

THE CROSS



"A CHURCH WHERE EVERYBODY IS SOMEBODY AND CHRIST IS LORD OF ALL"



March-April 2024 — Volume 28 Issue 2

EASTER Sunday March 31, 2024

"What does the Bible say about perseverance?"

The Bible has a lot to say about perseverance in several different contexts. Clearly, the Scriptures teach that those who "overcome" and persevere in the faith will inherit eternal life (Revelation 2:7). This truth is also expressed in Colossians 1:23 where we see that people will be holy, blameless, and above reproach "if they continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel." So all Christians should be in agreement that those who are ultimately saved are those who do persevere and continue to believe the gospel.

There are two very distinct views on the issue of perseverance of the saints among Christians. The first is
(Perseverance on page 12)

"What is the meaning of Easter?"

Easter is the annual celebration of Christ's resurrection to life after His crucifixion and death. The day is also called Resurrection Sunday. The word *Easter* is related to the word *east*, which naturally points us to the sunrise, to new days and new beginnings.

For some, Easter is bereft of all but the secular meaning. For them, Easter is a time to dye eggs, hide them, and send children in search of them. It's a time to recite the myth of the Easter bunny and allude to his continuing escapades. It's a time of giving candy, taking pictures, eating Peeps, and feasting around the family table. It's a day to mark the start of spring and celebrate the rejuvenation of nature and the greening of the grass.
(Easter on page 13)

"The Fruit of the Holy Spirit - What is patience?"

There are two Greek words translated as "patience" in the New Testament. *Hupomone* means "a remaining under," as when one bears up under a burden. It refers to steadfastness in difficult circumstances. *Makrothumia*, which is used in Galatians 5:22, is a compound formed by *makros* ("long") and *thumos* ("passion" or "temper"). "Patience" in Galatians 5:22 literally means "long temper," in the sense of "the ability to hold one's temper for a long time." The KJV translates it "longsuffering." A patient person is able to endure much pain and suffering without complaining. A patient person is slow to anger as he waits for God to provide comfort and punish wrongdoing. Since it is a fruit of the Spirit, we can only possess *makrothumia* through the power and work of the
(Patience on page 12)

Your Aging Brain

If you are familiar with the organization called "Great Courses", I don't have to tell you much. If not, I have to convince you to look into their offerings and start taking some of the classes they offer, year round, for highly reasonable prices. My essay today is completely a copy of a piece of a lecture from one of their classes for which I have paid and have been studying for the past month and a half.

The course is "The Aging Brain", by Psychology Professor Thad A. Polk, of the University of Michigan. It is a twelve lecture course that is so relevant and revealing that I am taking the liberty to use a section of it as my contribution to the usual Church newsletter to which I have contributed various essays for the past two decades.

(Right Thing on page 16)



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Memo from GOD

Effective immediately, please be aware that there are changes YOU need to make in YOUR life. These changes need to be completed in order that I may fulfill My promises to you to grant you peace, joy and happiness in this life. I apologize for any inconvenience, but after all that I am doing, this seems very little to ask of you. I know, I already gave you the 10 Commandments. Keep them. But follow these guidelines, also.

1. QUIT WORRYING

Life has dealt you a blow and all you do is sit and worry. Have you forgotten that I am here to take all your burdens and carry them for you? Or do you just enjoy fretting over every little thing that comes your way?

2. PUT IT ON THE LIST

Something needs done or taken care of. Put it on the list. No, not YOUR list. Put it on MY to-do-list. Let ME be the one to take care of the problem. I can't help you until you turn it over to Me. And although My to-do-list is long, I am after all ... God. I can take care of anything you put into My hands. In fact, if the truth were ever really known, I take care of a lot of things for you that you never even realize.

3. TRUST ME

Once you've given your burdens to Me, quit trying to take them back. Trust in Me. Have the faith that I will take care of all your needs, your problems and your trials. Problems with the kids? Put them on My list. Problem with finances? Put it in My list. Problems with your emotional roller coaster?

For My sake, put it on My list. I want to help you. All you have to do is ask.

4. LEAVE IT ALONE

Don't wake up one morning and say, "Well, I'm feeling much stronger now, I think I can handle it from here." Why do you think you are feeling stronger now? It's simple. You gave Me your burdens and I'm taking care of them. I also renew your strength and cover you in my peace. Don't you know that if I give you these problems back, you will be right back where you started? Leave them with Me and forget about them. Just let Me do my job.

5. TALK TO ME

I want you to forget a lot of things. Forget what was making you crazy. Forget the worry and the fretting because you know I'm in control. But there's one thing I pray you never forget. Please, don't forget to talk to Me - OFTEN! I love YOU! I want to hear your voice. I want you to include Me in on the things going on in your life. I want to hear you talk about your friends and family. Prayer is simply you having a conversation with Me. I want to be your dearest friend.

6. HAVE FAITH

I see a lot of things from up here that you can't see from where you are. Have faith in Me that I know what I'm doing. Trust Me; you wouldn't want the view from My eyes. I will continue to care for you, watch over you, and meet your needs. You only have to trust Me. Although I have a much bigger task than you, it seems as if you have so much trouble just doing your simple part. How hard can trust be?

7. SHARE

You were taught to share when you were only two years old. When did you forget? That rule still applies. Share with those who are less fortunate than you. Share your joy with those who need encouragement. Share your laughter with those who haven't heard any in such a long time. Share your tears with those who have forgotten how to cry. Share your faith with those who have none.

8. BE PATIENT

I managed to fix it so in just one lifetime you could have so many diverse experiences. You grow from a child to an adult, have children, change jobs many times, learn many trades, travel to so many places, meet thousands of people, and experience so much. How can you be so impatient then when it takes Me a little longer than you expect to handle something on My to-do-list? Trust in My timing, for My timing is perfect. Just because I created the entire universe in only six days, everyone thinks I should always rush, rush, rush.

9. BE KIND

Be kind to others, for I love them just as much as I love you. They may not dress like you, or talk like you, or live the same way you do, but I still love you all. Please try to get along, for My sake. I created each of you different in some way. It would be too boring if you were all identical. Please, know I love each of your differences.

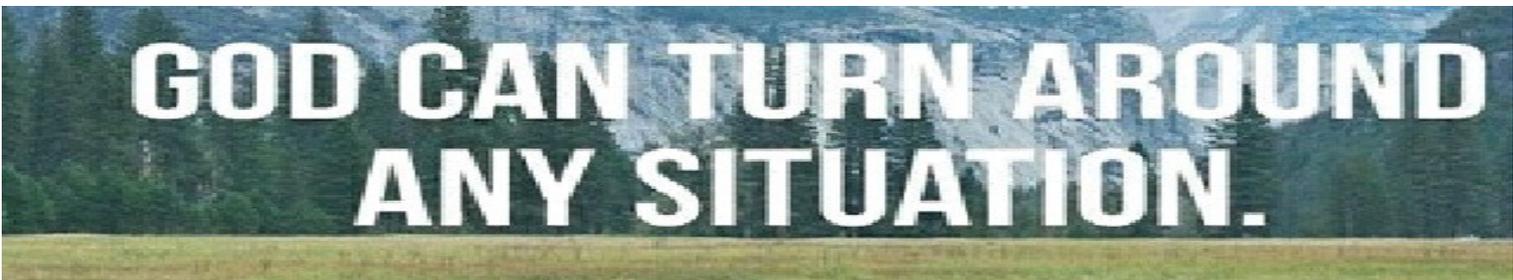
10. LOVE YOURSELF

As much as I love me for one reason of Love. Love Me. Heartache when I are very precious you, how can you not love yourself? You were only ... to be loved, and to love in return. Love your neighbors. But also love yourself. See you so angry with yourself when things go to me. Don't ever forget that!

Created by **I AM**, a God. It makes My wrong, **You**.

With all My heart I love **YOU** ...

God



**GOD CAN TURN AROUND
ANY SITUATION.**

What a Blessing it is to Serve the Lord with Gladness"



Pastor's Prayer

Rev Robyn M Anderson

Dear Lord, bless our Pastor as she delivers and preaches Your Holy Word;

Lift her spirit as she embraces Your divine call on her life;

Guide her as she ministers to Your flock and walks in Your wisdom;

Teach her the inner meanings of Holy Scripture through divine revelation;

Reward her works as she daily serves You and fulfills the purpose for which she was created.

Lovingly Presented,
The Cross Street Church
Family

"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all". **(Ephesians 4:1-6, NIV)**

Ephesians Chapter 4 describes both the unity of believers and the new hope which Christians have in Jesus.

As we end 2023 and begin a new year what a blessing it is to Thank God for bringing us into a new year full of great blessings and possibilities. Beginning a New Year is exciting and it allows us to say here I am Lord I am embracing the new.

Lord, Whatever you are doing in 2024, please do not do it without me.

Let this be your declaration :

"Lord Help Me to Level Up and Transition to Your Next for Me!!! Help Me to Be a Better Me!!!

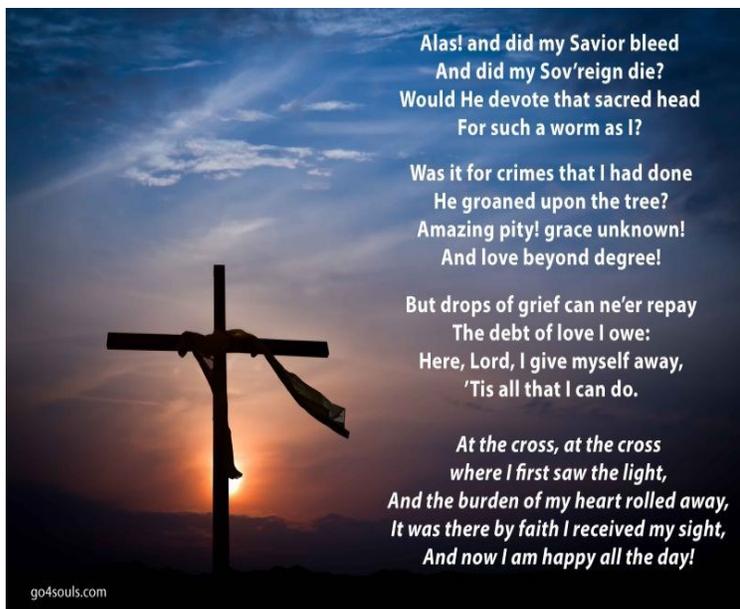
In 2024, at The Cross, together we are on our way to being a Better Me!!! This Better Me requires us to make a Commitment to God that we are going to Take Better Care of our Minds, Bodies and Spirit!!! We are going to increase our attendance at church, Bible Study and Prayer Meetings.

The generosity that flows from God to us, we let God's generosity flow from us to others.

Whatever God's Next is we are putting ourselves with the help of God in position to use the Gifts that God has given us to do a Good Work for the Kingdom of God!!!

As TD Jake says "Get Ready" Get Ready! Get Ready" Cross Street AME Zion Church to Grow Spiritually, Numerically and Financially!!!!

Level Up and Let's All Transition Everyday to God's Next!!!

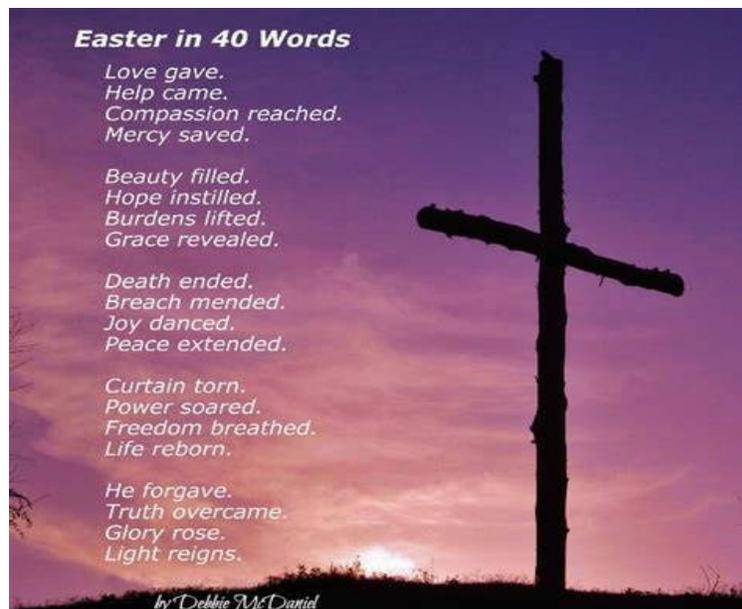


Alas! and did my Savior bleed
And did my Sov'reign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do.

At the cross, at the cross
where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart rolled away,
It was there by faith I received my sight,
And now I am happy all the day!



Easter in 40 Words

Love gave.
Help came.
Compassion reached.
Mercy saved.

Beauty filled.
Hope instilled.
Burdens lifted.
Grace revealed.

Death ended.
Breach mended.
Joy danced.
Peace extended.

Curtain torn.
Power soared.
Freedom breathed.
Life reborn.

