

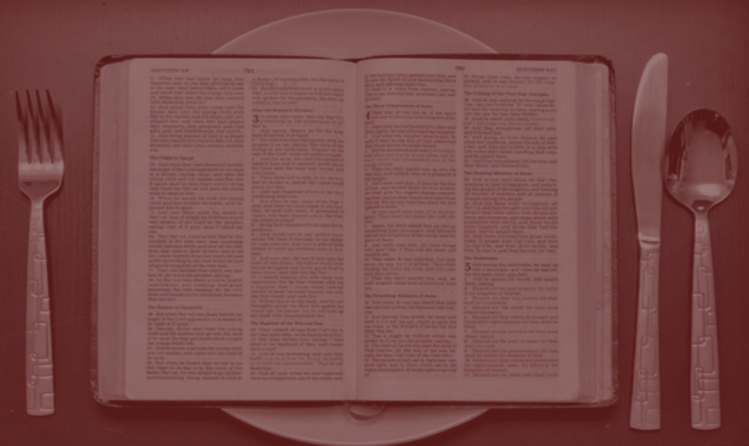
MESSIAS TEMPLE CHURCH



of the Apostolic Faith

Month of Consecration

JANUARY 2017



Sfg. Bishop Harry S. Grayson, Pastor

Schedule & Guide

MESSIAS TEMPLE

Twenty-One Day **CONSECRATION**

2017

- Consecration is the act of setting oneself apart from the world to become dedicated as an instrument of righteousness for the purposes of God.
- Fasting is a voluntary abstinence and restriction of food and/or activities for a specified period of time to devote ourselves to prayer and Bible reading.
- Fasting is a means of seeking God by denying the physical in order to focus on the spiritual. Fasting without praying and Bible reading is simply just skipping a meal.

Despite what many may think, our primary purpose for fasting is not to get something from God; it is to draw closer to Him. **James 4:8** reads, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you ...” Our fast will contain various spiritual components that will compel us to grow closer to God. There will be a daily devotion where we will emphasize a particular area of prayer and spiritual enrichment.

I believe that your obedience and commitment to this consecration will result in “Giving Spiritual Birth and a Supernatural Experience of God’s Glory”.

Pastor Grayson

The 2017 Twenty-One Day Consecration will begin on Sunday, January 9, 2017 and will commence with our Communion service on Sunday, January 29, 2017 @ 4pm.

This consecration includes:

1. Morning / Evening Routine & our church corporate prayer times – pg. 2
2. Questions about this Fast- pg.3
3. “Avoid Negativity Challenge” – pg. 5
4. A Weekly fasting schedule pg. 7
5. A 21 day devotion guide - pg. 9
6. Scriptures to meditate on throughout consecration. – pg 18
7. Journal Log – pg. 20

MORNING ROUTINE: Our daily prayer time will be every morning at 5:00-6:00 a.m.

- ✓ Morning Thanksgiving - don't stop giving thanks until you get to work – Fill your environment with your love for God through your praise and worship
- ✓ Determine and declare that you will not internalize negative actions/behavior in your environment – be quick to forgive
- ✓ Determine to slow down and think before you speak – to avoid sarcasm and cynicism
- ✓ Bless people with a genuine smile
- ✓ Remove at least one negative word, phrase, or comment from your daily conversation
- ✓ Confess the Word

EVENING ROUTINE: Routine “Consecration Quiet Time” every evening 6:00- 7:00 p.m.

- ✓ Evening Praise and Meditation (note our evening corporate prayer time)
- ✓ Turn off/get off of the: TV, computer, or phone at least 1-hour before going to bed
- ✓ Meditate on devotion, one or several of the scriptures listed, or other edifying scriptures.
- ✓ Confess the Word

Corporate prayer at the church:

- Monday 5am
- Wednesday 5am & 11am
- Friday 5am & 7pm

Questions about this Fast

What kind of fast will we observe?

