

# THE CROSS



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



See Page 29 for more Information

January-February 2022  
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## Prayer & Fasting

**Praying and fasting for the Turning Point: Pursuing new possibilities for Ministry in the Post Pandemic.**

**Praying for salvation, healing, deliverance, and prosperity. Lifting our children for spiritual guidance and success in school. Praying for spiritual, numerical, and financial growth in 2022.**

**We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. I can do all**

*(Prayer & Fasting on page 16)*

## Embracing Realities of Life

Zhou Daxin's latest novel, "The Sky Gets Dark, Slowly", is a sensitive exploration of old age and the complex, hidden emotional worlds of the elderly in a rapidly aging world.

In it he writes, "...Many elderly speak as though they know everything, but of old age they are in fact as ignorant as children. Many elderly are in fact, completely unprepared for what they are to face when it comes to

*(Embracing Realities on page 17)*

## Love

**What does it mean that God is love?**

The Bible teaches that God loves us, yet also teaches that God is love. First John 4:7-9 reveals, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because *God is love*. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."

In the original Greek used to write the *(Love on page 15)*

## "I Am Happy With What I Have"

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

### LET'S TALK ABOUT JOY!

A powerful way to learn from God's word with your family can begin by asking questions! Here are some ways to begin spiritual conversations throughout this week! Feel free to dive deeper into these scriptures as well: Psalms 16:11 ESV, 28:7 NLT, 30:12

*(I Am Happy on page 27)*

# 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.

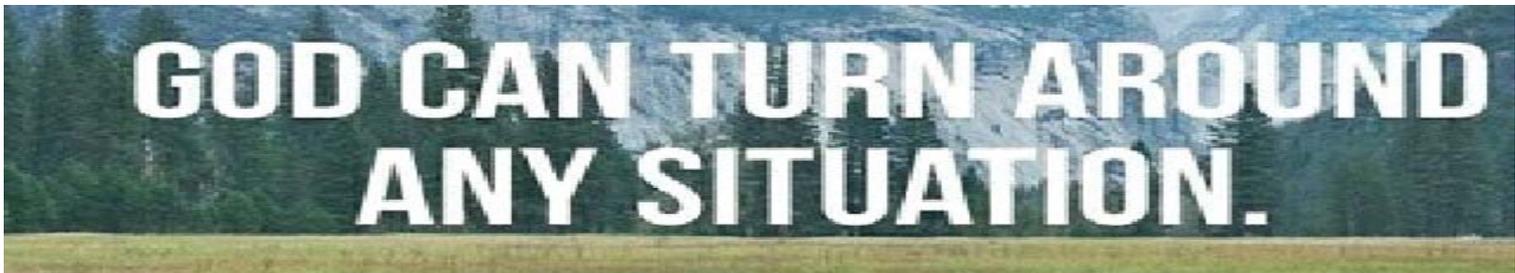
## 10. LOVE YOURSELF

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.**



# *From The Pastor's Desk*

Dear Church Family,

I wanted to take a moment and send a note to wish you and yours a blessed and prosperous New Year!

We have experienced in the past year many trials and difficulties as a Church Family. Yet, we are to still hold forth the Cross of Jesus Christ (and His Resurrection) as the answer to the needs of humanity. We must continue to tell the good news that Christ still saves, heals, delivers, and comfort the weak.

I want to encourage you to look to this new year of 2022 in faith and determination to bring you more remarkable victory and strength. Let me remind you of a very familiar passage of scripture to encourage you:

Philippians 4:13 (KJV) 13 I can do all things through Christ, which strengthened me. (Remember, Paul was a man who experienced prison for the cause of Christ!).

The Lord has spoken to me that the New Year will be a Turning Point for spiritual, numerical, and financial growth.

If we continue to follow the principles of Loving more, serving more, and giving more, it will move us far along the path to the next level of Ministry.

Again, have a blessed and prosperous New Year, and I want you to know that you are appreciated! Much love from the Pastor and First Lady.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Harvill

**Note: You can start giving now via realm online, text, cash app, PayPal, mail, and drop-off.**

**"Pursuing New Possibilities in the Pandemic for Ministry**

**" With men, it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God" ~ Matthew 19:26.**



# RETOOLING FOR CHURCH GROWTH 2021

- Renewing
- Reconnecting •Reopening

*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,  
and all these things shall be added to you. ~Matthew 6:33*

Growing the Church via Zoom & Virtual Church

*Starting Stronger:*

## RENEWING

*Bible Study— Growing in Christ: Lessons on Assurance—Lessons on Christian Living  
‘Living for Christ isn’t easy, but it is possible!’ Learn how with GROWING with CHRIST  
Lessons will be emailed & available for you to pick up at the church.*

*We begin the year with Spiritual Renewal  
-Prayer & Bible Study*

## RECONNECTING

*Growing the church by coming back together in love & fellowship*

## REOPENING

*Returning with zeal for Christ and His Kingdom mission*

## Hear Our Prayers Lord

### “2022 Happy New Year”

Let's pray: Eternal God, You gave us the greatest gift: the gift of life. In the coming year, help us use it wisely. May we grow in generosity, kindness and forgiveness, hope, faith and love. In Jesus name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Thank You Jesus.

### “Prayer for God to Search and know You”

Psalms 139:23-24 say, **“Search me, God and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting”**, Amen.

#### Search us, Lord.

Lord, we thank You that You see all and that You know all. Search us, Lord. We give You access and full reign over every part of our life. We thank You for revealing our offensive ways and giving us wisdom on how to change. We accept our imperfection and embrace Your grace in these moments. We need You Lord to do a work in us. Help us never grow tired of Your correction, its In Jesus Name we pray, Amen, Amen, Amen.

### “Prayer for When You Feel All Alone”

**Genesis 16:13 says, “You are the God who sees me...”**  
Amen

Dear God, Thank You that You see us right where we are, in the midst of our pain and struggle, in the middle of our desert land. Thank You that You have not forgotten us and never will. Forgive us for not trusting You, for doubting Your goodness, or not believing You're really there. We choose to set our eyes on you today. We choose joy and peace when the whispered lies come and say that we should have no joy or peace. We also thank You care for us and Your love for us is so great. We confess our need for You. Fill us fresh with Your Spirit, renew our hearts and minds in Your truth. We ask for Your hope and comfort to continue to heal our hearts where they're been broken. Give us the courage to face another day, knowing that with You before us and behind us, we have nothing to fear, its In Jesus Name we pray, Amen, Amen, Amen.

### “Prayer for Fresh Hunger for the Word”

**James 4:4-6 says, “You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God's? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”**  
**Amen, Amen, Amen.**

Father, we are weary, and we can tell that our flesh wants to look to things of this world to fill our life and mind with. But

we know that those things will never satisfy when we are feeling weak. Today we repent for fixing our gaze on lesser things and we ask You for the grace to give us a hunger to seek You and know You in a deeper way. We ask You, to please stir our heart to read Your word and spend time in prayer with you daily? We look to You because You are worthy of our affection and devotion, its in Jesus' name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

### “Prayer to Remain Steadfast Under Trials”

**James 1:12 says, “Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him,”** Amen.

Dear Lord, we love You. Thank You that You are with us as we journey through this life with all its troubles. Please increase our faith as we cling to the promises You give us during our struggles. Be with us, help us, guide us, draw us closer to You. Thank You for the promise that if we stand firm in our faith during the test, that You will reward us with the crown of life. Help us remember each day that You love us, that You are with us, and that we are Your beloved child, its in Your name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

### “Prayer When You Worry About What People Think”

**Psalms 34:4-5 says, “I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked into him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.”**

Let us pray, Lord, we spend so much energy trying to please others when we are the one we want to please. Forgive us for letting the fear of man keep us from a wholehearted focus on You. We know our fear. We lift them up to you now and trust that You will deliver us. So Father, give us the peace that passes all understanding as we turn our focus to You today. Help us to keep our eyes on You and You alone. Give us discernment to follow Your guidance today in each challenge that we face. Let us pray, lord, instead of making other people the center of our life, we want to make You the center. We need Your grace to keep our gaze fixed on You. Lord, as we look to You, make us radiant with Your presence. Fill us with Your spirit, so others can see a reflection of Jesus in us when we speak or smile. Not so that they'll think we are good persons, but so they'll see You are a good God. That we bring glory to ourselves through us. And Father, we thank You in advance for answering our prayer and delivering us from our worries about what others think. We trust that You will enable us to shine the light of Christ today, it's In Jesus Name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