He forgave.
Truth overcame.
Glory rose.
Light reigns.

by Debbie McDaniel

PRAYERS



Knowing the Power of Jesus' Blood

Key Scripture: *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).*

Key Thought: There is wonder-working power in the blood of Jesus.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the blood of Jesus which, through your eternal Spirit, purges my conscience from dead works in order to enable me to serve you. 1 Thank you for redeeming me through the precious blood of Christ who became an eternal sacrifice for my

sins, without any blemishes or imperfections. 2 Through your Son, Jesus Christ, who shed His blood for me, I am able to believe in you, Father, because your Word assures me that you raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory so that all my faith and hope would be in you. 3

Through the blood of Jesus you have reconciled me to yourself, Father, and being reconciled, I am likewise saved through His life. 4 Thank you so much for the power of His blood. Your Word shows how the Israelites applied sacrificial blood to the doorposts of their houses in order to keep the plague from coming near their dwellings. 5 I claim the protective power of Jesus' blood for me and my family, Lord. I praise you for your promise that assures me that when you see the blood of Christ, you will be sure to protect us. 6 Thank you, Father.

You teach me in your Word that I am able to overcome the enemy, Satan, by the blood of the lamb, and by the word of my testimony. 7 Therefore, I plead the protection of the blood of Jesus Christ over my home and family, and I know you will plant your hedge of protection around us, 8 because, as for me and my house, we will serve you. 9

Help me, Father, to walk in the light as Jesus is in the light, because I know

this will enable me to have true fellowship with other believers, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse me from all sin. 10 The blood of Jesus was shed for the remission (forgiveness) of my sins. 11 Therefore, I know I am freely justified by His grace through the redemption His blood provide for me 12

Thank you, Father, for sending Jesus to be a sacrifice for my sins, and I respond to this fact of my faith with total trust in the power of His blood. With your help, I will declare His righteousness to the world, and I will accept the certainly that all my sins have been fully remitted through His blood. 13 In the same way that I have been justified through His blood, I know I will be saved from wrath through Him. 14

Father, thank you for the power of Jesus' blood in my life.

References: (1) Hebrews 9:14; (2) 1 Peter 1:18-19; (3) 1 Peter 1:20-21; (4) Roman 5:10; (5) Exodus 12:13; (6) Exodus 12:13; (7) Revelation 12:11; (8) Job 1:10; (9) Joshua 24:15; (10) 1 John 1:7; (11) Matthew 26:28; (12) Romans 3:24; (13) Romans 3:25; (14) Romans 5:9..

Bible Prayers for all your needs
Victory House Publishers

OUR SICK AND SHUT-IN NEED YOUR CALLS, YOUR CARDS AND YOUR VISITS... BUT ABOVE ALL, THEY NEED ALL OF OUR PRAYERS!

Worshiping God

Key Scripture: *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24)*

Key Thought: Only God is worthy of worship.

Prayer: You are worthy, O lord to receive glory and honor and power, because you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created. 1

Yours, O lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty, for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you reign over all. In your hand is power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to

give strength unto all. Now, therefore, my God, I thank you and I praise your glorious name. 2

Father, you are seeking true worshipers, who will worship you in spirit and in truth. 3 I will be such a worshiper, because I love you with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. 4

Through Christ, therefore, I will offer the sacrifice of praise to you continually, that is, the fruit of my lips, giving thanks to your name. 5

References: (1) Revelation 4:11; (2) 1 Chronicles 29:12-13; (3) John 4:23; (4) Mark 12:30; (5) Hebrews 13:15

Bible Prayers for all your needs
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Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy. Psalm 99:9



The fruit of the Spirit abides in us and it is up to us to cultivate it so that we may experience the blessing and the fullness of the Spirit. God is the husbandman..."He prunes, nurtures, waters and protects His own. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit will energize and control every faculty of our nature when our will joins the will of God. Then the "beauty of the Lord will be upon us" (Psalm 90:17) and "we shall bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4)."

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

"But the fruit of the Spirit is LOVE, JOY, PEACE, LONGSUFFERING, GENTLENESS, GOODNESS, FAITH, MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE: against such there is no law." (Galatians 5:22, 23)

The fruit of the Spirit abides in us and it is up to us to cultivate it so that we may experience the blessing and the fullness of the Spirit. God is the husbandman..."He prunes, nurtures, waters and protects His own. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit will energize and control every faculty of our nature when our will joins the will of God. Then the "beauty of the Lord will be upon us" (Psalm 90:17) and "we shall bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4)."

The fruit of LOVE when properly motivated "is pure, far reaching, forgiving. There is no limit to the good that LOVE does. God is LOVE. (I John 4:7)

JOY never fades, it is never destroyed by circumstances, it is unaffected by wealth or poverty, sickness or health. It is found in the presence of God (Psalm 16:11)

PEACE "is a tranquility of mind as a result of a right relationship with God". The PEACE of God in our hearts challenges sin at every turn and deals with it immediately in order to maintain that right relationship. (Ephesians 2:14)

LONG-SUFFERING means steadfastness of the soul under provocation. It means forbearance and patient endurance of ill-treatment, without anger or thought of revenge. (Colossians 3:12, 13)

GENTLENESS is sweet reasonableness, calmness and graciousness. It calms troubled waters, settles turmoil and heals strife. (James 3:17)

GOODNESS does good to others. It is kindness of heart and good deeds. It may not always be a gentle word, but a stern rebuke done for the good of someone else. (Psalm 33:5)

MEEKNESS disarms the stormy, tempestuous person. The qualities of mildness and gentleness in dealing with others. It is not weak. It is a high quality of spiritual strength. (I Timothy 6:11)

FAITH means faithfulness to Christ and His cause. It manifests itself in being a trustworthy steward of God. It is trust and obedience, belief in God's word and promises. (Hebrews 11:1)

TEMPERANCE is power, it is strength, having self-control. It means discipline. It provides balance to the Christian's life. It enables him to praise Him whether in discipline or testing. (Proverbs 11:1) (Information taken in part from World-Wide Keswick publication and Holy Scriptures)

Satan tries to imitate the real thing with an artificial fruit. As you can see, the artificial fruit is very much like the real thing and if we are not careful, we can fall into the trap of expressing limited love, temporary joy, numbness, insensitivity, manipulation, hypocrisy, half-heartedness, false modesty and choosing lesser goals.

THE FRUIT, *The Artificial Fruit,* **The Weed**

LOVE, *limited love*, **hatred**; JOY, *temporary JOY*, **sorrow**; PEACE, *numbness, carelessness*, **anxiety strife**;
PATIENCE, *laziness, insensitivity*, **impatience**; KINDNESS, *manipulation by kindness*, **pride**;
GOODNESS, *hypocrisy*, **evil**; FAITHFULNESS, *half-heartedness*, **infidelity**;
MEEKNESS, *false modesty*, **self-seeking**; SELF-CONTROL, *choosing lesser goals*, **lack of control**
(The Fruit of the Spirit, John W. Sanderson)

READ THE BIBLE IN ONE YEAR

MARCH

1 Joshua 7-9
 2 Joshua 10-12
 3 Joshua 13-15
 4 Joshua 16-18
 5 Joshua 19-21
 6 Joshua 22-24
 7 Judges 1-4

8 Judges 5-8
 9 Judges 9-12
 10 Judges 13-15
 11 Judges 16-18
 12 Judges 19-21
 13 Ruth 1-4
 14 1 Sam. 1-3
 15 1 Samuel 4-7

16 1 Samuel 8-10
 17 1 Samuel 11-13
 18 1 Samuel 14-16
 19 1 Samuel 17-20
 20 1 Samuel 21-24
 21 1 Samuel 25-28
 22 1 Samuel 22-24
 23 2 Samuel 1-4

24 2 Samuel 5-8
 25 2 Samuel 9-12
 26 2 Samuel 13-15
 27 2 Samuel 16-18
 28 2 Samuel 19-21
 29 Samuel 22-24
 30 1 Kings 1-4
 31 1 Kings 5-7

APRIL

1 1 Kings 8-10
 2 1 Kings 11-13
 3 1 Kings 14-16
 4 1 Kings 17-19
 5 1 Kings 20-22
 6 2 Kings 1-3
 7 2 Kings 4-6

8 2 Kings 7-10
 9 2 Kings 11-14
 10 2 Kings 15-17
 11 2 Kings 18-20
 12 2 Kings 21-22
 13 2 Kings 23-25
 14 1 Chronicles 1-3
 15 1 Chronicles 4-6

16 1 Chronicles 7-9
 17 1 Chronicles 10-13
 18 1 Chronicles 14-16
 19 1 Chronicles 17-19
 20 1 Chronicles 20-23
 21 1 Chronicles 24-26
 22 1 Chronicles 27-28
 23 2 Chronicles 1-3

24 2 Chronicles 4-6
 25 2 Chronicles 7-9
 26 2 Chronicles 10-13
 27 2 Chronicles 14-16
 28 2 Chronicles 17-19
 29 2 Chronicles 20-22
 30 2 Chronicles 23-25

MAY

1 2 Chronicles 26-29
 2 2 Chronicles 30-32
 3 2 Chronicles 33-36
 4 Ezra 1-4
 5 Ezra 5-7
 6 Ezra 8-10
 7 Nehemiah 1-3

8 Nehemiah 4-6
 9 Nehemiah 7-9
 10 Nehemiah 10-13
 11 Esther 1-3
 12 Esther 4-7
 13 Esther 8-10
 14 Job 1-4
 15 Job 5-7

16 Job 8-10
 17 Job 11-13
 18 Job 14-17
 19 Job 18-20
 20 Job 21-24
 21 Job 25-27
 22 Job 28-31
 23 Job 32-34

24 Job 35-37
 25 Job 38-42
 26 Psalms 1-4
 27 Psalms 5-8
 28 Psalms 9-12
 29 Psalms 13-15
 30 Psalms 16-18
 31 Psalms 19-21

Name of God	Meaning	Application
JEHOVAH	"I AM", The One Who Is The Self-existent One	God never changes. His promises never fail. When we are faithless, He is faithful. We need to obey Him.
JEHOVAH- JIREH	The Lord Will Provide	Just as God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac, He provided His son Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice. God will meet all our needs.
JEHOVAH- MEKADDISHKEM	The Lord Who Sanctifies	God sets us apart as a chosen people, a royal priesthood, holy unto God, a people of His own. He cleanses our sin and helps us mature.
JEHOVAH-NISSI	The Lord is My Banner	God gives us victory against the flesh, the world and the devil. Our battles are His battles of light against darkness and good against evil.
JEHOVAH –RAPHA	The Lord Who Heals	God has provided the final cure for spiritual, physical, and emotional sickness in Jesus Christ. God can heal us.
JEHOVAH - ROHI	The Lord is My Shepherd	The Lord protects, provides, directs, leads, and cares for His people. God tenderly takes care of us as a strong and patient shepherd.
JEHOVAH – SABAOTH	The Lord of Hosts The Lord of Armies	The Lord of the hosts of heaven will always fulfill His purposes, even when the hosts of His earthly people fail.

There are various names of God, many of which enumerate the various qualities of a Supreme Being. The English word "god" (and its equivalent in other languages) is used by multiple religions as a noun or name to refer to different deities, or specifically to the Supreme Being, as denoted in English by the capitalized and uncapitalized terms "God" and "god". Ancient cognate equivalents for the biblical Hebrew Elohim, one of the most common names of God in the Bible, include proto-Semitic El, biblical Aramaic Elah, and Arabic 'ilah. The personal or proper name for God in many of these languages may either be distinguished from such attributes, or homonymic. For example, in Judaism the tetragrammaton is sometimes related to the ancient Hebrew ehyeh ("I will be"). In the Hebrew Bible (Exodus 3:14), Yahweh, the personal name of God, is revealed directly to Moses. Correlation between various theories and interpretation of the name of "the one God", used to signify a monotheistic or ultimate Supreme Being from which all other divine attributes derive, has been a subject of ecumenical discourse between Eastern and Western scholars for over two centuries. In Christian theology the word is considered a personal and a proper name of God. On the other hand, the names of God in a different tradition are sometimes referred to by symbols. The question whether divine names used by different religions are equivalent has been raised and analyzed.

CHRISTIAN SEASONS

EPIPHANY

Epiphany or The Season After Epiphany (4-9 Sundays) is a time for remembering the various times and ways Jesus was revealed to humans, particularly to the Gentiles (non-Jews) through the Magi (Wise Men) who represented other nationalities. It is a reminder of the universality of Jesus, the Savior of persons in every land. The first Sunday after Epiphany Day (January 6) is known as Baptism of the Lord referring to 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, and John 1:29-34. This is an excellent time for baptism and renewal of the baptismal covenant. Appropriate symbols are water, the baptismal shell or font, a descending dove, and a cross standing in water. The emphasis for the remainder of the season is on the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the miracles performed, and Jesus' works and teachings.

Color: Green is symbolic of the freshness of nature, hope, life, and growth.

Lent

Lent is the period of time to reflect on the events that led Jesus to Calvary. It begins with Ash Wednesday and covers a period of forty days (excluding Sundays) culminating with Holy Week (including Passion/Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday). Lent is a time of fasting, sacrifice, and preparation.