We will observe a type of Daniel fast. There are scriptures for the Daniel Fast. In Daniel, chapter 1, the Prophet ate only vegetables (that would have included fruits) and drank only water. In Daniel, chapter 10, the Prophet ate no meat nor any precious breads or foods and he drank no wine for 21 days. So from these scriptures, we get the guidelines:

1. Only fruits and vegetables (nuts included)
2. Water as a beverage or pure 100% fruit juice
3. No red meat, sweeteners (sugar) and no leavened breads & yeast

Who should or should not fast?

All believers who are physically able to fast should do so, in order to bring their bodies into submission to the spirit of Christ. Anyone with physical or medical conditions that could be aggravated by fasting should consult their physician before participating in a fast. If you are medically unable to fast or abstain from the prescribed food and beverage, then find something else you enjoy doing and choose to fast from that – television, social networking sites, etc. Children may choose to participate in a limited-fast under supervision of parents or guardian. You may choose to select certain days a week to participate in the Daniel- type fast and/or abstaining from activities they enjoy, such as social networking (Facebook, twitter, skype, etc.), video games, television, cell phone, texting, etc. During these times youth should seek God in prayer, listen to gospel and worship music, etc.

What if I have never fasted?

God is pleased at our desire to connect with Him. We encourage you to step out on faith and, if necessary, gradually build up to the specified time. Each week, do at least 1-3 days of fasting. Do not become discouraged if you feel tempted to eat outside of the prescribed parameters of the fast; God will give you the strength to overcome your temptation. Ask the Lord to identify someone that can hold you accountable and encourage you during this journey. If possible, team up with a partner.

What do we do while we fast?

While you are fasting, you are encouraged to spend time in reading the Scriptures, praying, and listening to the voice of God. Prayer and listening to God is just as important as abstaining from food. We encourage you to journal what you hear God speaking. While at work or doing your daily chores, utilize break times to focus and meditate on God. Throughout the fast, use this time for meditation on God's direction for you, your family and our church.

What should I expect?

A natural response to fasting and prayer is an increase in hunger for the abstained food. As a result, you may experience hunger pangs, headaches, bad breath, and strong odor from your body as you are eliminating toxins from your body. For this reason, please consider personal hygiene and take extra care of your body. It is perfectly normal to experience these things; therefore breath mints and sugar-free gum are acceptable.

What is the purpose of fasting?

Since fasting and prayer is aimed at breaking the bonds of evil on a person's life, a loved one's life, or on a body of believers, including a family, church, or ministry, expect distractions from the enemy. The Bible tells us to be alert and vigilant for your adversary, the devil, is seeking whom he may devour (**1 Peter 5:8**). When fasting and praying, it is vital to be alert to the tricks of the enemy. This keeps you from reacting to the enemy instead of responding the way God desires.

What are the benefits of fasting?

- Helps to develop humility
- Sensitizes our spirit to hear from God
- Helps us to break sinful habits
- Intensifies the power of prayer
- Improves our worship of God
- Removes doubt and unbelief
- Make our witness bolder and stronger

- Enlarges our spiritual authority and capacities
- Helps us to develop patience
- Brings revival to our church
- Brings reconciliation between you and God; and between you and others

Journaling: Charting Out the Journey

A Christian journal helps you preserve the thoughts, prayers and promises of God that come to you throughout the day. It can be a significant spiritual companion and a reminder of how God's promises have come to pass in your life. Whatever the reason, journaling is an important part of our Christian life. Many times we need to reflect on our circumstances to gain a clearer understanding of God's will and desire for us. Writing things down brings clarity to those thoughts. The wonderful thing about keeping a Christian journal is that you can write about anything that touches you while fasting, praying and reading the Scriptures. Make copies of the journaling pages at the end of this guide or use a tablet or notebook specifically to journal this fast.

“AVOID NEGATIVITY” CHALLENGE

Exchanging a Negative Attitude for a Grateful Attitude

- The goal of this challenge is to begin to remove negative thought processes, patterns, actions, and attitudes with the intent to speak, act, and function with the wisdom of God, Word of God, and the mind of Christ.
- You didn't get negative overnight, so the negativity will not leave overnight.
- However, with purposeful focus on: small powerful confessions, meditation of the Word, and prayer - your environment can and will become more conducive to a joyful and more fulfilled life.