**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**; F A I T H F U L N E S S, *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

### January

1 Genesis 1-2  
2 Genesis 3-5  
3 Genesis 6-9  
4 Genesis 10-11  
5 Genesis 12-15  
6 Genesis 16-19  
7 Genesis 20-22

8 Genesis 23-26  
9 Genesis 27-29  
10 Genesis 30-32  
11 Genesis 33-36  
12 Genesis 37-39  
13 Genesis 40-42  
14 Genesis 43-46  
15 Genesis 47-50

16 Exodus 1-4  
17 Exodus 5-7  
18 Exodus 8-10  
19 Exodus 11-13  
20 Exodus 14-17  
21 Exodus 18-20  
22 Exodus 21-24  
23 Exodus 25-27

24 Exodus 28-31  
25 Exodus 32-34  
26 Exodus 35-37  
27 Exodus 38-40  
28 Leviticus 1-4  
29 Leviticus 5-7  
30 Leviticus 8-10  
31 Leviticus 11-13

### FEBRUARY

01) Leviticus 14-16  
02) Leviticus 17-19  
03) Leviticus 20-23  
04) Leviticus 24-27  
05) Numbers 1-3  
06) Numbers 4-6  
07) Numbers 7-10

08) Numbers 11-14  
09) Numbers 15-17  
10) Numbers 18-20  
11) Numbers 21-24  
12) Numbers 25-27  
13) Numbers 28-30  
14) Numbers 31-33  
15) Numbers 34-36

16) Deuteronomy 1-3  
17) Deuteronomy 4-6  
18) Deuteronomy 7-9  
19) Deuteronomy 10-12  
20) Deuteronomy 13-16  
21) Deuteronomy 17-19  
22) Deuteronomy 20-22  
23) Deuteronomy 23-25

24) Deuteronomy 26-28  
25) Deuteronomy 29-31  
26) Deuteronomy 32-34  
27) Joshua 1-3  
28) Joshua 4-6

### MARCH

01) Joshua 7-9  
02) Joshua 10-12  
03) Joshua 13-15  
04) Joshua 16-18  
05) Joshua 19-21  
06) Joshua 22-24  
07) Judges 1-4

08) Judges 5-8  
09) Judges 9-12  
10) Judges 13-15  
11) Judges 16-18  
12) Judges 19-21  
13) Ruth 1-4  
14) 1 Samuel 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

Name of God	Meaning	Application
<b>JEHOVAH</b>	"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.
<b>JEHOVAH- JIREH</b>	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.
<b>JEHOVAH-MEKADDISHKEM</b>	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.
<b>JEHOVAH-NISSI</b>	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.
<b>JEHOVAH –RAPHA</b>	The Lord Who Heals	God has provided the final cure for spiritual, physical, and emotional sickness in Jesus Christ. God can heal us.
<b>JEHOVAH - ROHI</b>	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.
<b>JEHOVAH – SABAOTH</b>	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.

**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** is the period of time to reflect on the events that led Jesus to Calvary. Its 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 Kingdome. 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 far God's Vision for the Church**

Foods to include in your eating plan during the Daniel Fast

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

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)

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

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)

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

3. Fast and yield yourself to God as a servant.

Daniel said, "as you see fit, deal with your servants" (Daniel 1:13)

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

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)

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

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)

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

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

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

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

**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.!

**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.

**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.

**Be blessed on your fast**

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

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

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.

**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.

**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 iniquities.  
 To You, Adonai, is my praise for always;  
 may my last breath be a whisper  
 giving You all the glory.

*juliesanne.com*



## Sunday School is a Family Affair

8:45 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. We have classes for all ages – 3 to 103  
New Members Class meets at the same time.  
(For Transportation Needs Please call the Church 860-344-9527)

**Come Grow with US!**

### Restoring Law and Order

**Background Scripture:** Ezra 7:1-26

#### EXALTI!

**Declaration:** Ezra 7:1-10, 23-26

**Affirmation:** We value how God works through various types of people to bring God's plan into fruition.

#### The Coming and Work of Ezra

<sup>1</sup> After this, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, <sup>2</sup> son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub, <sup>3</sup> son of Amariah, son of Meraioth, <sup>4</sup> son of Zerahiah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, <sup>5</sup> son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of the chief priest Aaron— <sup>6</sup> this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that the Lord the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was upon him.

<sup>7</sup> Some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants also went up to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of the King Artaxerxes. <sup>8</sup> they came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king. <sup>9</sup> On the first day of the first month the journey up from Babylon was begun, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the gracious hand of his God was upon him. <sup>10</sup> For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel.

<sup>23</sup> Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven, or wrath will come upon the realm of the king and his heirs. <sup>24</sup> We also notify you that it shall not be lawful to impose tribute, custom, or toll on any of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, or other servants of this house of God.

<sup>25</sup> “And you, Ezra, according to the God-given wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judge all the people in the province Beyond the River who know the laws of your God; and you shall teach those who do not know them. <sup>26</sup> All who will not obey the law of your God and the law of the kings, let judgement be strictly executed on them, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of their goods or for imprisonment.”

#### ENGAGE

People sometimes face situations in which they fear others will oppose their efforts. What motivates people to behave benevolently toward others? God's hand was on Ezra, and he was able to return to Jerusalem, in an effort, to restore respect for God's Law.

We tend to admire those who undertake a mission with boldness in both society and the church. Can you recall such persons and their character and successes? What difficulties did they face and how did they overcome them? Can you imagine what it is like to assume leadership of a group prone to hostility or indifference? In undertaking a greatly challenging mission, does it help to have the backing of a powerful political leader? Does education and training help leaders in bringing stability to a culture? What examples can you think of where this has been the case, say, in your community or church?

#### EDUCATE

**Ezra 7:1-7:** Artaxerxes I was the son of Xerxes I, the ruler of Persia in the book of Esther. One might wonder whether the influence of Esther was a major influence for Artaxerxes' favorable treatment of the Jews in Ezra and Nehemiah (see Nehemiah 1). “The Book of Ezra described two waves of Jewish captives returning to their homeland. It is extremely important for understanding the book of Ezra to distinguish between the two waves” (Standard Lesson Commentary). The first group of

*(Restoring Law on page 12)*

**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.**

*(Restoring Law from page 11)*

pilgrims returning to Jerusalem during the reign of the Persian King Cyrus was led by Zerubbabel and Jeshua son of Jozadak. Their mission was to rebuild the temple and refurbish it in part with the items taken from it by Nebuchadnezzar. "After opposition (4:1-5) and a brief delay (4:24), the temple was completed in 516 BC (6:15). Today's lesson focuses on those who returned to Judah in 458 BC, 80 years after the first return. This return was led by Ezra, an expert in God's law, whose life focused on proper worship of God" (Ibid.). Ezra and Nehemiah were part of the second group of pilgrims, those who would solidify the gains made by the first returnees. Nehemiah would deal with civic leadership (including refortifying the city), while Ezra's mission was teaching The Law to the returning exiles. In the genealogy, we see Ezra's lineage traced back to Aaron-showing him to be a priest. But, he was more than a mere priest, for "He is described as a teacher, or scholar, of the Law of Moses.... The ease at which Ezra understood the complex nuances of law is indicated by his description as well versed. This implies his skilled comprehension" (Ibid.). Traditionally, Judaism credits Ezra with establishing the Great Assembly of scholars and prophets, the forerunner of the Sanhedrin, as the authority on matters of religious law.