Color: Purple (violet or lilac) is the color used to denote royalty, praying, fasting, and penitence. It represents a symbol of the majesty of Christ, and Jesus' humanity, suffering, and fasting.

A guideline given by some money managers is as follows: Give 1/10 (tithe of your income to God). Put 1/10 in savings. Put 1/10 in an emergency account until three months of pay is set aside. Live on the remaining 7/10 with freedom to work towards giving as much as possible to God's work.

LITURGICAL COLORS

Liturgy or liturgical comes from the Greek word "leitourgia" that means public service. Thus, liturgical refers to the rites or forms prescribed for use in public worship. Colors add brightness, variety, and visual appeal for the worshiper and Christian believer. But beyond this is the wealth of meaning and theological interpretation wrapped up in the colors used during the various seasons. Below are the prevalent colors and their liturgical interpretations.

Purple (violet or lilac) is the color used to denote royalty, praying, fasting, and penitence. It represents a symbol of the majesty of Christ, and Jesus' humanity, suffering, and fasting. Advent and Lent are seasons when this color is used.

Green is symbolic of the freshness of nature, hope, life, and growth. It is used during The Season After Epiphany and King-tide. Some denominations use green during The Season after Pentecost.

White is symbolic of light, joy, purity, glory, and the bright light of truth. It is used during Christmas/Christmastide, Epiphany (January 6), Baptism of the Lord Sunday, Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday, Maundy Thursday (if Holy Communion is celebrated), Easter/Eastertide, Ascension Day/Sunday, Trinity Sunday, and Christ the King Sunday. It is appropriately used for Consecrations, Baptisms, Marriages, and Holy Communion.

Red is symbolic of loyalty, power, witness, Christian zeal, blood, fire, the work and ministry of the Church, and the Holy Spirit. It is used on Pentecost, for some The Season After Pentecost, and Church anniversaries, dedications, and ordinations. The color red is appropriate for year-round use if there is no other color available.

Black represents grief, sorrow, mourning, or death. It is used on Good Friday and sometimes for funerals. (Some prefer to use white for funerals to celebrate the homegoing of a loved one.)

Gold is the color denoting worth, virtue, glory to God, and Christian might. It was one of the gifts given to the Baby Jesus by the Magi (Wise Men). The Kingship of the Christ Child and the price Jesus paid on Calvary is also represented in this color.

Other Colors

Blue is an alternate liturgical color that is symbolic of hope. It is often used as an alternate color to purple during Advent by some denominations.

Kente Cloth is being used by many African-American congregations as a parament. It is also used on clergy and choir robes or liturgical stoles. Most of the kente cloth contains several of the liturgical colors. Kente Cloth is a strong woven fabric from the West African country of Ghana. Its name comes from the word "kenten" referring to that which cannot be torn under any circumstances. It is woven in narrow four inch strips and stitched together to make the desired width of the fabric. Traditionally, this cloth carried symbolic designs that indicated a proverb or special message. In addition to the meaning wrapped up in the colors, it also represents the commitment of believers not to allow anything to separate them from the love of God and a reminder to hold on to one's heritage.

Fasting for Health, Healing and a Heart for God's Vision for the Church

1. The Daniel Fast involves a spiritual commitment to God. "Daniel proposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the Kings delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank." (Daniel 1: 8)

2. Faith is foundational to the Daniel Fast. "Then I set my face toward my God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting" (Daniel. 9:30 "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17: 21)

3. Fast and yield yourself to God as a servant. Daniel said, "as you see fit, deal with your servants" (Daniel 1:13)

4. Schedule your prayer / And end with thanksgiving. Daniel "kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks" (Daniel 6: 10)

5. Begin with confession, (repentance), dedication, and prayer-"Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way of everlasting" (Psalm 39: 23-24)

Remember: The Daniel Fast will lead to spiritual insight. "... to these young men God gave knowledge" (Daniel 1: 17)

Guidelines for Daniel Fast

Foods We May Eat

After answering hundreds of questions about the Daniel Fast on the blog, I developed these food guidelines. My hope is that it will serve as a more complete list. The original list used by many people was issued in a book about fasting. I know the author tried to do the best he could, but that isn't the same as getting hundreds of questions seeking clarification.

Please make sure to READ THE LABEL when purchasing packaged, canned or bottled foods. They should be sugar-free and chemical-free. Keep this in mind as you review this list of acceptable foods. Look for the list of ingredients on the label (not the nutritional value) to make sure all the ingredients comply with the Daniel Fast Guidelines.

Foods to include in your eating plan during the Daniel Fast

All fruits. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned. Fruits include but are apples, apricots, bananas, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, cantaloupe, cherries, cranberries, figs, grapefruit, grapes, guava, honeydew melon, kiwi, lemons, limes, mangoes, nectarines, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangelos, tangerines, watermelon

All vegetables. These can be fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned. Vegetables include but are artichokes,

asparagus, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chili peppers, collard greens, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, ginger root, kale, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, mustard greens, okra, onions, parsley, potatoes, radishes, rutabagas, scallions, spinach, sprouts, squashes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, watercress, yams, zucchini, veggie burgers are an option if you are not allergic to soy.

All whole grains, including whole wheat, brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat tortillas, rice cakes and popcorn.

All nuts and seeds, including sunflower seeds, cashews, peanuts, sesame. Also nut butters including peanut butter.

All legumes. These can be canned or dried. Legumes include dried beans, pinto beans, split peas, lentils, black eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans, cannellini beans, white beans.

All quality oils including olive, canola, grape seed, peanut, and sesame.

Beverages: spring water, distilled water or other pure waters.

Other: tofu, soy products, vinegar, seasonings, salt, herbs and spices.

Note: Unsweetened plant-based milks and juices can be used in recipes or on cereal, but the only beverage on the Daniel Fast is water.

Foods to avoid on the Daniel Fast

All meat, animal, fish and seafood products including beef, lamb, pork, poultry, fish and shellfish.

All dairy products including milk, cheese, cream, butter, and eggs.

All sweeteners including sugar, raw sugar, date sugar, honey, syrups, molasses, cane juice, date honey, and stevia.

All leavened bread including Ezekiel Bread (it contains yeast and honey) and baked goods.

All leavening agents including yeast, baking soda and baking powder.

All refined and processed foods products including artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour, and foods that contain artificial preservatives.

All deep-fried foods including potato chips, French fries, corn chips.

All solid fats including shortening, margarine, lard and foods high in fat.

Beverages including coffee, tea, herbal teas, carbonated beverages, energy drinks, and alcohol.

Remember, **READ THE LABELS** so you are aware of the ingredients in the package.!

Be blessed on your fast

Learn more about the Daniel Fast at <http://Daniel-Fast.com>

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5: 17)

10 Practical Guidelines on Fasting By Charles Ng of Singapore

1. Enter into fasting with a positive faith. If you are determined to seek God diligently by fasting, you have a Scriptural right to expect that God will reward you. In Matthew 6:18, Jesus promises to every believer who fasts correctly: “your father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”

2. Do not wait for an emergency to drive you to fast. It is better to begin fasting when you are spiritually up than down. The law of progress in God’s Kingdom is from “strength to strength” (Ps. 84:7), “from faith to faith” (Rom. 1:17), and from “glory to glory” (2Cor. 3:18).

3. Do not set for yourself too long a period of fasting. If you are fasting for the first time, begin by omitting one or two meals. Then, move on to longer periods such as a day or two. It is better to begin with a short period and achieving it than to do a long period of fasting and not achieving it.

4. During your period of fasting, feed on God’s Word, the Bible. Where possible, read a portion of Scripture before each period of prayer. The Psalms are especially helpful.

5. Avoid boastfulness—apart from special periods of prayer, your life should be as normal as possible.

6. Check on your motives each time you fast. Take time to read Isaiah 58.

7. If you are on regular medication or suffer from diabetes or TB, it is wise to obtain medical advice before entering into any fast.

8. As you enter fast, you might suffer discomfort, unpleasant physical symptoms such as dizziness or nausea. Do not be deterred. Go through with the fast as planned. After the first day or two, these unpleasant physical reactions usually subside.

9. Remember that hunger is purely a

matter of habit. If you hold out, the sensation of hunger will go away. Sometimes you can fool your stomach by drinking a glass of water instead of snacking.

10. Guard against constipation. Before and after fasting, choose meals that will help you in this respect such as fresh fruits, fruit juices, dried figs, prunes, apricots, or oatmeal.

Total Fast: Abstaining from solid foods for 24 hours. Taking only water.

Partial fast: Abstaining from solid foods for an extended part of the day, e.g. from 7:00 am until 7:00 PM. Taking only water.

1 Meal Fast: Sacrificing one full meal a day, e.g. Abstaining from lunch.

Daniel Fast: Abstaining from meals and other delicacies. Taking only small portions of fresh vegetables, fruit and juices.

+ PRAY

COVID-19 RESPONSE

► **PRAY FOR THE VULNERABLE:** Ask God to protect those most vulnerable to the effects of the virus, especially the elderly and those with underlying health conditions.

► **PRAY FOR GOVERNMENT LEADERS:** Ask God to give our local, state, and national leaders wisdom in how to deal with the virus.

► **PRAY FOR MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS:** Ask that God would guide and protect them as they care for the sick.

► **PRAY FOR FAMILIES:** Ask God to comfort and provide for those whose businesses, job stability, and schooling have been affected.

► **PRAY FOR THE CHURCH:** Ask God to help His people have courage, find ways to serve those in need, and continue proclaiming the Gospel.



A Poem of Praise

Father God, I love You so;
You care for me even when I don't know.
I often question Your intent,
Despite those promises You've already kept.
I try to make sense of all around,
yet my eyes focus narrowly on my own.
You forgive my impatience,
and my self-righteous thoughts;
And secured my salvation through Your Son's
death on the cross.
He redeemed all my sins and gave me new life;
an act that cost a most precious price.
With Your help, dear Lord,
I will trust in the perfect plan
that is a gift from Your great hand.
Thank You for each day's new mercies,
and the grace that wipes away all my inequities.
To You, Adonai, is my praise for always;
may my last breath be a whisper
giving You all the glory.

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Sunday School is a Family Affair

We have classes for all ages – 3 to 103
Virtual Classes (See page 29 for Details)
(For Transportation Needs Please call the Church 860-344-9527)

Come Grow with US!

The Resurrection: Key to Faith / Life Beyond Death

Devotional Reading: **Exodus 14:10-14, 21-23, 26-31**

Background Scripture: **Mark 16**

EXALT!

Declaration: Mark 16:1-8

The Resurrection of Jesus

¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” ⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” ⁸ So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Affirmation: We will value God’s presence and guidance amidst the difficult and unknown.

ENGAGE

Feeling of dread and apprehension confront many people as they navigate life’s uncertainties and tragedies. Where can we find a source of hope to claim our fears and allay our apprehensions? The women who came to the tomb did not let their grief hinder them, and their faithfulness was rewarded with the good news of Christ’s resurrection from the dead.

Break into small groups and share experiences of doubt, disappointment, and fear people go through that may cause them to wonder if there is truly a better time for which to wait with hope. How may they overcome these barriers? Share those times you may have witnessed people emerge from great loss with joy and enthusiasm. How did they do it and what was the effect on others? Have you witnessed people adjust to disappointment and overcome fear when they accepted the help of others? How can we offer support and encouragement to family and friends who fear the future?

EDUCATE:

Mark 16:1-6: One may question why the women came to anoint the body after burial. Normally, the anointing would have taken place before the burial, but in this case, the Sabbath began before Jesus’ disciples could care for his body or even place it in his family tomb (see Mark 15:42; Deuteronomy 21:23; and Matthew 27:59-60). The question the three women ask (16:3) highlights the absence of Jesus’ other disciples from the scene but also underscores these women’s faithful commitment to carrying out their last service to Jesus. There are significant parallels between the women at the tomb and the shepherds at Jesus’ birth (Luke 2:8-15): both were frightened at the angelic figures, both were given an announcement that ushers in a world-changing work of God—a new way in which God is present with God’s people—both groups were unlikely witnesses to the world of God’s work, and both were faithful witnesses despite fear and social obstacles. For Mary (both at Jesus’ birth [Luke 1:26-38] and now), the shepherds, and the other women at the tomb, their experience of God culminated in a decision to believe and a series of life—changing choices to be made, even in the face of an unknown future: this is the essence of faith.

Mark 16:7-8: Mark’s story of the Resurrection ends on a disappointing note: the women don’t live out their faith but
(Courage on page 11)

Pray for all of our children, teens, young adults in this school years that God’s hands will be upon them keeping them from all hurt, harm and danger. Also pray for all of our families, friends, and all of God’s children.