Some things to avoid during the next 21 days:

- Do not police other people – this is a personal challenge – Remember to get the beam out of your eye first – **Matthew 7:3**
- You may realize in the course of the day how negative your words, comments, responses and overall communication may be – don't let it discourage you and become overwhelmed by it
- Do not become religious about this, if you have a goal and fail, get back up and continue, though it may be challenging and difficult **DON'T GIVE UP!**

Some things to expect (RESULTS) within the next 21 days:

- Easier decision making
- Renewed focus and vitality
- Clarity of vision
- Keener hearing (God's voice)
- Less fatigue – Greater energy – More joy
- Deeper fulfillment

Service Attendance, Fasting and Prayer Schedule:

Pre Fasting: January 4 th & 5 th	Total abstinence of food until 4:00pm
January 9 th - 15 th	NO Fried Foods, NO Red Meats, NO Leavened breads & yeast, NO Desserts Drink (water or 100% juice) * see food suggestion on page 8
January 16 th – 22 nd	Choose ONE Fast: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1. Total abstinence of food until 4:00pm (NO fried foods, NO red meats, NO leavened breads & yeast, and NO desserts) ➤ 2. Eat ONLY fruits, veggies, nuts & salads w/o meat (no soda) No desserts Drink (water or 100% juice)
January 23 th -29 th	Choose ONE Fast: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1. ONE meal a Day. You may drink water & liquids (no soda) all day. (NO fried foods, NO red meats, NO leavened breads & yeast, and NO desserts) ➤ 2. Eat ONLY fruits, veggies, nuts & salads w/o meat (no soda) No Desserts Drink (water or 100% juice)

- ✚ DO NOT EAT JUNK FOOD DURING ENTIRE CONSECRATION
- ✚ Participate In The Daily Morning Prayer from 5am – 6am & Evening Meditation 6pm – 7pm (*Refer to Morning and Evening Routine discussed earlier in this manual pg. 2*)
- ✚ Attend Sunday School @ 9:00am and Sunday Worship Service @ 10:30am, Bible Study on Wednesday either at 12:00noon or 7:00pm and Prayer on Friday evening @ 7:00pm. Journal whatever you feel God is speaking directly to you.
- ✚ Limit All Social Media to Church, Corporate, and Special Events Businesses only.
- ✚ Fast ends Sunday, January 29 after Communion Service @ 4pm.
- ✚ If you are celebrating a birthday, you can make an exception on that day or on the weekend.
- ✚ If you are taking medicine or have special dietary needs : please adhere to

your doctor's orders or prescription label (with regard to food and drink)

Suggested foods to eat and to avoid:

Try not to get too hung up on what you should and shouldn't eat. The most important part of this Fast is that you deny yourself physically so that you may seek the Lord in prayer and grow closer to Him. Your fast may look a little different than someone else's, and that's fine. Some people may need to be stricter than others in their food choices so that their fast is a sacrifice for them. These food guidelines are meant to be just that – **a guide**. They are given to help you create boundaries for your fast.

Suggested foods to eat:

All fruit – fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, or canned.

- All vegetables – fresh, frozen, dried, juiced, or canned.
- All whole grains – amaranth, barley, brown rice, oats, quinoa, millet, and whole wheat.
- All nuts & seeds – almonds, cashews, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, and sunflower seeds; unsweetened almond milk. Nut butters are also included.
- All legumes – canned or dried; black beans, black eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, kidney beans, lentils, pinto beans, and split peas.
- All quality oils – avocado, coconut, grapeseed, olive, peanut, sesame, and walnut.
- Beverages– distilled water, filtered water, 100% juice and spring water.
- Other – unsweetened almond milk, coconut milk, rice milk, or soy milk; herbs, spices, salt, pepper, unsweetened coconut flakes, seasonings, Bragg's Liquid Aminos, soy products, and tofu.
- Fish, Turkey, or Chicken

Suggested Foods to Avoid:

- Red Meat– bacon, beef, buffalo, and pork.
- All sweeteners – agave nectar, artificial sweeteners, brown rice syrup, cane juice, honey, molasses, raw sugar, syrups, stevia, and sugar.
- All leavened bread & yeast – baked goods and Ezekiel bread (if it contains yeast and honey).
- All refined & processed food products – artificial flavorings, chemicals, food additives, preservatives, white flour, and white rice.
- All deep-fried foods – corn chips, French fries, and potato chips.
- All solid fats – lard, margarine, and shortening.
- Beverages – carbonated drinks, energy drinks.

