Jesus made was to determine what John was not. He was not like a reed that was moved by the winds of opinion that blew on any given day. His message was “repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” The message was the same for the publican as it was for the Pharisee and any person who would come to God.

Jesus also made the point that John was not royalty. John had not become so accustomed to the easy life that he was willing to compromise his faith or his morals to keep the good times rolling. His message to the king was, “Repent of your adultery,” and he was in prison for that.

So, who was John? Jesus told the crowd that he was a prophet, and more than just a prophet. He said that there was none greater in the kingdom than John. Then he said something strange. He said, “Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” How could that be? If John was the greatest, how could the least be

greater than him? Notice this; John was not in the kingdom about which he preached. His message was repent and get ready for the kingdom.

We who are least in kingdom must become stronger than reeds so that we will not be moved by the times and we must be careful that we become attached to creature comforts and forget which kingdom it is that we belong to. We need to ask ourselves if we are at least one of the least in the kingdom, and what proof have we of that?

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to see that you have called me into your kingdom and have empowered me to be effective in the world. Amen.

**Message:** Jesus said that John was greater than John, yet the least person in the kingdom was greater than John. If the least is greater than John, then where is the proof that we are even the least?

**Affirmation:** My focus is not on whether I am the least or the greatest, but my focus is on my calling to serve.

**Reflection:** Ministers of the Kingdom of God are not to be as reeds, easily shaken in the wind; neither are they to be enticed by fine things, or by the favor of those in power. Rather, as ministers of the kingdom of God we must call people to repent, the religious and worldly alike, so that they may fully enjoy the Kingdom of God.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twenty One

### **They Could Believe Because They Had Repented**

All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John. But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John. - Luke 7:29-30

The common people, people just like you and me, were moved to repentance by John's message. Their hearts were prepared to receive the message of Christ because they had repented. All of their doubts, fears and skepticism had been washed away in the waters of repentance.

But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's plan. Why was that? We can only speculate, but there are some things that are obvious. First, the "experts" had already drawn conclusions about the anointed one who would come, and Jesus did not fit their conclusions. And the Pharisees had developed quite a nice platform for themselves as the approved spiritual leaders of the people. Both of these groups found their power base being threatened.

The key point that separated the common follower of John and Jesus from the Pharisees and experts was repentance. When they heard John preaching that they needed to turn away from the sins they had been committing and be baptized as a sign of beginning a new life, they responded. However, pride kept the Pharisees from admitting that they had anything about which to repent.

There are people today who have developed such a tradition around their understanding of God's word that

they stand outside of what God is doing declaring that it isn't according to their tradition and in doing so they keep those who would follow them from entering into the blessing that God has made available. Their way and God's way seem to part ways at the point where their tradition is challenged.

Are you willing to follow God's way, even when it runs counter to your tradition? Pray about it.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to not follow in the way of those whose traditions are more important to them than following you. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** There are people today who have developed such a tradition around their understanding of God's word that they stand outside of what God is doing declaring that it isn't according to their tradition and in doing so they keep those who would follow them from entering into the blessing that God has made available.

**Affirmation:** Traditions are important, but it is more important to follow God. I will not allow my traditions to hold me outside of what God is doing today.

**Reflection:** Give some thought to how the traditions of the Jewish leaders kept them from embracing Jesus as the manifest presence of God. Then give some thought to how our own traditions today might keep us from experiencing God as he manifests himself.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twenty Two

### The Forcefully Advancing Kingdom

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. - Matthew 11:12

There is an important, yet subtle, difference between the NIV translation and the KJV. The KJV says, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," and leaves the connotation that the kingdom is under violent assault. I suppose there is an application of that concept, but I don't feel that is the primary application.

I tend to agree with the NIV, "The kingdom of heaven is forcefully advancing." There is force being exerted against the opposition, but that force is coming from the kingdom itself as it is being advanced in fulfilling the purposes of God.