(Courage from page 10)

rather let fear control their actions (16:8). See Luke 24:1-12 for the rest of the story that shows the ultimately faithful response of Jesus' followers. Mark's ending forces the reader to ask how he or she would respond: in fear or in faith? "Three strong emotions overwhelmed the women as they went out and fled from the tomb. Their feelings were decidedly mixed. This is the only verse in the New Testament where the Greek words for trembling, bewildered, and afraid occur together. The picture was one of uncertainty as the women found themselves in an in-between state: the empty tomb was initial evidence of a miraculous occurrence, but they had not yet seen the risen Jesus personally" (Ibid., p. 270). We should ask ourselves how we may have responded under the circumstances? On another note, "Does fear ever prevent you from serving the Lord? When [and if] that occurs, remember the words of our resurrected Lord: 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive forever and ever' (Revelation 1:17-18). Believe this and have great faith!" (Ibid., pp. 270-271).

ELEVATE:

Share how we may acquire a new appreciation for the three women who discover that Jesus' tomb is empty. Also, discuss the possibility of overcoming one's fear of what lies beyond death. Are you growing in willingness to tell others about Jesus' resurrection and what it means for all who follow (believe and trust in) Jesus? Discuss how you are possibly becoming more aware of signs of Resurrection hope in the world around you.

iThink:

1. Read Mark 16:1-8 aloud and discuss the crossroads of faith that confronted the three women at the end of the account. What would have been the outcome if, out of fear, they had chosen to keep this experience to themselves?

2. Ask participants to imagine having been with the women who saw and heard the angel ("young man"). What would have been their response with the strange, unexpected news that Jesus had been raised? What will they do with this news today? Tomorrow?

3. Talk about the absence of male disciples at the tomb. Where were they? Why didn't one or more of these men accompany the women that Sunday morning? Did the men have more to fear than the women, or did they simply regard anointing the dead as "women's work"?

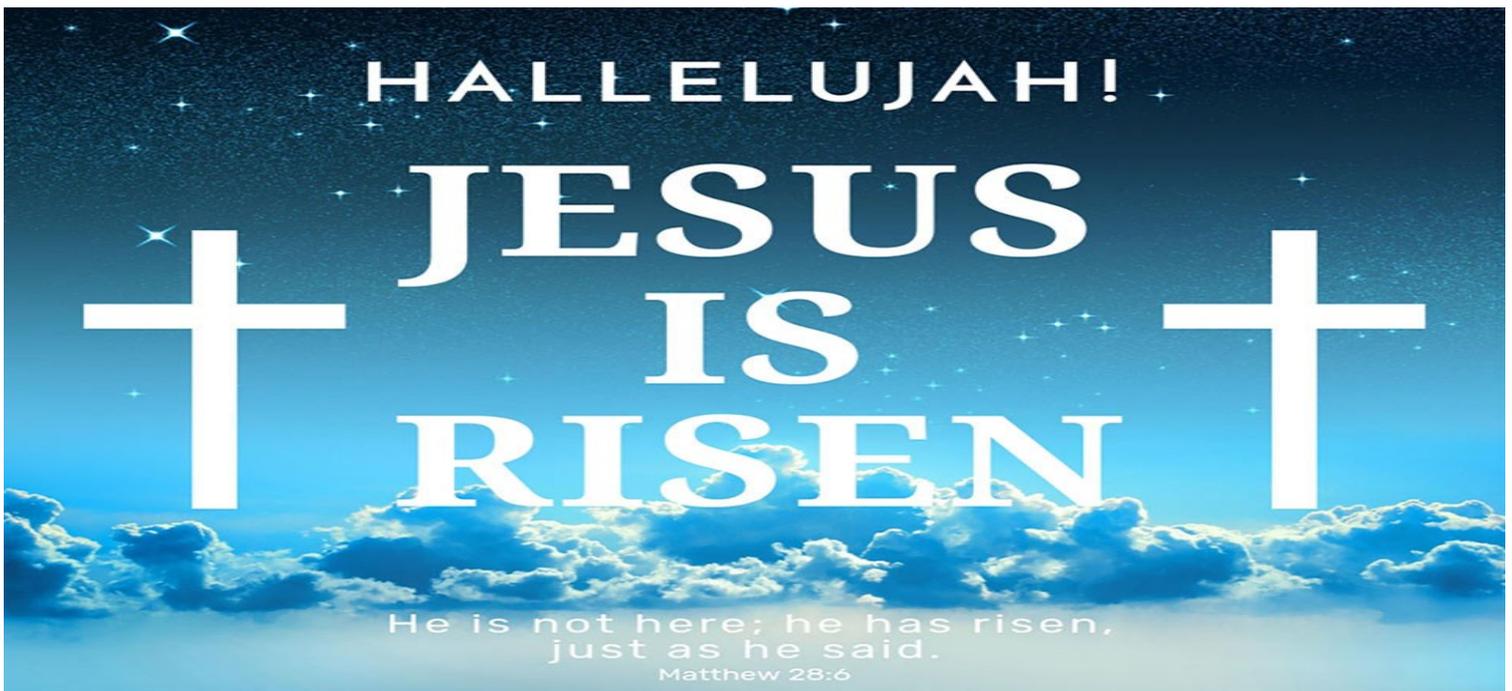
4. Invite participants to tell what they most fear about sharing news of Jesus' resurrection with the world. What would it take for them to move beyond the tomb with faith?

5. Read or recite three favorite hymns/songs about Jesus' resurrection. What about the hymns/songs give participant hope? How are participants encouraged by the words of the hymns/songs?

6. Suggest that participants plan together how they will overcome fears and go forth in the community and world to share the good news of Jesus.

KEY VERSE:

**"Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here."
Mark 16:6**



(Perseverance from page 1)

the Arminian view that it is possible for true Christians to turn away from God and not persevere. This is consistent with the concept of salvation which has man's "free will" at the center of it. It is logically consistent that, if man's "free will" choice is the determining factor of his salvation, then it would also be possible for that man to later choose to reject God and thereby lose his salvation.

However, the Bible clearly teaches that we are "born again" by the Holy Spirit, which results in our coming to faith in Christ. All who have been "born again" do have eternal security and will persevere. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is founded in the promise that "he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6) and Jesus' declaration that "all that the Father gives me will come to me" and "I shall lose none of them that he has given me" (John 6:37, 39).

Beyond the concept of perseverance in regard to salvation, there are biblical exhortations to persevere in the Christian life. In his pastoral epistles to Timothy, the apostle Paul reminds the young pastor to "watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1 Timothy 4:16). Timothy's character was that of a godly man, and his doctrine was sound and scriptural. Paul warned him to watch them both closely and persevere in them because—and this is a warning to all Christians—perseverance in godly living and believing the truth always accompany genuine conversion (John 8:31; Romans 2:7).

Further exhortations to persevere in the Christian life come from James, who warns us to be "doers of the word and not hearers only" because those who hear but do not do are "deceiving themselves." "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it [perseveres]...this one will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:22-24). The sense here is that the Christian who perseveres in godliness and the spiritual disciplines will be blessed in the very act of persevering. The more we persevere in the Christian life, the more God grants His blessings upon us, thereby enabling us to continue to persevere. The psalmist reminds us that there is great reward in persevering in the Christian life. In keeping God's commandments, there is "great reward" for our souls (Psalm 19:11), peace of mind, a clear conscience, and a witness to the world more eloquent than many words.

James also exhorts us to persevere "under trials" because those who do will be blessed and will receive the "crown of life" which God has promised (James 1:12). Just as the true believer will be eternally secure in his salvation, his faith will also persevere in affliction, sickness, persecution, and the other trials of life that befall all believers. If we desire to live godly lives in Christ, we *will* suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12), but the faithful will persevere, kept by the power of the Holy Spirit who is the guarantee of our salvation and who will keep us "strong to the end," persevering so we will be "blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:8).

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(Patience from page 1)

Holy Spirit in our lives.

Patience comes from a position of power. A person may have the ability to take revenge or cause trouble, but patience brings self-restraint and careful thinking. Losing patience is a sign of weakness. We are patient through trying situations out of hope for a coming deliverance; we are patient with a trying person out of compassion. We choose to love that person and want what's best for him.

As the Spirit produces patience in us, He is making us more Christlike. Second Thessalonians 3:5 speaks of the "patience of Christ" (ASV). Christ is even now patiently awaiting the completion of the Father's plan: after Jesus "had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool" (Hebrews 10:12-13). We should be patient, even as He is patient.

God is patient with sinners. Romans 2:4 says that God's patience leads to our repentance. Romans 9:22 points out that only God's patience prevents Him from destroying "the objects of his wrath." Paul glorifies the Lord for His "unlimited patience" that saved him, "the worst of sinners" (1 Timothy 1:16). Peter highlights the patience of God in 1 Peter 3:20, pointing out that God had immense patience with the evil people of Noah's day, delaying judgment as long as possible (Genesis 6). Today, "our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved" (2 Peter 3:15, NLT).

James urges believers to be patient and not to complain as we wait for Jesus to return. James holds up the prophets as models of patience (James 5:7-11). The Old Testament prophets ceaselessly spoke God's Word to unheeding and abusive audiences. Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern (Jeremiah 38:1-16), Elijah was so worn out from his fight with Jezebel that he wanted to die (1 Kings 19:1-8), and Daniel was thrown into the lion's den—by a king who was his friend (Daniel 6:16-28). While God delayed judgment, Noah prophesied of the coming destruction, and in 120 years did not have a single convert (2 Peter 2:5).

The opposite of patience is agitation, discouragement, and a desire for revenge. God does not want His children to live in agitation but in peace (John 14:27). He wants to dispel discouragement and replace it with hope and praise (Psalm 42:5). We are not to avenge ourselves; rather, we are to love others (Romans 12:19; Leviticus 19:18).

God is patient, and His Spirit produces the fruit of patience in us. When we are patient, we leave room for God to work in our hearts and in our relationships. We lay down our schedule and trust in God's. We thank the Lord for what and whom He's brought into our lives. We let God be God.

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(Easter from page 1)

Such observances of Easter, if they go no further than this, are a faint and feeble shadow of the real meaning of Easter; they are as empty as a plastic egg, as hollow as a chocolate Easter bunny.

Easter is a Christian holiday, and Christian celebrations focus on the true meaning of Easter: the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Two thousand years ago, a man died on a cross, was buried, and three days later rose to life again. This fact—that a dead man came to life again and lives evermore—is why we celebrate Easter. The meaning of Easter is that the Son of God paid the price for our sins and rose again to reconcile us to God (see Romans 4:25).

Easter means that our greatest enemy, death, has been conquered. Easter means that our sins are forgiven and we are made right with God. Easter means that Christ is truly the King and Victor, seated “far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked” (Ephesians 1:21). The meaning of Easter is that Jesus is the Lord of new beginnings, new days, and new lives.

Easter means that the incomprehensibly great power of God was on full display at the Garden Tomb where Christ lay. That same great power that raised Christ from the dead now works in us who believe (Ephesians 1:19). The meaning of Easter is that God can move mountains, split seas, restore life, and roll the stone away.

Easter means the poor in spirit will possess the kingdom of heaven, the mourners will be comforted, the meek will inherit the earth, the seekers of righteousness will be filled, the merciful will find mercy, and the pure in heart will see God (see Matthew 5:3–8). The meaning of Easter is that the promises of God come true in Christ.

Easter means that we can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, and recovery of sight for the blind. We can set the oppressed free and announce the year of the Lord’s favor (see Luke 4:18–19). The meaning of Easter is that the gospel—God’s Emancipation Proclamation—is to be heralded far and wide. Good news is meant to share.

Easter means that love is stronger than death. Love “burns like a blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away” (Song of Solomon 8:6–7). It was for love that God gave His only Son (John 3:16); it was for love that Christ died on the cross (John 15:13). It is for love that the risen Lord intercedes for His children (Romans 8:34). Easter is fraught with love.

Easter means there is hope for us, after all. As Jesus said, “Because I live, you also will live” (John 14:19).

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"What is Passion Week / Holy Week?"

Passion Week (also known as Holy Week) is the time from Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday (Resurrection Sunday). Also included within Passion Week are Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday, Spy Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Passion Week is so named because of the passion with which Jesus willingly went to the cross in order to pay for the sins of His people. Passion Week is described in Matthew chapters 21-27; Mark chapters 11-15; Luke chapters 19-23; and John chapters 12-19. Passion Week begins with the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday on the back of a colt as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9.

Passion Week contained several memorable events. Jesus cleansed the Temple for the second time (Luke 19:45-46), then disputed with the Pharisees regarding His authority. Then He gave His Olivet Discourse on the end times and taught many things, including the signs of His second coming. Jesus ate His Last Supper with His disciples in the upper room (Luke 22:7-38), then went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray as He waited for His hour to come. It was here that Jesus, having been betrayed by Judas, was arrested and taken to several sham trials before the chief priests, Pontius Pilate, and Herod (Luke 22:54-23:25).

Following the trials, Jesus was scourged at the hands of the Roman soldiers, then was forced to carry His own instrument of execution (the Cross) through the streets of Jerusalem along what is known as the Via Dolorosa (way of sorrows). Jesus was then crucified at Golgotha on the day before the Sabbath, was buried and remained in the tomb until Sunday, the day after the Sabbath, and then gloriously resurrected.