21 Day Devotion Guide

(January 9&10) Devotion Day 1-2 ... Deserter of Disciple John 6:66

When God, by His Spirit through His Word, gives you a clear vision of His will, you must “walk in the light” of that vision (1 John 1:7). Even though your mind and soul may be thrilled by it, if you don’t “walk in the light” of it you will sink to a level of bondage never envisioned by our Lord. Mentally disobeying the “heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19) will make you a slave to ideas and views that are completely foreign to Jesus Christ. Don’t look at someone else and say, “Well, if he can have those views and prosper, why can’t I?” You have to “walk in the light” of the vision that has been given to you. Don’t compare yourself with others or judge them—that is between God and them. When you find that one of your favorite and strongly held views clashes with the “heavenly vision,” do not begin to debate it. If you do, a sense of property and personal right will emerge in you— things on which Jesus placed no value. He was against these things as being the root of everything foreign to Himself— “. . . for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses” (Luke 12:15). If we don’t see and understand this, it is because we are ignoring the underlying principles of our Lord’s teaching.

Our tendency is to lie back and bask in the memory of the wonderful experience we had when God revealed His will to us. But if the light of God reveals a New Testament standard to us, and we don’t try to measure up, or even feel inclined to do so, then we begin to backslide. It means your conscience does not respond to the truth. You can never be the same after the unveiling of a truth. That moment marks you as one who either continues on with even more devotion as a disciple of Jesus Christ, or as one who turns to go back as a deserter.

(January 11&12) Devotion Day 3-4 ... What is Your Mind On?

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Him,

Because he trusts in you —**Isaiah 26:3**

Is your mind stayed on God or is it starved? Starvation of the mind, caused by neglect, is one of the chief sources of exhaustion and weakness in a servant’s life. If you have never used your mind to place yourself before God, begin to do it now. There is no reason to wait for God to come to you. You must turn your thoughts and

your eyes away from the face of idols and look to Him and be saved (see Isaiah 45:22).

Your mind is the greatest gift God has given you and it ought to be devoted entirely to Him. You should seek to be “bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ . . .” (2 Corinthians 10:5). This will be one of the greatest assets of your faith when a time of trial comes, because then your faith and the Spirit of God will work together. When you have thoughts and ideas that are worthy of credit to God, learn to compare and associate them with all that happens in nature—the rising and the setting of the sun, the shining of the moon and the stars, and the changing of the seasons. You will begin to see that your thoughts are from God as well, and your mind will no longer be at the mercy of your impulsive thinking, but will always be used in service to God.

“We have sinned with our fathers . . . [and] . . . did not remember . . .” (Psalm 106:6-7). Then prod your memory and wake up immediately. Don’t say to yourself, “But God is not talking to me right now.” He ought to be. Remember whose you are and whom you serve. Encourage yourself to remember, and your affection for God will increase tenfold. Your mind will no longer be starved, but will be quick and enthusiastic, and your hope will be inexpressibly bright.

(January 13&14) Devotion Day 5-6...Do you Really Love HIM? Mark 14:6

If what we call love doesn’t take us beyond ourselves, it is not really love. If we have the idea that love is characterized as cautious, wise, sensible, shrewd, and never taken to extremes, we have missed the true meaning. This may describe affection and it may bring us a warm feeling, but it is not a true and accurate description of love.

Have you ever been driven to do something for God not because you felt that it was useful or your duty to do so, or that there was anything in it for you, but simply because you love Him? Have you ever realized that you can give things to God that are of value to Him? Or are you just sitting around daydreaming about the greatness of His redemption, while neglecting all the things you could be doing for Him? I’m not referring to works which could be regarded as divine and miraculous, but ordinary, simple human things— things which would be evidence to God that you are totally surrendered to Him. Have you ever created what Mary of Bethany created in the heart of the Lord Jesus? “She has done a good work for Me.”