The kingdom has indeed suffered violence. From the early days believers have been persecuted, tortured and put to death. Even today we hear on almost a daily basis of the same kind of treatment of believers. But on the other hand, this kingdom has been forcefully advancing since the day it began. From a handful of believers to today, when 1/3 of the world's population claim the name of Christ, this kingdom is forcefully advancing.

Jesus also said that "forceful men lay hold of it." The word translated "forceful" here is *biastes* and literally means "forcer." It is one who has the energy to push his way into something, even using violent force when necessary.

A forceful person is one who sees an opportunity and commits to that opportunity, even when it means standing against opposition. The message seems to be that there are men and women who see the opportunity

of the kingdom of God which is forcefully advancing and they are inspired to exert whatever means necessary to lay hold of it.

Jesus said forceful believers had to be willing to accept rejection from their family and they must take up the cross of responsibility and commitment if they are to be a disciple (Luke 14:25-27). Are you a forceful person? If you are, get a hold of the kingdom.

**Prayer:** Lord, give me the courage and faith to go forward with this forcefully advancing kingdom. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** There are men and women who see the opportunity of the kingdom of God which is forcefully advancing and they are inspired to exert whatever means necessary to lay hold of it.

**Affirmation:** I have seen the opportunity of this forcefully advancing kingdom and I have taken hold of it so that I might participate with God in fulfilling his purposes in the earth today.

**Reflection:** Give some thought to the idea of the kingdom forcefully advancing. How is it forcefully advancing? Also consider what it means to be a forceful person who "lay hold" of the kingdom.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twenty Three

### **They Didn't Come to the Dance**

To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplace calling out to others: “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.”

- Matthew 11:16-17

Jesus had just explained that John was a great prophet. In verse 14 he declared that John was fulfillment of the prophesied return of Elijah. He went on to say that there was no greater man born of woman than John, then he gives this “song and dance” analogy.

Those of us who can remember being children can see the picture Jesus is painting. We all have been in a group of children when a game would start up. Some of the children would readily join in while others would hang back not knowing whether they should participate.

In his analogy Jesus was telling the people that those who didn't respond to the teachings of the kingdom would miss out on the blessing. After this illustration he explained what he was saying. “John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved right by her actions” (v18-19).

Those who didn't believe, and those who didn't join in, missed the blessing of the kingdom. It is easy to become critical of a messenger and miss the intent of his message. There were many who gladly received the words of Christ and his teachings and those received great blessings; but there were others who could not see beyond their own prejudices.



John wasn't received because they thought him to be a wild man, a demon possessed man and they rejected Jesus because he rubbed shoulders with the untouchables, the sinners and tax collectors. They were like children on the playground who wouldn't join in on the fun.

We must purpose to hear the music of the kingdom and get in on the kingdom blessings even when we are stretched beyond our level of doctrinal comfort.

***Prayer:*** Lord, let me here your music and I will dance to your tune. Amen.

***Message:*** We must purpose to hear the music of the kingdom and get in on the kingdom blessings even when we are stretched beyond our level of doctrinal comfort.

***Affirmation:*** I have heard, and hearing I believed. Having believed I took the step of faith to commit to the kingdom. I have come to dance.

***Reflection:*** What do you think Jesus was referring to when he said, "We played the flute for you and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn." How would that apply to Christians today?

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Twenty Four

### **Spiritual Truth is Revealed to Children**

At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. - Matthew 11:25-26

Ever since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden he has been trying to reestablish what he lost there. Virtually every major religion of the world has some process by which man reaches the level of peace and serenity that Adam and Eve enjoyed in the garden. In man's quest to restore what he once had in the Garden of Eden he has become very wise and learned in religion, but he still didn't have peace.

The Jews had developed a very sophisticated system of religion. There were hard and fast rules of conduct and of ways to approach God. They had made it so difficult to approach God that no one could be righteous enough, even themselves.