It is referred to as Passion Week because in that time, Jesus Christ truly revealed His passion for us in the suffering He willingly went through on our behalf. What should our attitude be during Passion Week? We should be passionate in our worship of Jesus and in our proclamation of His Gospel! As He suffered for us, so should we be willing to suffer for the cause of following Him and proclaiming the message of His death and resurrection.

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WHERE DO I START?

Read: Luke 11:1-10

I call on the Lord in my distress, and he answers me. Psalm 120:1

Several years ago, I was driving down the freeway when my car died. I pulled over to the side of the road, got out of the car, and opened the hood. As I looked at the engine I thought, A lot of good this does me. I know nothing about cars. I don't even know where to start!

That's how we might sometimes feel about prayer: Where do I start? That's

the disciples wanted to know when they suggested to Jesus, "Teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). The best place to look for instruction is in the example and teaching of Jesus. Two questions you may have are the following:

Where should we pray? Jesus prayed in the temple, in the wilderness (Luke 4), in quiet places (Matthew 14:22-23), in the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22), and on the cross (Luke 23:34, 46). He prayed alone and with others. Look at His life, follow His example, and pray wherever you are.

What should we pray? In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught us to ask that God's

name be honored and that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Ask Him for your daily provisions, for forgiveness of sin, and for deliverance from temptation and evil (Luke 11:2-4).

So if you're looking for a good place to start, follow the example of the Lord's Prayer. Anne Cetas

Prayer Tips: "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12).

ALWAYS THERE

Read: Psalm 55:16-23

Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you. Psalm 55:22

The radio engineers who work at Our Daily Bread Ministries were getting ready to broadcast a program via satellite.

They had prepared everything, including the satellite link. But just as they were to begin uploading, the signal to the satellite was lost. Confused, the engineers labored to reconnect the link,

but nothing worked. Then they got the word—the satellite was gone. Literally. The satellite had suddenly and surprisingly fallen from the sky. It was no longer there.

I suspect that sometimes when we pray, we think something similar has happened to God—that for some reason He isn't there. But, the Bible offers us comfort with the assurance that God hasn't "fallen from the sky." He is always available to us. He hears and He cares.

In a time of desperation, David wrote, "Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my

voice" (Psalm 55:17). No matter when we call on God, He hears the cries of His children. That should encourage our hearts. What was David's response to having a God who hears prayer? "Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you" (v. 22). Although God may not answer as we would like or when we would like, we know that at "evening, morning and noon" He is always there. Bill Crowder

Prayer Tip: Be yourself in prayer, you don't have to sound like your pastor

KEEPING TRACK OF PRAYERS

Read: Matthew 7:7-11

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling. 2 Thessalonians 1:11

Shortly before an elderly acquaintance died, I wrote an article about her, telling of her diligence in prayer. Despite Margaret Koster's age, she set an example of faithfulness in prayer—continuing to spend hours each day speaking with the Lord she loved.

Now she's reaping the rewards of the faithfulness.

But there's another story about Margaret that needs to be told—a story of how seriously she took her prayer-life. When she was younger, Margaret would pray each day for missionaries she knew about. She also kept a journal of her prayers—complete with answers.

One time when one of "her" missionaries was home from his overseas ministry, Margaret approached him, showed him her journal, and said, "I have recorded every prayer request you made as a missionary. And I have put down every answer that I know of. But I

also have some prayers for which I don't know the answers. You need to sit down with me and tell me how God answered those prayers so I can write them down."

Now that's taking prayer seriously! We learn from Margaret not only the importance of prayer but also the reality of God's answers. Remember, "If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us" (1 John 5:14). Dave Branon

Prayer Tip: Don't forget the persecuted church worldwide. Fellow Christians are being mistreated and tortured for their faith. Pray daily for them..

OUR DEMANDING SCHEDULES

Read: Mark 1:32-39

The whole town gather at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. Mark 1:33-34

Is your life too busy? Business deadlines, productivity quotas, and shuttling children to lessons and sporting events can really fill up your schedule. It's easy to think, If only I didn't have so many responsibilities, then I could walk in vital union with God.

Yet C. S. Lewis wisely pointed out that no one was busier than Christ. "Our model is the Jesus ...of the workshop, the roads, the crowds, the clamorous demands and surly oppositions, the lack of all peace and privacy, the interruptions. For this...is the Divine life operating under human conditions."

We read of Jesus in Capernaum: "That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases" (Mark 1:32-34). The next day Christ sought out a solitary place and prayed. There He received

direction from His Father to pursue a demanding ministry in another place. Our Lord communed with His Father and depended on the Spirit to minister through Him.

Is your schedule demanding? Follow the example of Jesus and set aside a specific time for prayer. Then depend on God's power to help you each day's demands. Dennis Fisher

Prayer Tips: Put a Post-it note in your line of sight at work with requests you can pray about during the day.

THE ARMOR OF GOD

EPHESIANS 6:10-18

“... Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.” v. 10, 11

The Shield of Faith (Eph. 6:16)

Faith is being sure that God will keep His promises. Faith in God protects you when you are tempted to doubt.



Feet Prepared with the Gospel of Peace (Eph. 6:15)

The Gospel of Peace is being right with God and being contented in troubled times. Jesus said peacemakers were blessed. →

The Helmet of Salvation (Eph. 6:17)

Put on the Helmet of Salvation by believing that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again.

The Breastplate of Righteousness (Eph. 6:14)

Righteousness is being honest, good, humble, and fair to others. It means standing up for weaker people.

The Belt of Truth (Eph. 6:14)

Truth keeps us from giving in to the world's beliefs. Compare your beliefs and actions to the truth of the Word of God.

The Sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17)

which is the Word of God. God's Word is our offensive weapon. When we tell others what the Bible says, the Holy Spirit helps people see their bad thoughts and actions, and makes them want to be forgiven.

Ephesians 6:10-20 (New King James Version)

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, ¹³ against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— ¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

(Right Thing from page 1)

This is lecture number 10 – with the title “Aging Well: Staying Active”.

“In this lecture, you will learn about the effects of **physical activity** on the mind and brain, and especially whether exercise can forestall some of the effects of aging. Then, you will learn about the effects of **social activity** and whether interacting with other people can improve your health and lengthen your life span. Finally, you will learn about **mental activity**. Is there any science to support the idea that training your brain can keep you sharp as you age? What about intense intellectual engagement, such as learning a second language or taking a Great Course?

Physical Activity

Physical activity is good for you, so it's no surprise that people who are physically active tend to live longer. Physical activity promotes a healthy cardiovascular system and therefore protects against heart disease. A lot of evidence suggests that physical exercise also makes your brain healthier. It sharpens your cognitive abilities and perhaps even protects you from some of the cognitive declines that are associated with normal aging.

A number of large longitudinal studies—which follow the same people over a period of time—have found a correlation between physical activity and a healthy mind. In one famous study at Harvard's School of Public Health, called the Nurses' Health Study, researchers mailed questionnaires asking about walking and other physical activity to nearly 20,000 older nurses starting in 1986.

Then, they called those same nurses 10 to 15 years later and asked them to perform some cognitive tests over the phone. They found that the nurses who had been more physically active did better on the cognitive tests. The more-active nurses also exhibited less of a drop-off in their cognitive performance as they got older. And it wasn't just vigorous exercise that helped; nurses who walked at least 15 minutes a day showed the same benefits.

Another large longitudinal study called the Canadian Study of Health and Aging followed more than 4,000 people who had been cognitively normal five years earlier to see who had developed cognitive impairments and dementia. The most physically active people were about 40 percent less likely to have developed cognitive impairments

compared with people who were not active.

Likewise, the most physically active people were about 50 percent less likely to have developed dementia of the Alzheimer's type. And it wasn't just high levels of physical activity that helped; even low levels of activity reduced the risk of cognitive impairments and of Alzheimer's disease by about 33 percent compared to no activity.

These studies demonstrate an association between physical activity and healthy aging. But these results are correlational, so we can't tell definitively whether physical activity actually causes improvements in cognition and health.

One influential study, in which scientists experimentally manipulated who exercises and who doesn't, was conducted by Kirk Erickson and Arthur Kramer at the University of Illinois, along with a number of their colleagues. They randomly assigned 60 older people to one year of aerobic exercise and another 60 older people to one year of stretching and toning as a control condition.

Both groups had their brains scanned before and after the training. They also had their memory tested. And the scientists found that aerobic exercise reversed the normal age-related shrinkage in the hippocampus and led to improved memory performance.

A large number of animal studies have also demonstrated significant benefits from physical activity, both at a cognitive level and at a neural level. Although these studies don't involve humans, they can often be more informative than human studies, because they can be more carefully controlled. They also can make it possible to explore the biological mechanisms involved in much more detail than is possible in humans. One of the most important animal studies was done by Mark Rosenzweig at Berkeley, William Greenough at the University of Illinois, and their colleagues. They found that rats that are raised in enriched environments, with new toys every day and lots of other rats, learn faster than rats raised in standard cages. Furthermore, these rats also have more connections between brain cells and an overall increase in cerebral cortex volume.

One hypothesis for this is that rats in enriched environments are more physically active than rats in normal

cages. But can physical activity alone produce those kinds of brain changes?

Fred Gage and his colleagues at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies near San Diego began investigating that question in the mid-1990s and found that the answer is yes. In fact, they found that making rats exercise leads to the growth of new brain cells in the hippocampus, the brain area that is crucial for memory. Before then, most neuroscientists assumed that we can't grow new brain cells in adulthood, but Gage's work proved that that assumption was wrong.

Subsequent animal studies have shown that physical activity also leads to new blood vessels in the brain, higher levels of chemicals that trigger growth in the brain, increased resistance to brain damage, and improved learning and cognitive performance.

Social Activity

In a large longitudinal study at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Laura Fratiglioni and her colleagues tried to address whether frequent social interactions help people live longer, healthier lives. They found that people with strong, positive social networks were 60 percent less likely to develop dementia compared with people with a poor or limited social network.

Furthermore, social support may also improve recovery after brain injury. Maria Glymour at Columbia University and her colleagues investigated the effect of social support on recovery after a stroke. Stroke victims who had more social ties and stronger emotional support tended to perform better on cognitive tests six months after their stroke.

Living alone versus with other people has also been shown to have a significant effect on cognition in older people. One study followed more than 1,000 European men over the age of 70 for 10 years. Men who lost a partner, were unmarried, or lived alone exhibited more than twice as much cognitive decline over the 10-year period compared with men who lived with someone.

It's also important that the social interactions be positive rather than negative. In fact, people who report less satisfaction with their social network tend to exhibit greater cognitive decline than people who are more satisfied.

(Right Thing on page 17)

(Right Thing from page 16)

But all of these studies are correlational, and correlation does not imply causation. To infer causality, we need experimental studies that randomly assign some people to more social interaction and some people to less. So far, there aren't very many of these studies.

One study that comes close was conducted by Elizabeth Stine-Morrow at the University of Illinois and her colleagues. They randomly divided a large number of older people into an experimental group and a control group. The people in the experimental group worked with five to seven other participants on a long-term project that involved 20 team meetings over a period of about six months. The control group just continued life as normal.

The researchers tested a number of cognitive abilities both before and after the intervention, and the experimental group showed greater improvement on all of them compared with the control group.

It's impossible to know whether it was the social interaction that led to the observed improvements in cognitive function. In addition to greater social interaction, the experimental group also engaged in more mental activity. It's even likely that they engaged in more physical activity than the control group, because they had to physically get to and from the 20 group meetings. So, although engaging in this group activity helped, we don't yet know why.

Mental Activity

A number of websites, computer programs, and apps are now being marketed that claim that they can keep your brain sharp and improve your memory and attention. But do these products actually work?

In 2014, the Stanford Center on Longevity and the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin gathered leading scientists in the field to discuss the effectiveness of these kinds of brain games and to prepare a statement summarizing their consensus about the existing science. They reached a number of important conclusions.

First, claims promoting the advantages of brain games are often exaggerated and sometimes misleading. In particular, although cognitive training can definitely improve your performance on the specific task that you're practicing, there isn't

convincing evidence that it will improve your performance on cognitive tasks that you engage in every day.

Cognitive training has been shown to produce improvement in specific practiced skills, and that improvement sometimes extends to other closely related tasks, but in general the gains are typically very narrow.

The scientists' consensus statement also pointed out the importance of considering opportunity costs when evaluating the benefits of cognitive training. In particular, if you're spending time playing brain games or solving crossword puzzles, then you're typically not spending that time being physically active or socializing, even though evidence suggests that physical activity and social interactions do help brain health.

The scientists concluded their statement with the following five recommendations.

1. Try to lead a physically active, intellectually challenging, and Engaged life.
2. Try to incorporate physical exercise into your routine, because it has been shown to be an effective way to improve your health, including your brain health.
3. Be skeptical about claims based on the results of a single study or on the recommendation of a single scientist; many claims are based on fairly narrow findings that didn't generalize to real life and that haven't been replicated.
4. Remember that no studies have demonstrated that playing brain games will cure or prevent the development of Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia.
5. Don't expect the benefits of mental training to last for extended periods of time after you've stopped the training. Mental training is not a vaccine that can prevent age-related cognitive decline.