There are times when it seems as if God watches to see if we will give Him even

small gifts of surrender, just to show how genuine our love is for Him. To be surrendered to God is of more value than our personal holiness. Concern over our personal holiness causes us to focus our eyes on ourselves, and we become overly concerned about the way we walk and talk and look, out of fear of offending God. “. . . but perfect love casts out fear . . .” once we are surrendered to God (1 John 4:18). We should quit asking ourselves, “Am I of any use?” and accept the truth that we really are not of much use to Him. The issue is never of being of use, but of being of value to God Himself. Once we are totally surrendered to God, He will work through us all the time.

(January 15&16) Devotion Day 7-8 ... The “Go” of Renunciation Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. — Luke 9:57

Our Lord’s attitude to this man is one of severe discouragement because He knew what was in man. We would have said – "Fancy losing the opportunity of winning that man!" Fancy bringing about him a north wind that froze him and "turned him away discouraged!" Never apologize for your Lord. The words of the Lord hurt and offend until there is nothing left to hurt or offend. Jesus Christ has no tenderness whatever toward anything that is ultimately going to ruin a man in the service of God. Our Lord’s answers are based not on caprice, but on knowledge of what is in man. If the Spirit of God brings to your mind a word of the Lord that hurts you, you may be sure that there is something He wants to hurt to death.

v. 58. These words knock the heart out of serving Jesus Christ because it is pleasing to me. The rigor of rejection leaves nothing but my Lord, and myself, and a forlorn hope. "Let the hundredfold come or go, your lodestar must be your relationship to Me, and I have nowhere to lay My head."

v. 59. This man did not want to disappoint Jesus, nor to hurt his father. We put sensitive loyalty to relatives in place of loyalty to Jesus Christ and Jesus has to take the last place. In a conflict of loyalty, obey Jesus Christ at all costs.

v. 61. The one who says – "Yes, Lord, but . . ." is the one who is fiercely ready, but never goes. This man had one or two reservations. The exacting call of Jesus Christ has no margin of good-byes, because good-bye, as it is often used, is pagan, not Christian. When once the call of God comes, begin to go and never stop going.

(January 17&18) Devotion Day 9-10...

The “Go” of Renunciation – Cont. If you . . . remember that your brother has something against you . . . —Matthew 5:23

This verse says, “If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you” It is not saying, “If you search and find something because of your unbalanced sensitivity,” but, “If you . . . remember” In other words, if something is brought to your conscious mind by the Spirit of God— “First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:24). Never object to the intense sensitivity of the Spirit of God in you when He is instructing you down to the smallest detail.

“First be reconciled to your brother” Our Lord’s directive is simple— “First be reconciled” He says, in effect, “Go back the way you came— the way indicated to you by the conviction given to you at the altar; have an attitude in your mind and soul toward the person who has something against you that makes reconciliation as natural as breathing.” Jesus does not mention the other person— He says for you to go. It is not a matter of your rights. The true mark of the saint is that he can waive his own rights and obey the Lord Jesus.

“. . . and then come and offer your gift.” The process of reconciliation is clearly marked. First we have the heroic spirit of self-sacrifice, then the sudden restraint by the sensitivity of the Holy Spirit, and then we are stopped at the point of our conviction. This is followed by obedience to the Word of God, which builds an attitude or state of mind that places no blame on the one with whom you have been in the wrong. And finally there is the glad, simple, unhindered offering of your gift to God.

(January 19&20) Devotion Day 11-12... Imagination vs Inspiration The simplicity that is in Christ. — 2 Corinthians 11:3

Simplicity is the secret of seeing things clearly. A saint does not think clearly for a long while, but a saint ought ^[1]_[SEP]to see clearly without any difficulty. You cannot think a spiritual muddle clear; you have to obey it clear. In intellectual matters you can think things out, but in spiritual matters you will think yourself into cotton wool. If there is something upon which God has put His pressure, obey in that matter, bring your imagination into captivity to the obedience of Christ with regard to it and everything will become as clear as daylight. The reasoning capacity comes afterwards, but we never see along that line, we see like children; when we try to be

wise we see nothing (Matthew 11:25).