Their religion had become hard and harsh. Only the strongest could live by the rules, and even they were only righteous on the outside while inside they were filled with the sin like everyone else.

If learning, wisdom and a set of religious regulations did not promote heartfelt faith then how could one come to real faith? Jesus gave us the secret in this short prayer; "You have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children."

When our desire for intimate relationship with God exceeds our drive for wisdom and learning, and we are ready to humble ourselves and accept the innocence of a child, then we are ready to receive God's kingdom.

If you place an American toddler in a playpen with an Asian toddler, an African toddler and a Middle Eastern toddler you will find four small children who have learned no language but love playing with one another. The innocence of these children transcends the prejudice and wisdom of men. If we are willing to accept that kind of innocence then we are ready to be born as infants into the kingdom of God.

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me the grace of innocence, the boldness of faith, and the wisdom to trust you as a child trusts. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** When our desire for intimate relationship with God exceeds our drive for wisdom and learning, and we are ready to humble ourselves and accept the innocence of a child, then we are ready to receive the kingdom of God.

**Affirmation:** I desire God more than all of my learning and tradition. I accept him on his terms as a child accepts the word of his father.

**Reflection:** Can we really learn how to be righteous and holy? If the wisdom of God is truly hidden from the wise and learned of this world, and is revealed to the children, then how do we become as a child so we can understand and receive?

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twenty Five

### Yokefellows With Christ

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. - Matthew 11:28-30

Being strapped into a yoke does not appeal to me. I've seen animals in the fields yoked to a plow and it doesn't look like fun. When there are two animals yoked together it seems that it would be difficult to keep them both going the same direction.

A lot could be said about being in the yoke, but there must be something positive to be said as well because Jesus is offering to allow us to be yoked with him. The first hint as to the advantages of being in the yoke with Christ is his offer, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

There was a time for most of us when we had become weary with life and our burdens were heavy. During that time someone may have shared Jesus with us. At first we probably thought something like, "Just what I needed, someone trying to tell me how to live my life. As if it wasn't hard enough already. Now they want me to live by all these rules. I can't do it." Does that sound familiar?

It took us a while to realize that Jesus was offering to lift the load off our backs and connect with us in such a way that he was bearing the greatest part of the load. His reasoning for taking our load was, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." The load of life we carry is not too heavy for him to bear.

I have a friend, Steve Wilson, who teaches a series on living in the Yoke of Christ. In that series he says, "If you're tired, get some rest. If you're weary, get properly yoked with Christ." The truth in that is many of us believers give it all to Jesus when we come to him, then bit by bit take the burdens back as we travel on this journey of faith.

We need to check our connection in the yoke once in a while to see if we are carrying the load Jesus wants to carry. Remember, his burden is light and he is willing to take yours too.

***Prayer:*** Lord, help me to submit to your yoke and walk beside you as you bear the load for me. In Jesus name, amen.

***Message:*** We need to check our connection in the yoke once in a while to see if we are carrying the load Jesus wants to carry. Remember, his burden is light and he is willing to take yours too.

***Affirmation:*** I did come to Jesus and allowed him to get me yoked with him. My load is just as heavy, but now he is carrying it instead of me.

***Reflection:*** The concept of the yoke is sometimes hard to grasp. It sounds like we are taking on a burden rather than releasing a burden. Give some thought to the idea that our load may not actually become lighter, but it is Jesus who is carrying it.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Twenty Six

### The Saint and the Sinner

Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is - that she is a sinner."

Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

"Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled."

You have judged correctly." Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been

forgiven - for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.”

Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

The other guest began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” - Luke 7:36-56

Who is the saint, and who is the sinner?

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me the grace of being grateful for your gift of forgiveness to me. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** Jesus didn't judge people by what they had been. He only offered hope for what they could become. The grace of God is extended to those who are willing to humble themselves at his feet.

**Affirmation:** I was not worthy, but he made me worthy. I was I had failed, but he never saw me as a failure. I have knelt at his feet and he has forgiven my sins.