Even though there isn't strong evidence that brain-training games lead to general improvements in cognitive function, that does not mean we don't need to stay cognitively engaged and keep our minds active. There's solid evidence that intense cognitive training that specifically targets processing speed, episodic memory, and executive function can improve our abilities in those domains. Given that these are the domains that tend to decline with age, that's very good news.

More traditional intellectual engagement, such as learning a second language or taking a **Great Course**, has

also proven to be helpful. A large number of studies have investigated the relationship between formal education and cognitive vitality late in life, and the consistent finding is that higher levels of education are associated with less cognitive decline during old age.

Likewise, learning a second language has also been associated with improved cognitive function in older adults, particularly improved executive function. Neuroimaging studies have even found greater white matter integrity and prefrontal cortex volume—both of which tend to decline with age—in bilinguals compared with monolinguals.

These kinds of associations are just correlations, and they don't allow us to infer causality. So, scientists have vigorously debated how to interpret the observed associations. What was needed was an experimental study that randomly assigned some older people to a control condition and other older people to a condition in which they were seriously intellectually engaged.

In 2014, Denise Park, Jennifer Lodi-Smith, and their colleagues at the University of Texas at Dallas did just that. Specifically, they recruited about 220 older adults and randomly assigned groups to different conditions. Three of the groups were assigned to what they called a productive-engagement condition, in which they took an intense 14-week course that required active learning.

The control groups were assigned to what they called a receptive-engagement condition, in which they spent the same amount of time pursuing an activity, but the activity did not require the intense intellectual engagement that taking a course involves.

The researchers found that people in the productive-engagement conditions improved significantly more on measures of cognitive function than did the people in the receptive-engagement conditions. In particular, episodic memory improved quite substantially."

Excerpts of lecture taken from "The Aging Brain" – by Prof Thad Polk.

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A Prayer for Our Nation

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move every human heart, especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Adapted from
The Book of Common Prayer

Question: "Is the ACTS formula for prayer a good way to pray?"

Answer: The ACTS formula for prayer has been taught to children and new believers for many years. *ACTS* is an acronym that gives a basic model on how to pray: with Adoration, with Confession, with Thanksgiving, and with Supplication. While prayer formulas can help us learn to pray, they do not necessarily make our prayers more effective or ensure that our prayers will be answered. This model for prayer is loosely based on the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13), except for thanksgiving.

The ACTS model for prayer includes these elements:

Adoration – The *A* in the ACTS model stands for adoration, which means worship—glorying and exalting God. Through adoration, we show our loyalty and admiration of our Father. As we pray, we are called to worship God in adoration. This could be a song of praise to Him, praying a psalm of worship, declaring His attributes, or a myriad of other forms of worship.

Confession – The *C* in the ACTS model stands for confession. The word *confess* means “to agree with.” When we confess our sins, we agree with God that we are wrong and that we have sinned against Him by what we have said, thought, or done. God forgives us and restores our fellowship with Him (1 John 1:9).

Thanksgiving – The *T* represents thanksgiving. Philippians 4:6 says, “With thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (ESV). How is thanksgiving different from adoration? The difference is that worship focuses on who God is; thanksgiving focuses on what God has done. We can thank God for many things including His love, salvation, protection, and provision.

Supplication – The *S* stands for supplication, which refers to prayer for our and others’ needs. A supplication is a request or petition. We may pray for mercy (Psalm 4:1), leading (Psalm 5:8), wisdom (James 1:5), and much more. Paul encouraged us to make “supplication for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:18, ESV), which means to pray diligently for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Is the ACTS formula for prayer biblical? The acronym itself isn’t found in the Bible, but it can serve as a guide, especially when we are learning how to pray. Remember, prayer isn’t a formula, and each prayer doesn’t have to cover every type of prayer. God wants us to talk from our hearts and express ourselves to Him. As we grow in our love for Jesus Christ, we will naturally desire to talk to Him more.



Question: "What is the five-finger prayer?"

Answer: The five-finger prayer is a method to help people remember categories of people to pray for. It is a memory device used as an aid to prayer.

The little finger, or the pinkie, is the smallest finger, and it represents the individual who is praying. We need to pray for ourselves, but in humility we need to remember that we are the least important.

The ring finger this is usually the weakest of our fingers, and it reminds us to pray for the weak and the sick among us.

The middle finger is the tallest finger, and it reminds us to pray for our leaders.

The pointer finger, or the index finger, reminds us to pray for people who point the way—teachers and church leaders.

The thumb is the thickest and strongest digit, and when the hand is at rest, the thumb is the nearest to the rest of the body, reminding us to pray for family and friends—people who are closest to us.

The five-finger prayer has been popularized by Pope Francis. There is nothing specifically Roman Catholic about the five-finger prayer; it is simply one method to help people remember whom to pray for, similar to a prayer list. Since we all have our hands with us, the reminder of those in need of prayer is constant.

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PERSEVERING IN JESUS

Consider him who endured...so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:3

When I was studying in seminary years ago, we had a weekly chapel service. At one service, while we students were singing "Great is the Lord," I spotted three of our well-loved professors singing with fervor. Their faces radiated joy, made possible only by their faith in God. Years later, as each went through terminal illness, it was this faith that enabled them to endure and encourage others.

Today, the memory of my teachers singing continues to encourage me to keep going in my trials. To me, they're a few of the many inspiring stories of people who lived by faith. They're a reminder of how we can follow the author's call in Hebrews 12:2-3 to fix our eyes on Jesus who "for the joy set before him...endured the cross" (v. 2).

When trials—from persecution of life's challenges—make it hard to keep going, we have the example of those who took God at His word and trusted in His promises. We can "run with perseverance the race marked out for us" (v. 1), remembering that Jesus—and those who have gone before us—was able to endure. The writer urges us to "consider him...so that [we] will not grow weary and lose heart" (v. 3).

My teachers, now happy in heaven, would likely say: "The life of faith is worth it. Keep going." Karen Huang

Who's inspired you to keep going in your faith journey? How does their example encourage you to endure in times of trial and hardship?

Dear Jesus, help me to keep fixing my eyes on You. When I'm weary and losing heart, thank you for Your example.

For further study, read *Going the Distance: Practices to Strengthen Your Faith* at DiscoverODB.org

Today's Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-3

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

INSIGHT

Who are the "witnesses" the writer refers to in Hebrews 12:1? That's a matter of some debate, but a plausible interpretation is that they're the faithful believers who've gone before us. Now they stand as "witnesses," while we on earth remain in the arena, competing in our race of faith (v. 1). We accomplish this by "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith" (v. 2). This means that Christ is our leader as we live it out. The word pioneer in the Greek is *archēgos*. Other translations render it "author," "champion," or "originator." the path Jesus took was far more difficult than the one we're on. He bore the sins of the whole world, yet it led to His rightful place "at the right hand of the throne of God" (v. 2). Our race is difficult as well, but we know the joyful conclusion, for He's blazed the trail for us. Tim Gustafson

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MOTIVATED BY LOVE

If I...do not have love, I gain nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:3

Jim and Laneeda were college sweethearts. They got married and life was happy for many years. Then Laneeda began to act strangely, getting lost and forgetting appointments. She was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's at forty-seven. After a decade of serving as her primary caregiver, Jim was able to say, "Alzheimer's has given me the opportunity to love and serve my wife in ways that were unimaginable when I said, 'I do.'"

While explaining the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Paul wrote extensively on the virtue of love (1 Corinthians 13). He contrasted rote acts of service with those overflowing from a loving heart. Powerful speaking is good, Paul wrote, but without love it's like meaningless noise (v. 1). "If I ...give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing" (v. 3). Paul ultimately said, "the greatest⁵ [gift] is love" (v. 13).

Jim's understanding of love and serve deepened as he cared for his wife. Only a deep and abiding love could give him the strength to support her every day. Ultimately, the only place we see this sacrificial love modeled perfectly is in God's love for us, which caused Him to send Jesus to die for our sins (John 3:16). That act of sacrifice, motivated by love, has changed our world forever. Karen Pimpou

How have you tried to serve others without love? How can a love for God and others inspire your actions today?

Loving God, thank You for loving me. May my actions flow out of a loving heart today.

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13

¹ If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries all knowledge,

and if I have faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrong. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

INSIGHT

First Corinthians 13 is considered to be the love chapter of the New Testament. The love Paul describes is contrary to what our culture values and portrays. It has nothing to do with lust or satisfying one's own needs. Instead, it's directed outward toward others and is totally unselfish. Such love isn't primarily an emotion but an active decision to stay engaged and remain connected. Yet this type of love is impossible apart from God's work in us through the Holy Spirit. It's the greatest of human qualities (v. 13) and an attribute of God Himself (1 John 4:8). Alyson Kieda

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An Easter Prayer

Lord, thank you for loving us more than life itself.

God, life is hard and uncertain. So much pain, hurt, and heartache seems to surround us. And yet, knowing this, You still willingly gave up your life and became God with us and God who rescues us.

Thank you.

Because of Your sacrifice, we can spend eternity with You. There is no pain You cannot conquer, no hurt You cannot heal, and no life You cannot transform. Your death and resurrection proved that nothing is impossible for You, and that we are more than conquerors because of You.

Today and every day, help us to fix our hearts and our minds on You. And as we do, please give us more of Your joy, hope, and peace. We love You, and we want to worship You.

YouVersion

Remove Anger and Lift Your Spirits

Anger is a depressant of the spirit. So much energy is expended in anger that you are, literally, exhausted. The aftereffect is one of despondency. Anger that simmers and simmers and seethes is even more depressing because it permits a constant leakage of energy. Fortunately, there is an effective method for correcting this condition. You will be amazed at the self-control it gives.

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1.

Next time you feel anger arising, repeat this verse several times and note the effect. It is one of the best Spirit Lifters.

The Renewed Soul

Staleness results from lack of spiritual inspiration. But there is a cure.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. Psalm 23:2

Anyone who has traveled through a desert area is refreshed when he comes finally to the green grass country. What makes the difference? Life-giving water. Similarly, the arid human personality becomes as green pastures when the water of life flows through mind and heart. The soul is restored. It becomes peaceful and develops new vitality. The spirit rises to new heights.

When You Feel "Down"

Here is a true Spirit Lifter, a strength renewer, to use when you feel "down": **He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. Isaiah 40:29**

God is the source of all energy—in the sun, in plants and in people. Through the channel of spiritual thought, He will pour new energy and strength into you. You will feel it physically, emotionally and mentally.

Conceive of our Lord as touching you. Affirm that He is sending into your being His illimitable strength. Repeat this Spirit Lifter. You will feel new strength.

Cast Your Care on God

In maintaining a high spirit, it is important to cultivate the attitude of spiritual surrender. Place yourself, your interests, hopes and purposes completely in God's hands.

Therefore humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7

If we surrender ourselves to the direction of God, being guided by His hand, He will exalt us —He will help us attain our purposes and rise above all defeats. Cast all your care upon God; He cares for you. This is a supreme Spirit Lifter!

Know God and Live

A physicians told me that a large percent of patients did not need medicine; they needed God. Tolstoy said, "To know God is to live."

How do you find God? The answer is simple: **And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13**

Say these words over and over until your mind deeply accepts the fact that God will come into your life when you want him with all your heart. Show me a person who really knows God, and I will show you a happy, enthusiastic and vital individual.

Afraid of nothing

Fear haunts the minds of so many people. It is a paralyzing sickness. One verse that has helped many is this: **The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1**

Fear always lurks among shadows. It thrives in darkness. A spiritually darkened mind is a breeding ground for terrifying fears. Flood the darkness with light and fear scurry away. Fill the mind with light, and fears are driven off.

Fears develop when you feel weak. But the Lord transmits strength. Result? You are afraid of nothing.

Pure Mind and Pure Joy

Depression is sometimes due to evil in thoughts and actions. This leads to restlessness and weariness.

But the wicked are like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. "There is no peace," for the wicked." Isaiah 57:20-21

Inner tumult keeps every dirty thing in a state of suspension. The waters of the soul are discolored. No one can experience inner peace until they experience inner cleansing. Our souls are restless until they find peace in God; then we know pure joy.

“

In Christ I am anointed and a powerful person of God.

I am a joint-heir with Jesus and more than a conqueror.

I am a doer of the Word of God and a channel for His blessings.

If God be for me, who can be against me?

I am blessed coming in and I am blessed going out.

My enemies are fleeing before me.

God has commanded His blessing on my storehouses.

He has opened His Good treasures and I shall lend and not borrow.

I am the head and not the tail.

He has given me power to make wealth.

I dwell in the secret place.

I have His protection and provision.

God is my refuge, my fortress.

I am not afraid of the snare of the fowler.

No Evil shall befall me and no plague shall come nigh my dwelling.

God has given his angels charge over me and they are bearing me up in their hands

lest I dash my foot against a stone, as declared in Psalm 91.

1 Peter 2:9 establishes I am a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.

I am a peculiar person called out of darkness into His marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:24 states, I have been healed by the stripes of Jesus.