The tiniest thing we allow in our lives that is not under the control of the Holy Spirit is quite sufficient to account for spiritual muddle, and all the thinking we like to spend on it will never make it clear. Spiritual muddle is only made plain by obedience. Immediately we obey, we discern. This is humiliating, because when we are muddled we know the reason is in the temper of our mind. When the natural power of vision is devoted to the Holy Spirit, it becomes the power of perceiving God's will and the whole life is kept in simplicity.

(January 21&22) Devotion Day 13-14 ... Do it yourself! Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. — 2 Corinthians 10:5

Determinedly Discipline Other Things. This is another aspect of the strenuous nature of sainthood. Paul says, "I take every project prisoner to make it obey Christ." How much Christian work there is to-day which has never been disciplined, but has simply sprung into being by impulse! In Our Lord's life every project was disciplined to the will of His Father. There was not a movement of an impulse of His own will as distinct from His Father's – "The Son can do nothing of Himself." Then take ourselves – a vivid religious experience, and every project born of impulse put into action immediately, instead of being imprisoned and disciplined to obey Christ.

This is a day when practical work is overemphasized, and the saints who are bringing every project into captivity are criticized and told that they are not in earnest for God or for souls. True earnestness is found in obeying God, not in the inclination to serve Him that is born of undisciplined human nature. It is inconceivable, but true nevertheless, that saints are not bringing every project into captivity, but are doing work for God at the instigation of their own human nature which has not been spiritualized by determined discipline.

We are apt to forget that a man is not only committed to Jesus Christ for salvation; he is committed to Jesus Christ's view of God, of the world, of sin and of the devil, and this will mean that he must recognize the responsibility of being transformed by the renewing of his mind. (Romans 12:2)

(January 23) Devotion Day 15 ... The Initiative Against Dreaming: Arise, let us go hence. — John 14:31

Dreaming about a thing in order to do it properly is right; but dreaming about it

when we should be doing it is wrong. After Our Lord had said those wonderful things to His disciples, we might have expected that He would tell them to go away and meditate over them all; but Our Lord never allowed, "mooning." When we are getting into contact with God in order to find out what He wants, dreaming is right; but when we are inclined to spend our time in dreaming over what we have been told to do, it is a bad thing and God's blessing is never on it. God's initiative is always in the nature of a stab against this kind of dreaming, the stab that bids us "neither sit nor stand but go."

If we are quietly waiting before God and He has said – "Come ye yourselves apart," then that is meditation before God in order to get at the line He wants; but always beware of giving over to mere dreaming when once God has spoken. Leave Him to be the source of all your dreams and joys and delights, and go out and obey what He has said. If you are in love, you do not sit down and dream about the one you love all the time, you go and do something for him; and that is what Jesus Christ expects us to do. Dreaming after God has spoken is an indication that we do not trust Him.

(January 24) Devotion Day 16 ... The Inspiration of Spiritual Initiative

Arise from the dead . . .—Ephesians 5:14

Not all initiative, the willingness to take the first step, is inspired by God. Someone may say to you, "Get up and get going! Take your reluctance by the throat and throw it overboard—just do what needs to be done!" That is what we mean by ordinary human initiative. But when the Spirit of God comes to us and says, in effect, "Get up and get going," suddenly we find that the initiative is inspired.

We all have many dreams and aspirations when we are young, but sooner or later we realize we have no power to accomplish them. We cannot do the things we long to do, so our tendency is to think of our dreams and aspirations as dead. But God comes and says to us, "Arise from the dead" When God sends His inspiration, it comes to us with such miraculous power that we are able to "arise from the dead" and do the impossible. The remarkable thing about spiritual initiative is that the life and power comes after we "get up and get going." God does not give us overcoming life—He gives us life as we overcome. When the inspiration of God comes, and He says, "Arise from the dead . . . ," we have to get ourselves up; God will not lift us up. Our Lord said to the man with the withered hand, "Stretch out your hand" (Matthew 12:13). As soon as the man did so, his hand was healed. But he had to take the initiative. If we will take the initiative to overcome, we will find

that we have the inspiration of God, because He immediately gives us the power of life.