**Reflection:** I, like the Pharisees, have been involved in religion all of my life. And, like the Pharisees, there were times that religion became my vehicle to judge others. How about you? Give some thought to how religion has affected your life and compare that to the message of grace and forgiveness.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twenty Seven

### Supporting the Ministry of the Kingdom

Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

- Luke 8:1-3

Did you hear about the fishing vacation the deacons of the church took together? One of them took his \$75,000 dollar motor home, another one had a \$35,000 boat that he towed behind his \$40,000 SUV. Yet another one had a cabin on the lake that he had paid \$130,000 dollars for. They hired a fishing guide for the week for \$1500 dollars.

Sitting in front of the fireplace in the cabin talking one evening the subject of the church budget came up, and of course, there was the matter of the pastors' salary. One by one they discussed the departments of the church and it seemed to be a consensus that times were tough, donations were down, and each department was going to have to be cut.

The youth were going to have to cut out their monthly pizza night; the Sunday School was going to have to use last years' curriculum; the worship team was going to have do without that upgrade in sound equipment and that would also eliminate the need for the new recording equipment. After a couple of hours they had whittled the budget down to a manageable amount.



Then someone said, “Hey, we had better get to bed. The guide is going to be here at 5AM and we certainly don't want to waste his time and our money.”

Someone responded, “But we still have a shortage in the projected funds for the budget.” Someone else answered, “That's alright. Between the women, the youth and the Sunday School there should be enough fundraisers to cover the deficit.”

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me the grace of a giving heart. In Jesus name, amen.

**Message:** Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. - Matthew 6

**Affirmation:** I have invested myself in kingdom of God and my treasure is being stored for me in heaven where no earthly thing can reach it to destroy my investment.

**Reflection:** The story in this devotion is not literally true, but it has undoubtedly happened many times over the years. It was obvious where these deacons has placed value in their lives. Their idea of sacrifice was that the ministry should be sacrificed rather than for them to make significant changes in the way they lived. Something to think about.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twenty Eight

### **They Were Looking For A Sign**

Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.” - Matthew 12:38

On the surface it seems innocent enough, after all Jesus was pretty freely giving signs to all who watch and listen. Yet, he denied this group any sign, except the one of his death and resurrection (v39-40). Why did he speak so harshly to them? To find out let's take a quick look at this twelfth chapter of Matthew.

The chapter begins with the Pharisees accusing his disciples of being law-breakers because they picked some heads of grain to eat as they walked through a field on the Sabbath. Jesus refutes them then they accuse him of working on the Sabbath because he healed a man.

These religious leaders did not stop at accusing him of breaking the Sabbath they went on to accuse him of operating with the power of Beelzebub, the devil. Jesus very soundly rebukes them and reminds them that they are in danger of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

With all of this in mind we come to our text where some of those accusers are now asking him for a sign. They have seen signs. In fact, every sign they were given was twisted into some kind of accusation against Jesus. They were not looking for a sign to convince themselves, they were looking for a sign that they could use to reinforce their decision to get rid of him.

Jesus was not speaking against looking at signs as confirmation of faith. But he was speaking against those who would “tongue-in-cheek” say, “give us a sign to show us who you are.”

We should be reminded that when the disciples of John came asking if Jesus was the one John had spoken of he sent them back to John telling them to report the signs they had seen. It was the word he spoke, and the miracles he performed that confirmed who he was.

God will reveal himself with signs and wonders to those who are sincerely seeking to know him.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me not to be a sign seeker just for the sake of seeing signs, but grant me the grace to be a sign bearer to those in need. Amen.

**Message:** Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it (Mark 16:20). God will reveal himself with signs and wonders to those who are sincerely seeking to know him.