**Ezra 7:8-10:** The contrast between the Babylonian Empire and the Persian Empire, when it came to conquered cultures is striking. Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon sought to acculturate, to make Jews into Babylonians (Daniel 1). Persia, after conquest of Babylon, would allow Jews to retain their culture while still being loyal subjects of the empire. The 17th-century Christian minister and founder of the American State of Rhode Island, Roger Williams saw the treatment of the Jews by Persia in this and other passages as support for limiting government interference in religious matters. Williams published *The Bloody Tenet of Persecution*, arguing for a separation of church and state based on biblical reasoning. "The arrival of the travelers [including Ezra and those with him: priests, Levites, musicians, gatekeepers and temple servants numbering almost 2,000] gave evidence that the providence that the providence and blessing of the gracious hand of his God was upon Ezra. Ezra's role as a scribe and teacher is seen by the ways the Law of the Lord affected his life and the lives of others. It was not enough that he wanted to... teach God's Law. The desire to practice observance of God's Law implied a full understanding of the law's life-changing effect. Ezra's dedication to his calling undoubtedly changed Israel for the better and encouraged proper worship as the travelers returned to their homeland (compare Nehemiah 8)" (Ibid.).

**Ezra 7:23-26:** "Whether Artaxerxes regarded Israel's God as the one, true God is undetermined. However, at the very least, he held a high regard for the Israelites' God. The king ordered obedience to the commands of God as they related to the temple of God. The expression the God of heaven admits that Ezra's God is not just the God of Israel; this God is much greater, and Artaxerxes recognizes the scope of God's domain....Artaxerxes had developed a very high regard for Ezra and empowered Ezra to establish just and consistent guidance on the laws...of God. Undoubtedly, Ezra's identity as an expert on God's laws allowed him to accurately know and teach others in the same regard.... In a surprising move, Artaxerxes required people to obey both the law of the king and the law of...God. Years before, Darius the Great made a similar demand, requiring obedience to 'the God of heaven'

and the word of the king (Ezra 6:9-12)" (Ibid.).

## ELEVATE

It is of great significance that we encourage and assist one another in participation in Bible education in our churches. Are you aware of leaders among you who dedicate themselves to deep Bible study and exposition? Do you appreciate and follow them? This does not mean that we should neglect to value those church leaders who care for the day-to-day practical matters of the church. What do you think would happen if our civil governments did not allow the church to worship freely and in peace? Do we know that the church is growing daily to the perfection God has in store for her, and that each generation is expected to build on the work of those who came before them? In what sense do you think this is being accomplished? Give examples.

## iTHINK

1. Before class, perform an Internet search for a list of slogans of major universities. Select ten slogans, write them on separate posters, and display them around the room. As class begins, ask participants what they think these slogans are. Continue to discuss why education is valued and from where that intrinsic value comes.

2. If your congregation has a church library, ask a person in charge of it to promote it during the first few moments of class time. What is the value of creating and maintaining a church library?

3. Imagine that Artaxerxes I was invited to address a joint session of Congress on the topic "The Role of Religion in a Secular State." Help participants create a draft outline of his address using points from his letter in Ezra 7:11-26. (Note: This includes portions of the background Scripture along with a portion of the print passage.)

4. Create a timeline of the events in the Book of Ezra. Some events to include: Cyrus's decree, rebuilding the temple, second group of pilgrim led by Ezra, events of the Book of Esther, prophets (especially Zechariah and Haggai.).

5. Although Pastor Appreciation Day is still months away (October), create a class subcommittee to meet and create a list of suggestions as to how the class will acknowledge it.

## KEY VERSES

**For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel. Ezra 7:10**

From *The Young People-Adult Quarterly* (Ages 18 and up) International Sunday School Lessons for Christian Teaching

## Prayer—90 devotions from Our Daily Bread Compiled by Dave Branon

### EFFECTIVE PRAYING

Read: Matthew 7:7-11

***For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Matthew 7:8***

A 12-year-old Cambodian boy named Lem Cheong began to question his family's religious beliefs. He had been taught that a person seeking guidance should go to a temple and shake a container of numbered bamboo slivers until one fell out. The priest then interpreted the meaning of the number. But this practice didn't satisfy Cheong's longing for clear answers, nor did it fill the void in his heart that only God could fill.

According to Harold Sala in his book *Touching God*, Cheong asked his uncle, a priest, if he had ever had a prayer answered. The man was shocked by the brashness of his nephew's question, but he admitted that he couldn't remember a single time one of his prayers had been answered.

Later Cheong asked a Christian if God had ever answered his prayers. The man recounted several instances. Cheong was so impressed that he accepted Jesus as his Savior that day. After that, prayer became a vital part of his life.

Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). Christian prayer is effective because God is the living and true God who hears and answers according to His will. And His will is always good. Vernon Grounds

**Prayer Tip: Leave time in your prayer sessions to be quiet before the Lord and listen for His guidance.**

### A HEART FOR PRAYER

Read: Psalm 27:7-14

***My heart says of you "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek. Psalm 27:8***

While traveling on an airplane with her four-and two-year-old daughters, a young mom worked at keeping them busy so they wouldn't disturb others. When the pilot's voice came over the intercom for an announcement, Catherine, the younger girl, paused from her activities and put her head down.

When the pilot finished, she whispered, "Amen." perhaps because there had been a recent natural disaster, she thought the pilot was praying.

Like that little girl, I want a heart that turns my thoughts toward prayer quickly. I think it would be fair to say that the psalmist David had that kind of heart. We get hints of that in Psalm 27 as he speaks of facing difficult foes (v. 2). He said, "Your face, Lord, I will seek" (v. 8). Some say that David was remembering the time he was fleeing from Saul (1 Samuel 21:10 or from his son Absalom (2 Samuel 15:13-14) when he wrote this psalm. Prayer and dependence on God were in the forefront of David's thinking, he found Him to be his sanctuary (Psalm 27:4-5).

We need a sanctuary as well. Perhaps reading or praying this psalm and others could help us to develop that closeness to our Father-God. As God becomes our sanctuary, we'll more readily turn our hearts toward Him in prayer. Anne Cetas

### KEEP ON ASKING

Read: Luke 11:1-13

**Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Luke 11:9**

I heard a woman say that she never prayed more than once for anything. She didn't want to weary God with her repeated requests.

The Lord's teaching on prayer in Luke 11 contradicts this notion. He told a parable about a man who went to his friend's house at midnight and asked for some bread to feed his unexpected visitors. At first the friend refused, for he and his family were in bed. Finally he got up and gave him the bread—not out of friendship but because the caller was so persistent (vv. 5-10).

Jesus used this parable to contrast this reluctant friend with our generous heavenly Father. If an irritated neighbor will give in to his friend's persistence and grant his request, how much more readily will our heavenly Father give us all we need!

It's true that God, in His great wisdom, may sometimes delay His answers to prayer. It's also true that we must pray in harmony with the Scriptures and God's will. But Jesus moved beyond those facts to urge us to persist in prayer. He told us to ask, seek, and knock until the answer comes (v. 9).

So don't worry about wearying God. He will never tire of your persistent prayer! Foanie Yoder

**Prayer Tip: Approach God confidently (Hebrews 4:16).**

### LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER!

Read: Psalm 6

**The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer. Psalm 6:9**

During every morning worship service in a small church I attended, the congregation would share prayer requests. After each one, the pastor would say, "Lord, in your mercy," and the people would respond, "Hear our prayer." One Sunday, a four-year-old boy behind me became more intense after each request, until he finally shouted out, "Hear our prayer!" The little boy probably expressed what a lot of us were feeling that morning.

As Christians, we believe that God hears us when we pray, not because we deserve it but because Christ has opened the way for us to talk directly to the Father. We often make our requests quietly and confidently, but there are times when we cannot help but cry out to God in heartbreak and anguish.

In Psalm 6 we can almost hear David's sobs as he pleads with God for mercy, help, and healing. Yet, even though he was faced with difficult people and overwhelming circumstances, David affirmed his trust in God: "The Lord has heard my weeping. The Lord has heard my weeping. The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer" (vv. 8-9).