(January 25&26) Devotion Day 17-18 ... Vision Becomes Reality. - Isaiah 35:7

We always have a vision of something before it actually becomes real to us. When we realize that the vision is real, but is not yet real in us, Satan comes to us with his temptations, and we are inclined to say that there is no point in even trying to continue. Instead of the vision becoming real to us, we have entered into a valley of humiliation.

God gives us a vision, and then He takes us down to the valley to batter us into the shape of that vision. It is in the valley that so many of us give up and faint. Every God-given vision will become real if we will only have patience. Just think of the enormous amount of free time God has! He is never in a hurry. Yet we are always in such a frantic hurry. While still in the light of the glory of the vision, we go right out to do things, but the vision is not yet real in us. God has to take us into the valley and put us through fires and floods to batter us into shape, until we get to the point where He can trust us with the reality of the vision. Ever since God gave us the vision, He has been at work. He is getting us into the shape of the goal He has for us, and yet over and over again we try to escape from the Sculptor's hand in an effort to batter ourselves into the shape of our own goal.

The vision that God gives is not some unattainable castle in the sky, but a vision of what God wants you to be down here. Allow the Potter to put you on His wheel and whirl you around as He desires. Then as surely as God is God, and you are you, you will turn out as an exact likeness of the vision. But don't lose heart in the process. If you have ever had a vision from God, you may try as you will to be satisfied on a lower level, but God will never allow it.

(January 27) Devotion Day 19 ... Beware of Criticizing Others Judge not, that you be not judged —Matthew 7:1

Jesus' instructions with regard to judging others is very simply put; He says, "Don't." The average Christian is the most piercingly critical individual known. Criticism is one of the ordinary activities of people, but in the spiritual realm nothing is accomplished by it. The effect of criticism is the dividing up of the strengths of the one being criticized. The Holy Spirit is the only one in the proper position to criticize, and He alone is able to show what is wrong without hurting and wounding. It is impossible to enter into fellowship with God when you are in a

critical mood. Criticism serves to make you harsh, vindictive, and cruel, and leaves you with the soothing and flattering idea that you are somehow superior to others. Jesus says that as His disciple you should cultivate a temperament that is never critical. This will not happen quickly but must be developed over a span of time. You must constantly beware of anything that causes you to think of yourself as a superior person.

There is no escaping the penetrating search of my life by Jesus. If I see the little speck in your eye, it means that I have a plank of timber in my own (see Matthew 7:3-5). Every wrong thing that I see in you, God finds in me. Every time I judge, I condemn myself (see Romans 2:17-24). Stop having a measuring stick for other people. There is always at least one more fact, which we know nothing about, in every person's situation. The first thing God does is to give us a thorough spiritual cleaning. After that, there is no possibility of pride remaining in us. I have never met a person I could despair of, or lose all hope for, after discerning what lies in me apart from the grace of God.

(January 28) Devotion Day 20 ... My Rainbow in the Cloud... I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth —Genesis 9:13

It is the will of God that human beings should get into a right-standing relationship with Him, and His covenants are designed for this purpose. Why doesn't God save me? He has accomplished and provided for my salvation, but I have not yet entered into a relationship with Him. Why doesn't God do everything we ask? He has done it. The point is— will I step into that covenant relationship? All the great blessings of God are finished and complete, but they are not mine until I enter into a relationship with Him on the basis of His covenant.

Waiting for God to act is fleshly unbelief. It means that I have no faith in Him. I wait for Him to do something in me so I may trust in that. But God won't do it, because that is not the basis of the God-and-man relationship. Man must go beyond the physical body and feelings in his covenant with God, just as God goes beyond Himself in reaching out with His covenant to man. It is a question of faith in God—a very rare thing. We only have faith in our feelings. I don't believe God until He puts something tangible in my hand, so that I know I have it. Then I say, "Now I believe." There is no faith exhibited in that. God says, "Look to Me, and be saved . . ." (Isaiah 45:22).