**Affirmation:** I do not seek signs, but I have seen signs and wonders which confirmed the Word of God to be true.

**Reflection:** Some have said that we do not need signs, or supernatural manifestations of Holy Spirit, because the Word of God has already been established. That is true to a point, but what about those who do not accept Scripture as God's word? It seems reasonable that with 5 billion people in the world who do not accept Christianity that God would give some of them special signs to validate his word.

**My Thoughts:**

## Day Twenty Nine

### Jesus Denounces Pharisaic Hypocrisy

You Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But give what is inside the dish to the poor, and everything will be clean for you. – Luke 11:37-54

A Pharisee had invited Jesus to eat with him so he went in and reclined at the table. But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first wash before the meal, was surprised (v37-38). This leader of the Jews had a reputation to uphold and how could he allow someone to eat at his table with unwashed hands? If he did the entire table would be unclean and he couldn't allow that.

Jesus perceived his heart and went directly to the core of the matter. The problem with this Pharisee was not outward appearance, but what was actually in his heart. Perhaps he expected Jesus to put up some argument about how he didn't need to wash because of who he was, but Jesus didn't go there.

Looking inside the man's heart Jesus saw greed and self-righteousness. Pointing out his greed Jesus said, “Why don't you just give what you have to the poor as a starting point in cleaning up the inside of your cup.”

We should all read this chapter carefully to be sure that we do not find ourselves mirrored in what Jesus is saying to the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. We must be careful that our relationship with Christ is not reduced to a doctrine and a performance rather than consistently living out his grace and internal righteousness.

It is unfortunate that for many of us our faith has been defined by our doctrine and not by what we have

given to those around us who desperately need the grace of God. The effect of the kingdom Jesus introduced is greater than a doctrinal statement, or a simply recited prayer formula – it is a life changing experience.

We enter the kingdom of God through the door of new birth. That new birth changes who we are and it changes what is inside our cup. Holy Spirit purifies us from the inside out.

***Prayer:*** Father, I surrender the cup of my life for you to wash. Amen.

***Message:*** The effect of the kingdom Jesus introduced is greater than a doctrinal statement, or a simply recited prayer formula – it is a life changing experience.

***Affirmation:*** I am no longer the man I used to be - I have been transformed from the inside out by the power of God.

***Reflection:*** Give some thought to the point Jesus was making with these religious leaders. It was not that they were doing anything wrong but they were wrong on at least two issues: First, their outward life was only a mask over the wickedness that was in their heart. Second, they disregarded love and mercy in their application of the law for others.

***My Thoughts:***

## Day Thirty

### The Family of God

While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.” He replied to him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” Pointing to his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

- Matthew 12:46-50

The mistake many have made in identifying the family of Jesus is to look solely at the human, or physical aspect of who he is. Jesus was indeed human, but he is so much more. In human terms, Mary was his mother, and her other sons were his brothers, but in spiritual terms all who do the will of his Father in heaven are his brothers and sisters, his family.

When Jesus came preaching the kingdom of his Father, the kingdom of heaven, he was extending an invitation to be born into his family. He introduced the concept in John 3 when he told Nicodemus, “You must be born again,” and John reinforced the kingdom when he wrote, “All who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

I have talked to people of many different religions who look at Jesus as a great man, or prophet, and some even call him an “ascended master,” but all of these miss the point. He was all of that, but he was more. He was, and is, the very Son of God. Physically, he was human but in the Spirit he is very God. It is because of who he

is, and what he has done, that we have access to heaven and the promise of being children of God.

We are looking at the life and teachings of Jesus throughout this year, but we want to be sure that we do not reduce him in our own mind to a historical figure who did many good works. And we don't want to turn our relationship with him into a doctrinal statement.

We must realize that we who have been born again are brothers and sisters to him and we are heirs of the kingdom he presented.

**Prayer:** Thank you Lord for allowing me into your family. Amen.

**Message:** We who have been born again are brothers and sisters to Jesus and we are heirs of the kingdom he presented. Being in his family we are given the command to love one another.