Today, in that mysterious blend of confidence and crying out, we can bring everything to our loving heavenly Father, saying, "Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer!" David McCasland

**Prayer Tip: If your church has a Facebook group or directory, try systematically praying through it.**

# 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.

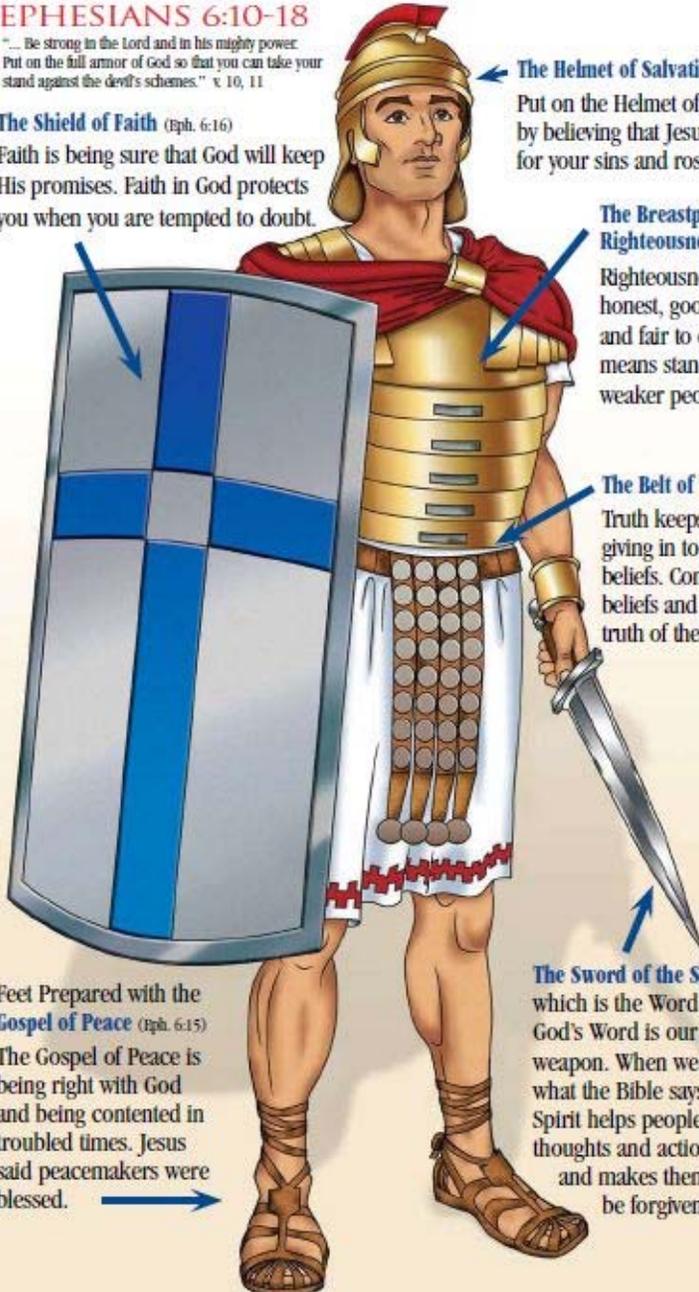
**The Helmet of Salvation** (Eph. 6:17)  
Put on the Helmet of Salvation by believing that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again.

**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.

**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.



## 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,<sup>[a]</sup> 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

(Love page 1)

New Testament, there is more than one word for love. The Greek word *agapos*, often referred to as agape love, is the word used in 1 John 4. It is used when speaking of an unconditional love. This love of God is boundless.

God does not only give love; He is the source of love. As the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1), He is the One who created love. It is because of His love that we are able to love. As 1 John 4:19 notes, "We love because he first loved us."

The fullest expression of God as love was through the Son, Jesus Christ. God created us, sustains us, and has revealed Himself to us through Jesus. John 1:14 declares, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Among the most famous of Bible passages on love is 1 Corinthians 13. In these verses we find a picture of God's love expressed in poetic terms that displays many of the aspects of God's love toward us. We are told, "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong doing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

Further, John 3:16 teaches, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." God has made clear that His love through the Son of God, Jesus, provides an opportunity for those who believe to spend eternity with Him. It is God's desire for us to enjoy His love both in this life and for all eternity.

The Bible is also clear we have done nothing to deserve God's perfect love. Romans 5:8 shares, "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Even when Jesus knew we would fail and even before we were born, He gave His life as the ultimate expression of His love.

God is love. He created love, created us to love Him, and has extended His love to each of us. Our challenge is to accept His great love (Ephesians 2:8-9) that we may experience His love in our lives today (John 10:10) and for eternity (John 3:16).

### **The attributes of God, what are they?**

The only way to truly know what God is like and to know His attributes is through His revelation of Himself in the Bible, God's Word to mankind. Without the authority of the Bible, any attempt to explain the attributes of God would be to open ourselves up to opinion, conjecture and supposition, which are often incorrect, especially when it comes to trying to understand God. The attributes of God, as revealed in the Bible, are crucial to understanding the truth about God, who He is, what He does, and what He is like.

One of God's primary attributes is that of Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 24:1). Nothing that exists came into being on its own, and no process (such as evolution) created anything. As Creator, God made everything according to His perfect plan to reveal and reflect Himself in the creation. Creation was subsequently marred by the fall of mankind into sin, but even the fallen creation still testifies to God's power and genius (Genesis 3:17-18; Romans 1:19-20). The creation speaks of God's attributes and there is no language or speech where its voice is not heard (Psalm

19:1-3).

In addition to being the Creator, God is eternal, meaning He had no beginning and He will have no end. His existence of one of immortality and infinity (Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17). Unlike man who changes from one day to the next, God is immutable and unchanging, which means He is absolutely reliable and trustworthy (Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 102:26-27). God's mind is incomprehensible to mankind. God's thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:9). They are so much higher than ours as to make Him inscrutable, unfathomable, unsearchable, and past finding out as far as understanding Him completely (Isaiah 40:28; Psalm 145:3; Romans 11:33-34).

God is unique; He is one God and there is no other (Isaiah 45:6), and He alone is worthy of our worship and devotion (Deuteronomy 6:4). God is completely sovereign over all of life and all circumstances. His plans and purposes will stand and no one can stop Him or say to Him, "What are you doing?" (Job 9:12; Psalm 93:1; 95:3; Jeremiah 23:20). God is spirit, meaning He is invisible (John 1:18; 4:24). God is a Trinity, being equally present in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is not three Gods, but one God in three Persons, each the same in substance and equal in power and glory. God is truth, He will always be truthful and, unlike man, He cannot lie (Psalm 117:2; 1 Samuel 15:29).

God is just, although it cannot be said that He is fair as we understand fairness. If He were completely fair, all mankind would be lost and have to spend eternity in hell paying for our sins. But God is not fair; instead, He is merciful and good, so as the second Person of the triune Godhead, He went to the cross to die in our place, taking the punishment that we deserve (2 Corinthians 5:21). God's justice and His righteousness, the quality or character of being right or just, is another attribute of God. He does not show favoritism by respecting some more than others (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 18:30).

God is omnipotent; His power is unlimited and complete, although He always limits His power by acting in accordance with the rest of His character (Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 32:17, 27). God is omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-13; Jeremiah 23:23) and omniscient (1 John 3:20), meaning He is everywhere and knows everything, whether past, present, or future.

God's primary attribute, and the one that permeates all His other attributes, is His transcendent holiness. His holiness is what separates Him from all moral defilement. God is as a consuming fire and His holy wrath against sin is to be feared (Hebrews 12:29, 10:27, 31). His holiness is tempered by His grace which offers goodness, kindness, mercy, and love to those who do not deserve it.

*(Prayer & Fasting from page 1)*

**this through him who gives me strength. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.**

**Prayer & Fasting:**

**-First Week January 10 -16:** No Sweets

**-Second Week January 17-23:** No Bread, Potatoes, Noodles (Starches)

**-Sunday January 23:** First Fruits Sunday

**-Third Week January 24-30:** No Meats

**-Fourth Week January 31-February 6:** Vegetable, fruits, and nuts only

**Daily:**

-Read Scriptures, pray, and exercise at least 20 to 30 minutes

-Drink plenty of water.

-No food after 7:30 P.M.

**Supersize:**

-No social media and T.V. after 7:30 P.M.

-Call and encourage at least one member daily.

***However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” Matthew 17:21.***

If we are going to reach the Turning Point it will require fasting and praying.

**Note**

Find you a partner or group that will pray and fast with you and hold you accountable.