*Cancer, sugar diabetes, heart disease, sickness, afflictions, infections,
or any other disease cannot enter my body.*

I am without spot or blemish, an intercessor,

the righteousness of God, saved, and washed in the Blood of Jesus.

“No weapon formed against me shall prosper, and every tongue which rise against me in judgement You shall condemn.

This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD,

and their righteousness is from Me,” Says the LORD.

I am saved from wrath by Him and justified by the blood of the Lamb.

*Lord I pray that those may prosper that love Jerusalem and that peace will be within them
and prosperity in their houses according to Psalms 122:6-9.*

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

PEOPLE ARE OFTEN UNREASONABLE
AND SELF-CENTERED.

FORGIVE THEM ANYWAY.

IF YOU ARE KIND, PEOPLE MAY
ACCUSE YOU OF ULTERIOR MOTIVES.

BE KIND ANYWAY.

IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL, YOU WILL WIN
SOME FALSE FRIENDS AND SOME TRUE ENEMIES

SUCCEED ANYWAY.

WHAT YOU SPEND YEARS BUILDING
SOMEONE CAN DESTROY OVERNIGHT

BUILD ANYWAY.

IF YOU ARE HONEST,
PEOPLE MAY CHEAT YOU.

BE HONEST ANYWAY.

IF YOU FIND HAPPINESS,
PEOPLE MAY BE JEALOUS.

BE HAPPY ANYWAY.

THE GOOD YOU DO TODAY MAY
BE FORGOTTEN TOMORROW.

DO GOOD ANYWAY.

GIVE THE WORLD THE BEST YOU HAVE
AND IT MAY NEVER BE ENOUGH.

GIVE YOUR BEST ANYWAY.

FOR YOU SEE, IN THE END,
IT IS BETWEEN YOU AND GOD.

**IT WAS NEVER BETWEEN
YOU AND THEM ANYWAY.**

-MOTHER THERESA



THE BEAUTY OF HOLLAND

I AM OFTEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE THE EXPERIENCE OF RAISING A CHILD WITH DISABILITY - TO TRY TO HELP PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT SHARED THAT UNIQUE EXPERIENCE TO UNDERSTAND IT, TO IMAGINE HOW IT WOULD FEEL. IT'S LIKE THIS...

WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A BABY, IT'S LIKE PLANNING A FABULOUS TRIP TO ITALY. YOU BUY A BUNCH OF GUIDEBOOKS AND MAKE YOUR WONDERFUL PLANS. THE COLISEUM, THE MICHEL-ANGELO DAVID. THE GONDOLAS IN VENICE. YOU LEARN SOME HANDY PHRASES IN ITALIAN. IT'S ALL VERY, VERY EXCITING!

AFTER MONTHS OF EAGER ANTICIPATION, THE DAY FINALLY ARRIVES. YOU PACK YOUR BAGS AND OFF YOU GO. SEVERAL HOURS LATER THE PLANE LANDS. THE FLIGHT ATTENDANT COMES IN AND SAYS, "WELCOME TO HOLLAND."

"HOLLAND!!!" YOU SAY, "WHAT DO YOU MEAN HOLLAND! I SIGNED UP FOR ITALY. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE IN ITALY! ALL MY LIFE I'VE DREAMED OF GOING TO ITALY."

BUT THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE FLIGHT PLAN. THEY LANDED IN HOLLAND AND YOU MUST STAY. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THEY HAVEN'T TAKEN YOU TO A HORRIBLE, DISGUSTING, FILTHY PLACE, FULL OF PESTILENCE, FAMINE AND DISEASE. IT'S JUST A DIFFERENT PLACE.

SO YOU MUST GO OUT AND BUY NEW GUIDEBOOKS. AND YOU MUST LEARN A WHOLE NEW LANGUAGE. AND YOU WILL MEET A WHOLE NEW GROUP OF PEOPLE YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE MET.

IT'S JUST A DIFFERENT PLACE. IT'S SLOWER-PACED THAN ITALY, LESS FLASHY THAN ITALY. BUT AFTER YOU'RE BEEN THERE AWHILE AND CATCH YOUR BREATH, YOU BEGIN TO LOOK AROUND, AND YOU BEGIN TO NOTICE THAT HOLLAND HAS WINDMILLS, HOLLAND HAS TULIPS. HOLLAND EVEN HAS REMBRANDTS.

BUT EVERYONE YOU KNOW IS BUSY COMING AND GOING FROM ITALY, AND THEY'RE BRAGGING ABOUT WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME THEY HAD THERE. AND FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE YOU WILL SAY, "YES, THAT'S WHERE I WAS SUPPOSED TO GO. THAT'S WHAT I HAD PLANNED."

AND THE PAIN WILL NEVER, EVER GO AWAY, BECAUSE THE LOSS OF THAT DREAM IS A VERY SIGNIFICANT LOSS.

BUT IF YOU SPEND YOUR LIFE MOURNING THE FACT YOU DIDN'T GO TO ITALY, YOU MAY NEVER BE FREE TO ENJOY THE VERY SPECIAL, THE VERY LOVELY THINGS ABOUT HOLLAND.

SOURCE UNKNOWN

You Must Develop Patience

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. James 1:4

When you and I say to God, “Change me,” we better know what we’re saying because we are not just going to wake up different the next morning. Instead, what God is going to do is give us an opportunity, through opposition, to grow as we change. James 1 tells us how important it is to have patience when we’re changing and facing opposition. Patience is a fruit of the Spirit that only develops and grows under trial, and it’s something we need. Scripture tells us that when we have it, we’re perfect and entire, lacking nothing. However, there’s

just no way to get it without going through something to receive it. If we really want to be victorious Christians who serve God and make a difference in the world, then we are going to have to go through some challenging things. The devil will try to scare you off, but God can see you through any challenge. So today, choose to let God work through you, even in the face of opposition. As your patience grows and develops, you will step into a life of great victory.

Prayer Starter: Lord, I want You to change me, and I know that means I’ll have to go through Challenges. Give me Your strength to endure and be steadfast when I’m going through trials so I can have patience and be fully developed in Christ.

Your Three Best Weapons

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 2 Corinthian 10:3

Through careful strategy and cunning deceit, Satan attempts to wage war against you and keep you in a mindset of defeat. But God has given you spiritual weapons to use against him. Here are the main three spiritual weapons you can use to fight off the enemy: 1. God’s Word: Receive it through preaching, teaching, reading and private Bible study. Continue in the Word until it becomes revelation given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. 2. Praise: This defeats the devil faster and move more efficiently than any other battle plan,

but it must be genuine heart-praise, not just lip service or a religious ritual. 3. Prayer: Prayer is relationship with the Godhead. It is communication with God, asking Him for help or talking with Him about whatever is on your heart. To have an effective prayer life, we must develop an intimate, personal relationship with the Father. Know that He loves you and that He loves you and that He wants to help you. There is a war going on, but God is fighting on your side and has given you the weapons you need. Use them to send Satan running!

Prayer Starter: Lord, thank You so much for giving me the spiritual weapons I need to fight my enemy. With Your help, I know that I can win the battle today!

Living Life Free of Strife

The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: Therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with. Proverbs 17:14

Strife is one of the main weapons the enemy uses against Christians. I believe there are three things that open us up to a spirit of strife. 1. Our lips: Wrong words spoken at the wrong time can certainly start a firestorm. The more wrong words we pour on the fire, the bigger it gets. One way to stop a fire is to remove the fuel. 2. Our pride: Although wrong words may open us up to strife, it is a proud heart that refuses to be quiet

in order to have peace. Pride demands that we have the last word, but the Word says it will lead to destruction (see Proverbs 16:18). 3. Our opinions: We can often get into strife by trying to convince others of our opinions. When we realize we have much to learn and stop passing out our opinions, we will begin to gain the knowledge we need. These are the three biggest areas that Satan uses to infiltrate our lives with strife. Make a decision to honor God and others by resisting strife and instead pursuing unity and understanding.

Prayer Starter: Holy Spirit, help me to stay on guard against strife. I give You my words and my opinions. I desire to walk strife-free in my relationship with others.

Learn to Trust God’s Plan for You

Commit thy way unto the LORD; Trust also in him; And he shall bring it to pass. Psalm 37:5

You can simplify your life by learning to develop trust in God. Far too often, we don’t allow ourselves to trust. Maybe your trust has been betrayed too many times in the past, or maybe you’re just a very independent person. Even so, it’s so critical to learn to trust God. It’s easy to get stressed out and run-down trying to make your life work on your own, but that never works. And God’s plan is always better than your own. The person who trusts God knows that His way is best. Now trust won’t just magically happen. Trust grows as we take

steps of faith and experience God’s faithfulness. You have to tell your doubt, your fear, your insecurity, or maybe even your fierce independence to make way for a life of trusting in God. When you do that, you won’t have to struggle so much to make your life work. Trusting God brings a supernatural rest to our souls, allowing us to live simply and freely, the way He wants us to live. So even when it doesn’t make sense, trust Him, and experience His freedom and rest

Prayer Starter: God, Your ways are better than mine and I know that trusting in my own strength will get me nowhere. I place my trust in You. Even when it doesn’t make sense to me, I choose to trust You, knowing You will make Your plans come to pass.

Old Testament

There are 39 books in the Old Testament library. There are four types of writing in the Old Testament: Law, History, Poetry, Prophecy.

It is helpful to know which kind of literature you are reading before you start: is it poetry, or is it history?

LAW

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

The first five books of the Bible are sometimes called the Law of Moses. They give many of God's laws about how to live.

HISTORY

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

These 12 historical books cover the occupation of the Promised Land, the time of the Judges, Israel's kings, the fall of the two kingdoms and a return to Jerusalem.

POETRY

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs.

Nearly one third of the Old Testament is written in poetry. These five poetical books ask profound questions about evil, pain, love, wisdom and God.

PROPHECY

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

The 17 prophetic books account for almost a quarter of the Bible. They are divided into "Major Prophets" (the first five books) and, "Minor

New Testament

There are 27 books in the New Testament library. There are three types of writing in the New Testament: History, Letters, Prophecy.

Before you study a New Testament book it helps to consider what kind of literature you are reading: is it a letter or is it history?

HISTORY

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts

The first four books, called gospels, are not like our modern biographies. But they do give four portraits of Jesus. Acts is part two of Luke, about the early church.

LETTERS

PAUL'S LETTERS

Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.

We have 13 of Paul's letters. Except for one personal one, Philemon, they were all written to groups of Christians.

OTHER LETTERS

Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude.

We don't know who wrote Hebrews. Tradition states that all the writers of the New Testament, except for John, were martyred.

PHOPHECY

Revelation

Written by the apostle John, this book has seven letters to churches and numerous visions about God.



JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN TODAY!

He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Matthew 28:6

Before Charles Simeon attended university in Cambridge, England, he loved horses and clothes, spending a huge sum on his attire yearly. But because his college required him to attend regular Communion services, he started to explore what he believed. After reading books written by believers in Jesus, he experienced a dramatic conversion on Easter Sunday. Awaking early on April 4, 1779, he cried out, "Jesus Christ is risen today! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" as he grew in his faith in God, he devoted himself to Bible study, prayer, and attending chapel services.

On the first Easter, life changed for two women who arrived at Jesus' tomb. There they witnessed a violent earthquake as an angel rolled back the stone. He said to them, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said" (Matthew 28:5-6). Overjoyed, the women worship Jesus and ran back to tell their friends the good news.

Encountering the risen Christ isn't something reserved for ancient times—he promises to meet us here and now. We might experience a dramatic encounter, such as the women at the tomb or as Charles Simeon did, but we might not. In whatever way Jesus reveals Himself to us, we can trust that He loves us. Amy Boucher Pye

How has God shown Himself to you? How have you change because of your encounter with Him?

Risen Jesus, thank You for coming and dying on the cross that I might have life eternal. I worship You.

Today Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10

¹ After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵ The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

INSIGHT

Matthew's resurrection account is stunning, particularly in its honesty. In addition to the joy of the women upon seeing the risen Jesus (28:8), we're also told of the disciples' unbelief (v. 17). When you weave together the resurrection accounts in the various gospels (and 1 Corinthians 15), it's clear that Jesus had appeared to His disciples several times at this point, yet some still doubted. We might find a small measure of comfort in that. In spite of all Christ has done for us and the ways He's proven Himself merciful and faithful, we still can struggle with doubts as they did. Like the father of the demonized boy, we find ourselves praying, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Bill Crowder

Ministries, Grand Rapids, Michigan,
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Crises/Emergency: Cell phone 860-754-4606

Cross Street Recovery Ministry the "Hope Line" is in operation 24 hours per day.

Please call 860-754-4606

if you, a friend and/or a family member are in need of counseling and/or are in crisis,

PLEASE dial the "Hope Line". All information will be confidential.

CROSS STREET MINISTRY OF RECOVERY

We can't but through God, all things are possible. How might we pull on God's strength to help each other recover?

Let the spirit of God work for you in a Mighty, Mighty Way

For more information contact:

Church office 860-344-9527.or

Rev. Gregory B. Winborne: Days: 860-616-3834



EARLY VOTING IN MIDDLETOWN

WHAT is Early Voting?