**Affirmation:** I have been born into the family of God and that makes Jesus my brother and everyone else who has been born into this family my siblings.

**Reflection:** There is more than one point to made in reflecting on this passage. First there is the message of familial relationships and our responsibility there. Then there is the message of who Jesus is. As the very son of God he is greater than just a prophet or ascended master He is God manifest in the flesh. And finally, there is the message that we who believe have been born into the family of God.

**My Thoughts:**

# **The Lord's Prayer Directive**





## "This Then Is How You Should Pray"

- Matthew 6:9

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

- Luke 11:1

Jesus answered that request by giving what has become known as "The Lord's Prayer," and in some traditions it is called the "Our Father." We often pray this prayer in worship services and in our private prayer time. It is often used as the closing prayer in a meeting.

Did Jesus really intend for his followers to pray these words when they prayed, or did he intend for this prayer to be used as a pattern for prayer? I don't think his is an "either or," but I do believe Jesus meant for this to primarily be a pattern for prayer.

That is why we call it the Lord's prayer directive. He was answering the request of the disciples to teach them to pray. This small book is written with that idea in mind.

Every phrase in the prayer is broken down and an explanation is given as to what is being addressed and a sample prayer is given for that phrase. It is not intended for the sample prayer to be "the prayer" for that phrase, but it is just a guide for praying that phrase.

# THE LORD'S PRAYER DIRECTIVE

## Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as  
it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our  
debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us  
from the evil one.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the  
glory forever. Amen.

## “Our Father in Heaven...”

Father brings to our mind two things; loving care  
and authority. In our prayer we need to recognize  
that God is truly our father. In fact, it is good to  
begin your prayer with, “Our Father.”

It is good at the beginning of your prayer to  
meditate upon the idea that God is Father, and what  
that means to you.

**Our prayer should be:** “Father God, I thank you  
for caring for me more than an earthly father could.  
Help me to appreciate your love and yield to your  
authority.”

## **“Hallowed be your name...”**

In every prayer we should take a little time to honor the awesomeness of God. Think of what he achieved in creation. How he rules the universe, yet how he considers each one of us and knows everything about us.

We are given hundreds of names and titles of God in the Bible, and each one of them gives us insight into who he is. Here are some of his basic names:

**“Elohim”** – This is a unique reference to the Lord God and projects the idea of the majesty of God.

**“El Shaddai”** – This is the term translated “Almighty God.” This name projects God as the all sufficient one.

**“Jehovah”** – Here God is shown to be the eternally self existent one. He exists without the limits of time, and without dependence upon any other force. He is the only totally self existent one in the universe.

By taking a moment to reflect upon one or more of these names of God in our prayer we can begin to develop a sense of awesomeness about him.

## **“Your kingdom come...”**

God’s kingdom will come, the question is will we participate in it? This is not a request but a statement, “Your kingdom [will] come.” We must

accept that there is a higher force at work in the world, and that he has a plan.

Our prayer concerning the kingdom of God should be that our spiritual eyes are opened to see God working in his kingdom and seek him to know what he would have us do for him.

**We should pray:** “Lord, help me to see how that you are bringing your kingdom to men and show me what my part is in the kingdom.”

**“Your will be done...”**

It is easy to say, “God’s will be done,” but it is not always easy to accept God’s will. Even Jesus had to spend a lot of time praying the night of his capture and trial. Finally, after the sweat of his labor of prayer became as drops of blood, he was able to say, “Nevertheless Father, not my will but yours be done.” We don’t have to go to a literal cross like Jesus did, but we must come to the place that we are willing to do the will of God whatever it might be.

**Our prayer here should be:** “Help me to be willing to be yielded to your will Lord. Whatever you have for me to do I will do it. I will use whatever talent you have given me to do your will.”

**“Give us today our daily bread...”**

Whether we are employed or unemployed we still need to ask God for our daily provision. Our

security should never be in our ability to earn money, but in God's bountiful supply. Usually his provision comes through our labor, but it is still his provision.