***Daily Reading by the Connecticut Bible Society - copies at the Church.***

January 10	Ephesians 5:21-33	January 20	2 Corinthians	January 30	2 Corinthians
January 11	Ephesians 6:1-24	January 21	2 Corinthian	January 31	2 Corinthians
January 12	2 Corinthians 1:1-11	January 22	2 Corinthians	January 30	2 Corinthians
January 13	2 Corinthians 1:12-24	January 23	2 Corinthians		
January 14	2 Corinthians				
January 15	2 Corinthians			February 01	Luke 10:1-24
January 16	2 Corinthians	January 24	2 Corinthians	February 02	Luke 10:25-42
		January 25	2 Corinthians	February 03	Luke 15:1-10
		January 26	2 Corinthians	February 04	Luke 15:11-32
January 17	2 Corinthians	January 27	2 Corinthians	February 05	Luke 18:15-30
January 18	2 Corinthians	January 28	2 Corinthians	February 06	John 3:1-21
January 19	2 Corinthians	January 29	2 Corinthians		

We have Free Bibles available at the Church.

***The Pastor and First Lady wish you a Happy New Year filled with Bountiful Blessings.***

*(Embracing Realities from page 1)*

getting old and the road that lays ahead of them. In the time between a person turning 60 years old, as they begin to age, right until all the lights go out and the sky gets dark, there are some situations to keep in mind, so that you will be prepared for what is to come, and you will not panic”

Initially:

The people by your side will only continue to grow smaller in number. People in your parents’ and grandparents’ generation have largely all left, whilst many of your peers will increasingly find it harder to look after themselves, and the younger generations will all be busy with their own lives. Even your spouse may depart earlier than you, or than you would expect, and what might then come are days of emptiness. You will have to learn how to live alone, and to enjoy and embrace solitude

Subsequently:

Society will care less and less for you. No matter how glorious your previous career was or how famous you were, ageing will always transform you into a regular old man and old lady. The spotlight no longer shines on you, and you have to learn to contend with standing quietly in one corner, to admire and appreciate the hubbub and views that come after you, and you must overcome the urge to be envious or grumble.

On-Going:

The road ahead will be rocky and full of precarity. Fractures, cardio-vascular blockages, brain atrophy, cancer and other issues, are all possible guests that could pay you a visit any time, and you would not be able to turn them away. You will have to live with illness and ailments to view them as friends, even; do not fantasize about stable, quiet days without any trouble in your body. Maintaining a positive mentality and getting appropriate, adequate exercise are your duty, and you have to encourage yourself to keep at it consistently as your new religion.

Further:

Prepare for bed-bound life, a return to the infant state. Our mothers brought us into this world on a bed, and after a journey of twists and turns and a life of struggle, we return to our starting point – the bed – and to the state of having to be looked after by others. The only difference being, where we once had our mothers to care for us, when we prepare to leave, we may not have our kin to look after us. Even if we have kin, their care may never come close to that of your mother’s; you will, more likely than not, be cared for by nursing staff who bear zero relation to you, wearing smiles on their faces all whilst carrying weariness and boredom in their hearts. Lay still and don’t be difficult; remember to be grateful and kind.

Eventually:

There will be many swindlers and scammers along the way. Many of them know that the elderly have lots of savings, and will endlessly be thinking of ways to cheat them of their money: through scam phone calls, text messages, mail, food and product samples, get-rich-quick schemes, products for longevity or enlightenment. Most basically, all they want is to separate you from your money and other resources. Beware, and be careful, hold your money close to you. A fool and his money are soon parted, so spend your pennies wisely.

In summary:

Before the sky gets dark, the last stretches of life’s journey will gradually get dimmer and dimmer; naturally, it will be harder to see the path ahead that you are treading towards, and it will be harder to keep going forward. As such, upon turning 60, it would do us all well to see life for what it is, to cherish what we have, to enjoy life whilst we can, and to not take on society’s troubles or your children’s and grandchildren’s affairs on for yourself. Stay humble, don’t act superior on account of your own age and talk down on others – this will hurt yourself as much as it will hurt others. So, leave nothing for 'later', because in always waiting for later, we can lose the best moments, the best experiences, the best friends, the best family.

The day is today ... The moment is now ... Enjoy your blessings ... share your love with others and be grateful for everything the Lord has blessed you with. Be the blessing that someone else has been waiting for.

[Kwame6@att.net](mailto:Kwame6@att.net)

# 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 always have our hands with us, the reminder of those in need of prayer is constant.

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## Our Daily Bread

### LOVE WHEREVER WE GO

**Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. Matthew 25:40**

I sat on the pier during a vacation, reading my Bible and watching my husband fish. A young man approached us, suggesting we use different bait. He glanced at me as he fidgeted from one foot to another and said, "I've been in jail." He pointed to my Bible and sighed, "Do you think God really cares about people like me?"

Opening to Matthew 25, I read aloud that Jesus talked about His followers visiting those in prison.

"It says that? About being in prison?" Tears brimmed his eyes when I shared how God considers kindness toward His children a personal act of love toward Himself (VV. 31-40).

"I wish my parents would forgive too." He lowered his head. "I'll be right back." He returned and handed me his tattered Bible. "Would you show me where to find those words?"

I nodded. My husband and I hugged him as we prayed for him and his parents. We exchanged contact information and have continued praying for him.

At one point or another, we'll feel unloved, unwelcomed, in need, and even physically or emotionally imprisoned (VV. 35-36). We'll need reminders of God's loving compassion and forgiveness. We'll also have opportunities to support others who struggle with these feelings. We can be a part of God's redeeming plan as we spread His truth and love wherever we go. Xochitl Dixon

**How can you love God by showing love to others today?  
In what ways has He showed you love through others?**

Father, thank You for loving me, and giving me opportunities to share Your truth as I love You by loving others.

Discover what real love is at  
[DiscoverySeries.org/Q0714](http://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0714)

Today's Scripture: **Matthew 25:31-40**

**<sup>31</sup> When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.**

**<sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, <sup>36</sup> I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and**

**you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."**

**<sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"**

**<sup>40</sup> The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."**

### INSIGHT

Each of the gospel accounts has a specific structure. Matthew's gospel uses five major teaching blocks around which the inspired author wraps the story of Jesus. Of these blocks, the first and the last are the longest and appear to stand in contrast to one another. The first block, the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), presents the ideals and principles of life within the kingdom of God. The final message (CHS. 23-25), along with some end-time prophecy, focuses on what happens when those kingdom principles are ignored—seen primarily in Jesus' challenges to Israel's unfaithful religious leaders (CH 23). Bill Crowder

### LIVING BY FAITH

**We live by faith, not by sight.  
2 Corinthians 5:7**

Gary was experiencing some balance issues while walking, so his doctor ordered physical therapy to improve his balance. During one session his therapist told him, "You're trusting too much in what you can see, even when it's wrong! You're not depending enough on your other systems—what you feel under your feet and your inner-ear signals are also meant to help keep you balanced."

"You're trusting too much in what you can see" brings to mind the story of David, a young shepherd, and his encounter with Goliath. For forty days, Goliath, a Philistine champion, "strutted in front of the Israelite army," taunting them to send someone out to fight him (1 Samuel 17:16 NLT). But what the people focused on naturally caused them fear. Then young David showed up because his father asked him to take supplies to his older brothers (V. 18).

How did David look at the situation? By faith in God, not by sight. He saw the giant but trusted that God would rescue His people. Even though he was just a boy, he told King Saul, "Don't worry about this Philistine....I'll go fight him! (V. 32 NLT). Then he told Goliath, "The battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands" (V. 47). And that's just what God did.

Trusting in God's character and power can help us to live more closely by faith rather than by sight. Anne Cetas

**What are you struggling with? What might it mean to walk by faith in God during this**

**seasons?**

Show me what it means in my struggles to trust You and Your character, dear God. You're powerful and loving.