When I have really transacted business with God on the basis of His covenant,

letting everything else go, there is no sense of personal achievement— no human ingredient in it at all. Instead, there is a complete overwhelming sense of being brought into union with God, and my life is transformed and radiates peace and joy.

(January 29) Devotion Day 21... The Habit of Having No Habits - 2 Peter 1:8

When we first begin to form a habit, we are fully aware of it. There are times when we are aware of becoming virtuous and godly, but this awareness should only be a stage we quickly pass through as we grow spiritually. If we stop at this stage, we will develop a sense of spiritual pride. The right thing to do with godly habits is to immerse them in the life of the Lord until they become such a spontaneous expression of our lives that we are no longer aware of them. Our spiritual life continually causes us to focus our attention inwardly for the determined purpose of self- examination, because each of us has some qualities we have not yet added to our lives.

Your god may be your little Christian habit— the habit of prayer or Bible reading at certain times of your day. Watch how your Father will upset your schedule if you begin to worship your habit instead of what the habit symbolizes. We say, “I can’t do that right now; this is my time alone with God.” No, this is your time alone with your habit. There is a quality that is still lacking in you. Identify your shortcoming and then look for opportunities to work into your life that missing quality.

Love means that there are no visible habits— that your habits are so immersed in the Lord that you practice them without realizing it. If you are consciously aware of your own holiness, you place limitations on yourself from doing certain things— things God is not restricting you from at all. This means there is a missing quality that needs to be added to your life. The only supernatural life is the life the Lord Jesus lived, and He was at home with God anywhere. Is there someplace where you are not at home with God? Then allow God to work through whatever that particular circumstance may be until you increase in Him, adding His qualities. Your life will then become the simple life of a child.

SCRIPTURES TO MEDITATE ON & ONE-LINE CONFESSIONS

MY HEART IS PRECIOUS AND I CHOOSE TO GUARD IT FROM NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND IMAGES

- ✓ Proverbs 4:23 (NLT) - Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

MY WORDS MINISTER GRACE AND EDIFICATION

- ✓ Ephesians 4:29 - Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

I WILL SPEAK WORDS THAT PRODUCE LIFE TODAY

- ✓ Proverbs 15:4 (NASB) - A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but perversion in it crushes the spirit.

MY ANSWER IS ON TAP, BECAUSE I ASK

- ✓ James 1:5 (AMP) - If any of you is deficient in wisdom, let him ask of the giving God [Who gives] to everyone liberally and ungrudgingly, without reproaching or faultfinding, and it will be given him.

GOD IS WITH ME, EVERYWHERE I GO

- ✓ Hebrews 13:5 - Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

I DWELL ON EXCELLENT THINGS

- ✓ Philippians 4:8 (NASB) - Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

MY THOUGHTS ARE PRODUCTIVE AND FRUITFUL

- ✓ Proverbs 21:5 (KJV) - The thoughts of the diligent tend only to

plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want. [SEP]

✓ 2 Corinthians 10:5 (KJV) - Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

OTHER PEOPLE'S ACTIONS DO NOT DISTURB MY PEACE

✓ Proverbs 24:19 - Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the wicked;

✓ Isaiah 54:17 (NASB) - "No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their vindication is from Me," declares the Lord.

✓ Ephesians 4:30 - And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God [do not offend or vex or sadden Him], by whom you were sealed (marked, branded as God's own, secured) for the day of redemption (of final deliverance through Christ from evil and the consequences of sin).

I AM STRENGTHENED BY THE JOY OF THE LORD

✓ Nehemiah 8:10 (NASB) - Then he said to them,

"Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

I WILL ALWAYS CREATE AN INVITING ATMOSPHERE FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH MY WORDS AND ACTIONS

Negativity Challenge is borrowed and modified from Bishop Ben Gilbert, Detroit World Outreach

You may choose a different daily devotional to read during our consecration period.

Some suggested devotional books:

Streams In the Desert by L.B. Cowman

My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers

Jesus Calling by Sarah Young

Come Away my beloved by Frances J. Roberts

Or any daily devotional that speaks to you.

You will be physically strengthened and spiritually increased by this journey!

JOURNAL AND NOTES

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Prayer requests

Testimonies/Miracles

My thoughts from meditation/reading the bible

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