This phrase is dealing with a mindset. Are we truly trusting him to guide us through the day or will we revert back to trusting our own instincts?

**Our prayer here should be:** "Lord, I need your provision today. Just as you gave daily manna to Israel in the wilderness I need your daily provision now. Open my heart and spirit to receive your blessing today."

### **"Forgive us our debts..."**

We have sinned, and if we say we haven't we are lying. Before you become upset with me for saying that, take note; it wasn't me who said it. 1 John 1:8 says that very thing. But verse 9 of that same chapter says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

God has made provision in Jesus Christ to forgive all our sins, but we have to ask him. In fact, every day when we pray through this prayer we should spend some time thinking through the previous day and ask God to bring to our mind anything we did, or thought about doing that we need to be cleansed of.

Then we should ask God to forgive us of those things. And he will because, "He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins."

**Our prayer should be:** “I know I have sinned, and I need your forgiveness. Grant me repentance for all my sins and wash me clean of every wrong desire.”

**“As we also have forgiven our debtors...”**

It is a lot easier to ask God to forgive us of what we have done wrong than it is to forgive others of what they have done against us, but Jesus said, “If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:14-15).

**We should pray:** “Father God, grant me the grace to forgive those who have done things against me. Help me to have a forgiving attitude toward others.”

**“But deliver us from the evil one...”**

God will protect us from the tempter as we continue to trust him. This prayer is as much a statement as it is a request. We are saying that we will trust and depend upon him to protect us and our family from the evil one.

**Our prayer should be:** “I know the devil is always after me and my family but I also know you want to protect us. I ask now that you send angels to watch over us and protect us from the evil one.”

**“For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.”**

Now it is time to give him the honor and glory he deserves. Think about it. He is the only one who can do what you have just asked him to do, and he wants to do it.

Sometimes we are so focused on our needs and desires that we forget to spend a period of time in praise and worship as we are ending our prayer.

The psalmist tells us that God inhabits the praises of his people (Psalm 22:3). We are told by Apostle Paul to submit our needs before God with thanksgiving and God will respond with giving us peace which is greater than any man can give (Philippians 4:4-7).

Let us conclude our prayer with praise and adoration.

**Our prayer should be:** “Father God, you alone are worthy of our praise and worship. I thank you for being who you are, and for doing what you promised. I commit all things to you now in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”

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## "Take A Knee" Prayer Challenge

I was recently moved by the story a man who was challenged to "Take A Knee" every day for 30 days. This man had been struggling in his faith walk. He was trying to overcome undesirable behaviors which had become habitual and were affecting his faith walk.

The Challenge was to simply take a knee in prayer every day. Just that simple. We are told that if we will do something for at least 21 days in a row it will become a habit so if we practice taking a knee in prayer for 30 days we should be well on our way to making it a life-habit.

When I heard this challenge an idea sparked in my head and went to my heart. Let's start a 30 Day Take A Knee Challenge. As I have prayed and meditated on the idea over the last few days I have become convinced that this is something which needs to be done. So, here it is - the 30 Day Take A Knee Prayer Challenge.



When you respond to this challenge you are being asked to commit to:

1. Bend your knee in prayer every day. It doesn't have to be a long prayer, especially in the beginning.
2. Invite your friends to join you in the challenge. Think of any of your friends who might accept the challenge then ask those friends to join with you.

When you register that you have accepted the challenge you will be sent a 31 Day devotional on prayer. Each day there is a Scripture verse, a few paragraphs of inspiration and a short prayer.

Why a 31 day devotional for a 30 day challenge? It is our hope that you won't stop bending your knee in prayer after the 30 days but that you will establish a pattern daily prayer.

To register that you are joining the challenge, or just to get more information about it, and to get your free devotional on prayer just visit the web site below:

<http://www.take-a-knee.org/join.html>