Learn more about the importance of church  
[DiscoverySeries.org/Q0904](http://DiscoverySeries.org/Q0904)

Today's Scripture: **1 Samuel 17:32, 40-47**

**<sup>32</sup> David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him. <sup>40</sup>" Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.**

**<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. <sup>42</sup> He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. <sup>43</sup> He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. <sup>44</sup> "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!"**

**<sup>45</sup> David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>46</sup> This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup> All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the LORD'S and he will give all of you into our hands."**

### INSIGHT

Geography expert Jack Beck describes the general area where the encounter between David and Goliath took place. Imagine it as running through three vertical lines. The area farthest to the east is the mountains where the Israelites live. The one farther to the west is where the Philistines live on the coastal plain along the Mediterranean Sea. Between them is a set of ridges and valleys called the Shephelah, creating a corridor between them. As the Philistines moved through the foothills toward the mountains, it's likely they did so in order to take over the trade routes on the east side of the Jordan River Valley. This would give them access to every village in the Israelite stronghold. Alyson Kieda

Ministries, Grand Rapids, Michigan  
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## *Words To Live By*

### FLIGHT 2022

Good morning and welcome to Flight 2022.

We are prepared to take off into the New Year.

Please make sure your Positive Attitude and Gratitude are secured and locked in the upright position.

All self-destruct devices: pity, anger, selfishness, pride, and resentment should be turned off at this time.

All negativity, hurt, and discouragement should be put away.

Should you lose your Positive Attitude under pressure during this fight, reach up and pull down a prayer.

Prayer will automatically be activated by Faith.

Once your Faith is activated, you can assist other passengers who are of little faith.

There will be **NO BAGGAGE** allowed on this flight.

God, our Captain, has cleared us for take-off.

Destination: **GREATNESS!**

Wishing you a New Year filled with new **HOPE**, new **JOY**, and new **BEGINNINGS!**

Stay Blessed!

And welcome in 2022.

**GOD'S BLESSINGS!!!**

***“Daily Confession of Faith”***

***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!***

# Spirit Lifters

By Norman Vincent Peale

## Faith, Hope and Love

The best three-point formula for living is in this immoral statement:

**And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.** 1 Corinthians 13:13

Here are three powerful Spirit Lifters: Faith, the greatest

power in this world; Hope, the attitude of expectancy—the best is yet to be; and Love, one of the greatest qualities of all—a heartfelt of compassion and understanding. Christian love gives deep joy. Let these three shine like stars in your life, and your spirit will be uplifted always.

## 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.

## Love Life and Have It Good

For anyone who wishes to enjoy life and experience God's goodness—to be happy, respected and, in short, live a full, rich life—read slowly but reflectively and humbly the following verses:

**He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.** 1 Peter 3:10, 11

In these two verses are listed just a few things that put happiness in your heart.

We are told to curb our tongues from speaking evil about

anyone. Simply never say anything to hurt anyone. Moreover, we are to refrain from double talk, from shrewd remarks that are designed to advance our interests at someone else's disadvantage. We are to turn our back upon evil and, in every way possible, do good. We are to help people and bring blessings into their lives. We are to seek peace on earth and in our own hearts, and so live that peacefulness may flow from us to others. We are to become an island of peace in a world of turmoil.

Do the simple, honest Christian things and life will be good—and you will love it

## Love Given Returns to You

When we are on the “outs” or in conflict with other people, it tends to depress us. Try this cure:

**Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.** Romans 12:10

Practice kindly affection. Always take a generous, patient attitude. Practice consideration. Put the other person ahead of yourself. Courtesy has amazing power to dissipate ill will.

Free your heart of jealousy and resentment. The love you give will return to you, and your spirit will be lifted to new levels.

## Receive God's Blessing

Our spirits rise when we learn how to receive the abundance of good things God wants to give to us. The secret is in two verses:

**So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be open to you. For everyone who ask receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.** Luke 11:9-10

Note that the word ask is immediately followed by the word will be given; that directly after the word seek are the

words you will find; and that quickly after the word knock is assurance that it will be opened. It is to emphasize that everyone who seek finds, and to all who knock the storehouse is opened.

Therefore, confidently ask. Then visualize yourself as now receiving; seek, then affirm that you have found; knock, then believe that God's storehouse is opened.

Practice receiving. Believe that you have been given. Then feel your spirits lift as you realize that God's blessings are actually showered upon you.

## God Has His Eye on You

Let the following words sink deeply into your consciousness, and the experience of God's protection will be yours.

**For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.** Psalm 91:11.

How your spirit will rise as the amazing truth grips you that nothing in this world can hurt you! God is watching over you to keep you in all your ways. His amazing kindness surrounds you always. You go through life with a high-hearted spirit, know God watches over you.

## No More Doubt—Only Confidence

**But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.** Philippians 4:19

If we do our part—live right and have faith—God will see that all of your real needs are supplied. God has infinite riches, enough for all of us. We can receive these through

God's law of boundless supply. Live according to His principles, and you will never look in vain for any necessity. How the spirit rises when you develop confidence and know that you will be cared for, that all will be well, that the future is bright with promise.

## Barbara Perry Speaks

### “Don’t Settle for Less-Than”

**“And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.” Exodus 6:9**

Let us pray, “Father, thank You for the great and precious promises You have given us that will lead us to our best life possible. Thank You for the hope and encouragement You provide through Your Word. We refuse to settle for less

than what You’ve promised, its In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.”

When Moses first gave the people of Israel the promise that God would deliver them from slavery in Egypt and give them the Promised Land as their possession. Instead of rising up in faith, they remain settled in their slavery, to remain victims rather than become victors.

See what God has for us is way too important to settle for less-than. Not

settling may mean going back to school and getting the training to bring out your talents. It may mean developing a business plan, meeting with mentors, and researching what we need to bring about that goal. It may mean joining a support group to help break the addiction. It may mean putting more effort into your marriage, taking more time for the person God gave us to love. It may mean joining a gym, taking walks at night, being proactive to get in shape. We’ll be amazed where we will be in ten years if we don’t. Amen.

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### “Believe First”

**“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. Mark 11:24**

Let us pray, “Father, thank You that our life is in Your hands, and Your Spirit leads us. Thank You for the silent seasons, for the times of testing when we don’t always understand where You’re taking us. We trust You to take

us through the desert into something bigger for our future, its In Jesus’ Name we ask and pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

In Mark 11, Jesus was hungry and walked over to a fig tree to find it was barren. After He said, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again. Jesus spoke to the tree, the source was cut off in the roots. It had still looked alive, but it was just a matter of time before the outside caught up with the inside.

See when we pray, Jesus says we have to believe that God put the miracle in motion. We can’t wait for the evidence, and then we’ll start believing; we have to believe first. Whether it’s for freedom from an addiction, the healing of a sickness, or a breakthrough in our finances, the prayer of faith says, “When we pray according to God’s Word, we believe it happens right when we pray.” It’s just a matter of time, and we’ll see what God promised. Amen

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### “Broken Pieces”

**“And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.” Acts 27:41**

Let us pray, “Father, thank You that when we’re in the waves and something precious has been lost, You don’t leave us on our own. Thank You that we can depend upon You to get us through and safely to where we should be. We believe that what You promised is still on

the way, its In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

In Acts 27, in the midst of the storm at sea, God promised the apostle Paul that he and the ship’s crew would survive, but the ship would be lost. It would be lost. It would have been much less traumatic if God had saved the ship, but sometimes our boat goes down. The good news is that the wooden boat’s broken pieces helped float them to safety.

See we think we have to have the boat, but God had a plan so that their

brokenness became their breakthrough. We may have lost someone or something precious to us, but what we have left is what we need. God didn’t let us lose so much that we can’t make it to where He’s taking us. When we’re in the waves, grab on to the broken pieces. That means to keep believing that what God promised is still on the way. Keep thanking God for His goodness. He doesn’t change His mind. The boat may have broken apart, but we’re still going to make it to our destiny. Amen. Hallelujah. Thank You Jesus

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### “It’s a Faith Walk”

**“(for we walk by faith, not by sight:) 2 Corinthians 5:7**

Let us pray, “Father, thank You that You have called us to walk by faith and not by sight. Thank You that Your power is working in the unseen realm to bring about Your promises in our life. Today we will live with a sense of expectancy that You are about to do great things, its In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

In the Scripture, the life of a believer is compared to an eagle. The parent of the eagles sit on their eggs to keep them warm. They never feel the baby eaglets kick, and on day thirty

-five, suddenly the eaglet starts pecking on the shell and it hatched.