Early voting allows you to vote in person safely and securely before Election Day.

WHICH ELECTION WILL BE THE FIRST to have Early Voting available?

Early Voting will begin with the Presidential Preference Primary. The Early Voting dates for this election will be Tuesday, March 26 through Thursday March 28, and Saturday, March 30. The Presidential Preference Primary Day is Tuesday, April 2, 2024.

LOCATION

Early Voting in **Middletown** will be conducted in **one location only**, the City Hall Council Chamber, located at 245 deKoven Drive.

HOURS

The hours are 10:00 am until 6:00 pm.

PARKING

Parking is available in the parking lot adjacent to City Hall.

HOW DOES EARLY VOTING DIFFER FROM voting by absentee ballot?

Absentee Ballot voting requires a reason. (from a list of six, found at MyVote.CT.gov) Early Voting is available to every eligible voter **without a specific reason**. Early voting may be done only in person, not via mail or drop box.

HOW WILL MY BALLOT BE PROCESSED

You will be given a ballot and an envelope. Once you complete voting on your ballot, place it in the envelope, seal and sign envelope, and then place it in the secure receptacle provided. A tabulator will not be present. Ballots will then be run through the tabulator and counted on Presidential Primary Day April 2nd.

CAN I VOTE on weekends?

Yes, Early Voting includes Saturdays and Sundays for most elections. For the Presidential Preference Primary, Saturday March 30th. There is no early voting on Sunday March 31st (Easter Sunday)

VOTER REGISTRATION FOR EARLY VOTING

If you are not yet registered, but want to vote during the early voting period before the Presidential Preference Primary, file your voter registration application (for a party holding a primary) with the registrars of voters by noon on the business day before the day you want to vote.

Voter registration is also available at **Cross Street Church at 440 West Street**, during the month of March, Monday through Thursday, from 4:00 pm until 6:00pm.

If you have any questions, please contact the Middletown Registrar of Voters office, 245 DeKoven Drive, Rm B-15, 860-638-4950.



Vision: "Level-Up"

GATHER — CONNECT — GO — GIVE

We are looking forward to the **next level** that God will take us individually and collectively as a church!!!!

As we continue to move forward it is going to take Unstoppable Faith and a Godly Mindset with every fiber of our being to be determined that we are going to a **next level** in Christ!!!

Let's **Level-Up**!!!! **Level Up** Spiritually!!! **Level-Up** as we Grow Numerically and **Level-Up** as we give Financially!!!

Level-Up in allowing God to use the spiritual gifts that God has given us to do ministry!!!

Cross Street let's go to the **next level** together! **Level-Up**!!!

The Vision Statement in four simple words:

These words are expressing the minimum expectations of members

Members are to **GATHER**

Every member should attend faithfully a worship service every week. Christians are commanded to worship the Lord together. Read Acts 2:42-47. not only are we called to worship the Lord, but we are also to encourage one another when we gather together.

Members are to **CONNECT**

That's the word picture to describe locking hands and arms with others. We are called to connect together in a small group (ministry, organizations, class leader system, bible study, Sunday school, and others).

Members are to **GO**

The members should be involved in at least one ministry in the church each year. Many should be involved in ministries that got them involved outside the walls of the church. The Great Commission should be at the heart of what we do as part of the process of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20).

Members are to **GIVE**

Every member should be a regular and faithful financial giver to the church. Jesus, Himself, said it best:
"wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be"
(Matthew 6:21).

2023-2024

Vision: "Level-Up"

Gather - Connect - Go - Give

Bicentennial Anniversary
Celebrating 200 Years in Ministry

Spiritual Growth in Ministry, Giving and Health and Wellness on Purpose

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV),

It is truly a great blessing to serve as the new Pastor of the Cross Street A.M.E. Zion Church.

As we journey together in this new season at Cross Street it is imperative that we seek to go to the next level in Christ.

God has truly blessed the Cross Street Church!!! We are celebrating 200 years in Ministry!!!

We truly have "Come this Far by Faith" and "We Are Not Tired Yet"!

We are looking forward to the next level that God will take us individually and collectively as a church!!!!

We thank God for the legacy that Presiding Elder Moses L. Harvill and First Lady Eledia Harvill has blessed us with in the last thirty years.

As we continue to move forward it is going to take Unstoppable Faith and a Godly Mindset with every fiber of our being to be determined that we are going to a next level in Christ!!!

Let's Level-Up!!!! Level Up Spiritually!!! Level-Up as we Grow Numerically and Level-Up as we give Financially!!!

Level-Up in allowing God to use the spiritual gifts that God has given us to do ministry!!!

Cross Street let's go to the next level together! Level-Up!!!

Peace and Blessings!



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday

8:00 a.m. **Church School**
(see Sunday Church School)
10:00 p.m. **Worship Service**
<https://zoom.us/j/959628798>
Meeting ID: 959 628 798
(929) 205-6099, Code: 959628798#

Tell your family and friends from
across the Country.
We can be watched worldwide.

Tuesday

Bible Study

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Join Zoom Meeting Link: <https://zoom.us/j/562367770>
(929)205-6099, Code: 562367770#

Wednesday

Day Of Prayer

Prayer Times: 6:00 A.M. 12:00 P.M. &
6:00 P.M.
Free Conference Call: 1 (727) 731-4561

Sunday Church School

8:00 a.m. – 08:45 a.m.
Adults

Call-in only: 978-990-5105
Code: 204730#
Sister Sylvia Pina / Brother Ken
Simmons

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 am
Children: ages 3-12:

In person, Fellowship Hall
Ms. Carolyn Smith / Rev. Grant.

3:00 pm—3:34 pm
Children: ages 9-12

Call-in: 929-205-6099, Code:
614890401#.

or
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/614890401#>
Rev. Grant teacher

Any questions call: 860-490-3199
Gloria Malloy, Church School
Superintendent.

We thank you for your generous giving. Ways you can give:

- Online: crosstreetamezion.org
1. Realm, (Realm: <https://onrealm.org/TheCross/-/give/TJXKDEVIXE>)
2. Text 73256 (Thecross)
3. PayPal,
4. CASHAPP: \$TheCross440
5. Mail: P.O. Box 223 Middletown, Ct

- 06457,
6. Drop off on Sunday 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
7. Call the office for someone to pick up
8. Church outside Lockbox

(Note: you can find links on the
website; <http://www.crosstreetamezion.org/Give>)

Sanctuary Guidelines

There will be one service at 10:00 A.M. The doors will open at 9:45 A.M. to begin temperature check-in. As you enter the building, we request you to sanitize your hands.

If you choose to worship in the Sanctuary, there will be one entrance open, the main doors in the front of the building. The committee and I ask that you follow the guidelines for seating. The pews and floor will be marked to help you do this.

We also kindly request all persons attending to wear a mask over their mouth and nose to prevent the possible spread of illness to the most vulnerable among us. Masks are not required for those under the age of two or for persons unable to remove their masks.

I understand that there has been considerable discussion about masks. Since the scriptures are, of course, silent on the matter, I do not think we need to agree on the substance of the question. It is a matter of personal conscience. However, since some of our more vulnerable brothers and sisters would experience a great deal

of anxiety worshipping with a group of people who are not wearing masks, I ask that you consent to wear a mask for their sake (see 1 Corinthians 8-9 for the principle).

Worship Outside: If you prefer to worship outdoors, there will be designated parking and an outside speaker, and you can listen on radio frequency 89.3 F.M. and watch on your phone via zoom, Facebook, or YouTube. During Communion, someone will bring the sacrament to you.

Livestream Worship: Finally, we will continue to live-stream the 10:00 A.M. service so that you can watch from your home. If you are experiencing any signs or symptoms of a new illness, including fatigue, fever, chills, difficulty breathing, cough, or nausea, please make use of the live stream and consider contacting your healthcare provider.

Other Precautions:
Since studies seem inconclusive on whether singing increases the risk for viral spread, and since we want to

exercise an abundance of caution at this point in re-opening, if you choose to join the worship and praise team in singing, please keep on your mask.

Please refrain from shaking hands and embracing one another at this time.

I understand that some of these precautions may feel burdensome. They are temporary, and, even so, I hope you will join me in giving thanks to God for bringing us back together again and ask him to provide us with patience and kindness for each other.

Much Love to All. Faithfully Yours,
Pastor Harvill

Special Note: For now, we will have service in the Sanctuary every other Sunday (First and 3rd) and 2nd and fourth in the parking lot only, along with Live streaming.

Please let us know by phone call, letter, or email what else we can do to help you become comfortable returning to in-person worship.

The Cross Street Journal is published Bi-monthly. It can be found on our website: crosstreetamezion.org & in the front lobby. If you would like a PDF copy sent to you, Email your request to: ken462012@gmail.com. If you have an article or information (word count 1000 - 1500 or less) for current and future publications the deadline for this information is the Monday after the 2nd Sunday of each Month. **You may submit your information in the following ways:** place the information on a CD (Window format) and leave it in the Cross Street office, E-mail Ken Simmons (ken462012@gmail.com), or give it to him. **Praise God!!!**



CROSS STREET A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Organized in 1823

440 West Street P.O. Box 223

Middletown, CT 06457

Phone: 860-344-9527 Fax: 860-344-1740

crossstreetchurch@snet.net

www.crossstreetamezion.org

Sunday School — See Page 31

Worship Service — 10:00 a.m.

Rev. Robyn M Anderson

Pastor

Email: revrmanderson@gmail.com

The Rev. Moses L. Harvill,

Presiding Elder

Mrs. D. Diane Proctor

Missionary Supervisor

The Right Reverend Dennis

Proctor

Presiding Prelate

Ministerial Staff

Rev. Robyn Anderson

Rev. William D. Wilson

Rev. Ella Frances Perry

Rev. Karen Nesmith

Rev. James Battle

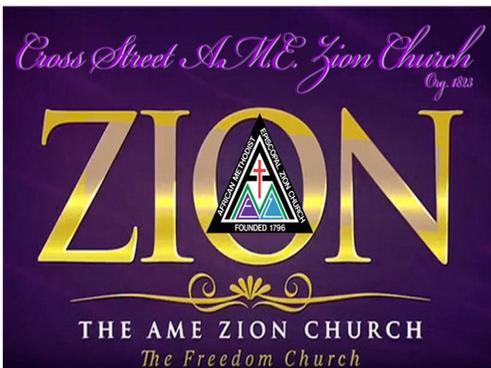
Rev. Myrtle Turner

Rev. Gregory Winborne

Rev. Joyce Johnson

Rev. Earlene Grants

Sister Felicia Freeman



Vision: "Level-Up"

GATHER — CONNECT — GO — GIVE

"I am a Christian"

By Maya Angelou

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not shouting "I'm clean livin'."
I'm whispering "I was lost,
Now I'm found and forgiven."

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I don't speak of this with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble
And need Christ to be my guide.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not trying to be strong.
I'm professing that I'm weak
And need His strength to carry on.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not bragging of success.
I'm admitting I have failed
And need God to clean my mess.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I still feel the sting of pain.
I have my share of heartaches
So I call upon His name.

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not holier than thou.
I'm just a simple sinner
Who received God's good grace,
somehow!

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV)

Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom
come, Thy will be done in earth, as it
is in heaven. Give us this day our
daily bread. And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors. And lead
us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil: For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, for
ever. Amen.



Then the Lord answered me and said:
Write the vision and make it plain on
tablets, that he may run who reads it.
Habakkuk 2:2

The Jabez Prayer

And Jabez called on the God of Israel
saying, "Oh, that You would bless me
indeed, and enlarge my territory,
that Your hand would keep me from
evil, that I may nor cause pain!" So
God granted him what he requested.
1 Chronicles 4:10 (NKJV)

"God's Word

*For the word of God is quick, and power-
ful, and sharper than any two-edged
sword, piercing even to the dividing
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the
joints and marrow, and is a discerner of
the thoughts and intents of the heart"*
Hebrews 4:12

Prayer: Forever, O Lord, your Word is
settled in heaven. I bless you because
you have given me rest according to
all that you have promised to me. Not
one word of all your good promises
has ever failed. In light of this truth, I
will walk in your Word at all times.
I love your Word, Father, it is a lamp
unto my feet, and a light unto my
path. All of your words are pure, O
God, and you are a shield to me. Lord

God, your way is perfect, and your
Word is tried. You are a shield and a
mighty buckler to me as I trust in you.
With your Word you made the heav-
ens, O Lord. all of your promises are
yes in Christ, unto your glory, O God.
You have spoken through your Word
since ancient times, in order to give
light to those who sit in darkness, and
you guide my feet in the way of peace.
Your Word is quick, alive, and power-
ful, and sharper than any two-edged
sword. It pierces even to the dividing
asunder of my soul and spirit, and of
my joints and marrow, and is a dis-
cerner of the thoughts and intents of
my heart.
Father, I am thankful for your Word,
and I will endeavor to walk in the light
of your Word all the days of my life.

If you were to die today, do you know where you will spend eternity ???

Doxology

Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.
Jude 24-25