See while we’re waiting for a promise from God to happen, some things have to develop in the dark, in secret. God is bringing it all together in secret. We have to believe when there’s no sign on the outside that what’s inside is really alive.

We may not see any sign of life until suddenly the egg cracks open. But God is saying, “Go sit on it. It’s still alive. Don’t let the circumstances fool you. Walk by faith and not by sight. Day thirty-five is coming!” Amen

## THE BEAUTY OF HOLLAND

I AM OFTEN ASKED TO DESCRIBE THE EXPERIENCE OF RASING 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 HSEVE A BABY, IT'S LIKE PLANNING A FABULOUS TRIP TO ITALY. YOU BUY A BUNCH OF GUIDEBOOKS AND MAKE YOUR WONDERFUL PLANS. THE COLISEMUM, THE MICHELANGELO DAVID. THE GONDOLAS IN VENICE. YOU LEARN SOME HANDY PHRASES IN ITALLAN. IT'S ALL VERY, VERY EXCITING!

AFTER MONTHS OF EAGER ANTICIPATION, THE DAY FINALLY ARRIVES. YOU PACK YOUR BAGS AND OFF YOU GO. SERVAL 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 SUPPORT TO BE IN ITALY! ALL MY LIFE I'VE DREAMED OF GOING TO ITALY."

BUT THERE'S A CHANCE 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 PLANE.

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 ILALY, 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 REM-BRANDTS.

BUT EVERYONE YOU KNOW IS BUSY COMING AND GOING FROM ILTALY, 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 SIGNIFI-CANT LOSS.

BUT IF YOU SPEND YOUR LIFE MOURING 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

## Joyce Meyer: Promises for your Everyday Life - a Daily Devotional

### “What is God Love Like?”

<sup>5</sup> **“having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,” Ephesians 1:5**

Why does God love us as imperfect as we are? Because He wants to, it pleases Him. It’s in His very nature to love us, no matter how sinful our actions may be.

God conquers evil with good (see

Romans 12:21). He does that by pouring out His limitless grace upon us so that when we sin, His grace becomes greater than our sin. And just as it is impossible for God not to love, so it is impossible for us to do anything to keep Him from loving us.

God loves because that is His nature. He is love (see 1 John 4:8). He may not always love everything we do, but He does love us. God’s love is the power that forgives our sins, heals our emotional wounds and mends our broken heart (see Psalm 147:3). God’s

love is unconditional; it is based on Him, not us! Once you realize that God loves you regardless of what you have or haven’t done, you can experience incredible breakthrough. You can quit trying to earn His love and simply receive it and enjoy it.

**Prayer starter:** God Your love is incredible. Focusing on Your love reminds me that it’s based on Your goodness, not my actions. Help me to receive Your love for me.

### “True Love Must Give”

<sup>10</sup> **“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” 1 John 4:10-11**

Everyone desires to be loved and accepted. But many of us try to find happiness the wrong way. We attempt to find it in getting, but it is found in giving. The love of God is the most

wonderful gift we are given. Once it flows to us, it needs to flow from us to others; otherwise, it becomes stagnant.

Love must give because that’s its nature. First John 4:11 highlights how we must give the love we receive: “Beloved, if God loved us so [very much], we also ought to love another.”

Living in God’s true love is a process. First, God loves us, and by faith, we receive His love. We then love ourselves in a balanced way, give love back to God and learn to love other people.

Love must follow this course or it is not complete. Once we have God’s love in us, we can give it away. We can choose to love others lavishly. We can love them as deeply and unconditionally as God has loved us.

**Prayer Starter:** Lord, I don’t want Your love to become stagnant in me. Help me to not only receive Your love, but to complete the process by choosing to love others lavishly.

### “How to Fight the Good Fight”

<sup>12</sup> **“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” 1 Timothy 6:12**

We are to “fight the good fight of faith” against the enemy— but what does that look like practically? Here are six strategies:

1. Think aggressively. Plan and calculate, like a general preparing for battle, how to engage and defeat the enemy.

2. Pray fervently. Hebrews 4:16 instruct us to approach God’s throne confidently. Step forward with confidence and tell Him what you need.

3. Speak fearlessly. First Peter 4:11 (AMP) says, “Whoever speaks, [let him do it as one who utters] oracles of God.” you and I are to have a spiritually commanding voice against the forces of evil.

4. Give abundantly. The way we give is the way we receive (see Luke 6:38). Live a life of generosity.

5. Work intently. Whatever we put our hand to, we need to do it aggressively (see Eccl. 9:10). Stir yourself up in the

Holy Spirit and get the job done.  
6. Love unconditionally. As children of God, we must love others as God loves us, unconditionally and sacrificially.

Take these steps, and when the enemy comes, you’ll be filled with God’s power and unbeatable.

**Prayer Starter:** Lord, I don’t want to sit back and miss the fight You’re called me to. As I move forward, show me how to apply these six strategies in my fight against the enemy.

### “Develop Your Potential and Do Something Now”

You may know that God’s created you with great potential, but you can’t stop there. You have to develop your potential.

I believe that many people are unhappy because they aren’t doing anything to develop their potential. If you want to see your potential develop to it’s fullest, don’t wait until everything is perfect. Do something now. Start laying

your hand to whatever is in front of you.

You must give your potential some form by doing something with it. You will never find what you are capable of doing if you never try anything.

Don’t be so afraid of failing that you never take a chance. Don’t stay in the safety zone. You may feel safe, but you will never succeed at developing your full potential or being fulfilled in what you are doing. Step out into what you feel God is leading you to do, and you will soon discover what you can and cannot do.

You are full of God-given potential, and He wants to do more through your life than you could ever imagine, but it requires your cooperation. Step out and serve Him wholeheartedly today.

**Prayer Starter:** Lord, in everything I do, I want to serve You wholeheartedly. Thank You for encouraging me to step out and take action, developing the great potential You have given me.

# A Bird's Eye View Of The Bible

## 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 Prophets" (the last 12). The "Minor" ones are shorter, not less important.

## 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.

### PROPHECY

#### Revelation

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



*(I Am Happy from page 1)*

TPT, Proverbs 17:22 TPT, John 15:1-11 TPT, Philippians 4:4

WHAT IS JOY? The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our strength and that in God's presence we can be full of joy. Joy is not the same as being happy; joy is even better than happiness! Happiness can come and go, but joy can be present even when we feel sad. A great way to explain joy is a happiness that cannot go away! Joy comes from God and time spent with Him. Even if we are having a bad day, we can turn to God and be filled with JOY! If we spend time with God by reading His Word (the Bible!) and talk to Him in prayer, that joy will never go away, no matter how we feel! Remember, when we're happy we will have joy and even when we're sad, joy is still there! Joy will stay deep down in our heart because of Jesus!

HOW DO WE SHOW JOY? One way to show joy is by always being thankful. The Bible says that joy is a happiness inside us that keeps us saying 'I can never thank You enough (GOD)!' Have you ever been afraid? How about hurt? We all feel that way sometimes, right? When we feel that way, what is the first thing you do? We probably go to Mom or Dad for help and then we feel a little better, but might still be sad. Guess what Mom and Dad do when they feel that way? They go to their Father, God and we can too! When we talk to God, we are reminded of that JOY deep down in our hearts. That joy will be with us on good days and bad days as long as we continue to spend time with God!

WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT JOY? Jesus is the greatest example of joy! Because of Jesus we are all made right with God and can have the same wonderful relationship with God as Jesus does even today. If we ask Jesus into our heart, we receive the true joy of salvation. When Jesus was born, joy filled the whole world! In fact, even before people met Jesus, just the news of his birth brought joy to them! Let's take a look at this story in the Bible together in Luke 2: 8-20 say, *That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. An angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and suddenly they became very frightened. The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people." The shepherds said we don't have to feel afraid because of this good news that will bring Joy! What do you think that good news will be?"*

*Today your Savior was born in David's town. He is Christ, the Lord. This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding box. It was Jesus!! Jesus brings joy to all people! Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God, saying: "Give glory to God in heaven, and on earth let there be peace to the people who please God." Then the angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened. We will see this thing the Lord told us about."*

The shepherds went right to Bethlehem to find the JOY that the angel told them about. *So the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph. And the shepherds saw the baby lying in a feeding box. Then they told what the angels had said about this child. Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds said to them. Mary hid these things in her heart; she continued to think about them. Then the shepherds went back to their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything that they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them. Even though the shepherds felt afraid at first, they listened to the angel sent by God and heard the good news brought them great JOY. We can get that same great news from Gods Word, the Bible, and be filled with the same joy as the shepherds! We have the same great joy because of Jesus! Let's all cheer for that great JOY!! Can we thank and praise God just like the shepherds for the joy of Jesus? Hallelujah!!*

Now HERE's THE MYSTERY OF JOY, In a world seeking happiness and pleasure, the mystery of the joy of the Lord often gets lost. As

believers, we have tapped into the abundant riches of Heaven through Jesus Christ 2 Peter 1:3 says, His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness, Amen. See our hearts should be overflowing with joy, and our smiles should testify to God's goodness in our lives. The life we live on earth was never meant to be drudgery. Still, most of us live each day overwhelmed by monotonous tasks. We are slouching beneath the heavy burdens on our backs, only to be exhausted at the end of the day and not looking forward to the next. It is true that in this fallen world there is sin, there are burdens, and there are plenty of tasks we do each day that aren't exhilarating, but rather, humbling. God knows all of this. Yet, when Jesus told us in John 10:10 says, The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full that knowing we would struggle to find joy in this world, Amen, Amen, Amen.

JOY Also has A REFUGE, John Piper said, "Christian joy is not an act of willpower, but a spontaneous, emotional response of the heart." When we fix our gaze on the cross of Christ and preach the Gospel to our hearts, the most appropriate response is humble, deeply rooted joy. This is a direct result of the Holy Spirit's work in our hearts. It is the fruit of a life that abides in Christ Gal. 5:24-25; says, Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit, Amen. John 15:1-5 say, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the Word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. See not only is the joy of the Lord a response of gratitude, an eternal perspective, and a blessing from the riches of Christ, it is also our strength, Amen. The Hebrew word for strength in Nehemiah 8:10 says, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is our strength. "Amen. If we refer to a place of safety, protection, and refuge. Literally, the joy of the Lord protects our hearts in times of battle and confusion. The joy of the Lord is a safe place where we can rest our weary souls in a chaotic world. The joy of the Lord is a refuge we run to when the world seems to be caving in all around us. It is a haven for our souls. We get UNLIMITED SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS, We have the abundant riches of God available every single day at any time. There is no limit to his riches in Christ. Ephesians 1:3 says, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ, Amen. It explains it this way: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places..." We don't just have a few blessings; every single spiritual blessing is ours in Christ. God is not limited, nor does he limit his blessings depending on our circumstances or our moods. Each day we have a choice. We can either serve Christ in all we do, taking hold of his joy, delighting in his presence, and serving him fully (yes, even in the daily, mundane tasks like brushing our teeth and doing the dishes). Or we can choose to be discouraged, to want more than what he has given right now, and to set our eyes on seemingly hopeless situations instead of the cross. Joy is not focused on the present, but on future glory. It is taking all that God has given us through Christ and living obediently. So even in the daily soul-scrubbing tasks, in trials and suffering, and in times of wandering, joy can be ours through setting our gaze on Christ Jesus. As we follow him and obey his commands, we receive the abundant blessing of having his joy take residence in our hearts, Amen, Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Thank You Jesus

Thank You Lord for using me every day to be able to spread JOY!

Barbara Perry

## THE POWER OF LOVE

**Many waters cannot quench love.  
Songs of Songs 8:7**

Today Scripture: **SONG OF SONGS 8:6-7**

**T**wo octogenarians, one from Germany and the other from Denmark, were an unlikely couple. They had each enjoyed sixty years of marriage before being widowed. Though living only fifteen minutes apart, their homes were in separate countries. Still, they fell in love, regularly cooking meals and spending time together. Sadly, in 2020, due to the coronavirus, the Danish government closed the border crossing. Undeterred, very day at 3:00 p.m., the two met at the border on a quiet country lane and, seated on their respective sides, shared a picnic. "We're here because of love," the man explained. Their love was stronger than borders, more powerful than a pandemic.

The Song of Songs offers an impressive display of love's invincible power. "Love is as strong as death," Solomon insisted (8:6). None of us escapes death; it arrives with a steely finality we can't break. And yet love, the writer said, is every bit as strong. What's more, love "burns like a blazing fire, like a mighty flame" (v. 6). Have you ever watched a fire exploding in feverish rage? Love—like fire—is impossible to contain. "Many waters cannot quench love." Not even a raging river can sweep love away (V. 7).

Human love, whenever it's selfless and true, offers reflections of these characteristics. However, only God's love offers such potency, such limitless depths, such tenacious power. And here's the stunner: God loves each of us with this unquenchable love. Winn Collier

**How does love in this life reflect the love shared by  
God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?  
How do you sense God loving you now?**

God, I need Your powerful, deep love. I need Your love that  
won't be extinguished and won't let me go.  
Will You show me this love today?

**<sup>6</sup> Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. <sup>7</sup> Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away. If one were to give all the wealth of one's house for love, it would be utterly scorned.**

### INSIGHT

The Song of Songs, or Song of Solomon, has long mystified Bible students—particularly in terms of how we're to understand its inclusion in the Scriptures. This sense of mystery has led to a variety of interpretations. Three main views are held regarding the purpose of the song. One interpretation holds that it's a metaphor describing God's love for Israel and His care for her as His chosen people. Second, it's historically been viewed by many Bible teachers to be a "type" (representative picture) of Christ and the church, perhaps even anticipating Paul's expressions of Christ's love for the church in Ephesians 5. Finally, it's seen by some modern scholars as a celebration of the love between husband and wife and how that love manifests itself physically and intimately. 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

## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

### Sunday

8:00 a.m. **Church School** (see Zoom Meeting)  
 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 School ZOOM Meetings

#### 8:00 a.m.- Contemporary Sunday School: Adults

Voice Only Call: (929) 205-6099;  
 Code: 140827210#  
 Web-link for Video Call: <https://zoom.us/j/140827210>

#### 8:30 a.m.- Dr. Long's Sunday School Class

Voice Only Call: (929) 205-6099;  
 Code: 734629713#  
 Web-link for Video Call: <https://zoom.us/j/734629713>

#### 9:30 a.m.- Beginners Sunday School: Ms. Carolyn Smith

Voice Only Call: (929) 205-6099;

Code: 233007146#  
 Web-link for Video Call: <https://zoom.us/j/233007146>

#### 11:00 a.m.- Primary Sunday School: Rev. Earlene Grant

Voice Only Call: (929) 205-6099;  
 Code: 614890401#  
 Web-link for Video Call: <https://zoom.us/j/614890401>

#### 11:30 a.m.- Juniors Sunday School: Rev. Greg Winborne

Voice Only Call: (929) 205-6099;  
 Code: 856361645#  
 Web-link for Video Call: <https://zoom.us/j/856361645>

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

- Online: [crossstreetamezion.org](http://crossstreetamezion.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.crossstreetamezion.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: [crossstreetamezion.org](http://crossstreetamezion.org) & in the front lobby. If you would like a PDF copy sent to you, Email your request to: [ken46@snet.net](mailto:ken46@snet.net). 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 ([Ken46@snet.net](mailto:Ken46@snet.net)), 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 — 8:45 a.m.**  
**Worship Service — 10:00 a.m.**

**Rev. Moses L. Harvill, M. Div.,**  
Pastor

Email: mharvill@snet.net

**The Rev. Dr. Terry L. Jones**  
Presiding Elder

**Mrs. D. Diane Proctor**  
Missionary Supervisor

**The Right Reverend Dennis Proctor**  
Presiding Prelate

**Ministerial Staff**

- Rev. Robyn Anderson-Turner
- 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



**Pursuing New Possibilities in the Pandemic**

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them,

**With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.** Matthew 19:26 KJV

**"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 discernor 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 heavens,  
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 powerful,  
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 discernor 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