

THE CROSS



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



November-December 2021
Volume 25 Issue 6

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Desk	3
Here Our Prayers Lord	5
Fruit of the Spirit	6
Name of God	7
Daily Bible Reading	7
Christian Season	8
Liturgical Color	8
Sunday Church School	11
The Armor of God	14
Words To Live By	20
Daily Confession of Faith	21
Spirit Lifters	22
Barbara Perry Speaks	23
The Beauty of Holland	24
Joyce Meyer	25
Bible's Bird's Eye View	26
Our Daily Bread	28
Activities	29



Visit our
Facebook page

Experiencing Joy

What is the key to experiencing joy in the Christian life?

Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) but can often seem elusive for Christians. Before delving in to how we can experience joy in the Christian life, we must first recognize that joy is not based on circumstances. In fact, joy may not even prevent us from experiencing negative emotions. Rather, joy is a deep-seated sense of happiness in what God

(Experiencing on page 16)

Choose Joy Over Lament

I get a daily "word of hope" from an anonymous source on my WhatsApp chat account. Some I delete without hesitation. Others, I ponder on the message, then either respond to it or leave it alone. And then there are those that touch me in such ways that I forward to others or share in various ways. There was one a couple of weeks ago that started with a passage from Isaiah 61:3. I went ahead and read the entire chapter in order to fully

(Lament on page 17)

Joy

In what way is joy a fruit of the Holy Spirit?

Galatians 5:22-23 lists out the fruit of the Spirit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." "Fruit" here means "the result of labor." The laborer is the Holy Spirit. So what Galatians 5:22-23 really describes is traits characteristic of a believer who has yielded to the Holy Spirit's

(Joy on page 15)

What Is Joy?

Galatians 5:22-23 tells us, "The Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control." Amen 🙏

We may have heard about the fruit of the Spirit and wondered what it is and how it relates to our Christian faith. In this series, each fruit will be explored and related to our everyday lives. Just

(What is Joy? 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 Beloved Member(s),

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! We continue to serve in a season like none other. You have demonstrated courageous faith, love, and loyalty for Christ and His Church in the Pandemic.

With Christ as our helper, we will pursue new possibilities for more excellent service in the use of our gifts, time, treasure, and an abundance of resources. We are coming together to celebrate Family and Friends Day. We need the love, comfort, encouragement, and joy in gathering together.

Last year was a great success, spiritually, numerically, and financially as we shared with Family and friends across the Country. You have demonstrated that we are stronger together. We have planned for Sunday, November 21, 10:00 A.M. Parking Lot Worship Experience and 4:00 P.M. Zoom Family and Friends Day at the Cross with this sentiment in mind. The Preacher will be the Bishop Brian Thompson, Presiding Prelate of the Western Episcopal District of the AME Zion Church. We are anticipating a memorable event with our children participating. We will have a time of fellowship and recognition of the Class Leaders following the Service.

We look forward to sharing with members who have relocated, Wesleyan Graduates, and our many family members and friends from every corner of the Country.

In this season, we make sacrificial thanksgiving gifts to help the church finish strong for the year. The financial need is larger because we have not been able to come together on Sunday in the sanctuary for worship and have consistent giving of tithes and offerings from the membership. We have not been able to have special events, rental of the facility, and other income streams opportunities.

Let's pray and give. It is not equal giving but equal sacrifice, and the goal this year is \$20,000. **We went beyond the plan last year – let's do it again. Would you please encourage our Family and friends to support our efforts?**

If you cannot give at this time, we understand and thank you for supporting this event in other ways. We are seeking a record day of giving and attendance. This event has more significance as we look to Christ, our helper, and the sustainer. If we can help you in any way, please let us know. *We send much love to all from the Pastor and First Lady.*

Faithfully yours,

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

“Prayer for When Your Life Seems Overwhelming”

Joshua 22:5 says, “Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and to cling to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Let's pray: Lord, help us remember our primary purpose in life. We want to seek You first and live for Your kingdom, but sometimes we end up so overwhelmed by our commitments and responsibilities that we forget our true priority is to love You first. Forgive us for letting other things get in the way of our relationship with You. Help us see our life through Your eyes and give us a sense of Your priorities for us, so we can follow Your design for our days. Give us a heart to love Your word and a longing to obey it. Show us today what walking in Your ways and clinging to You looks like. Help us simplify our life, so that our main goal becomes loving You with our whole heart, soul, and strength its In Jesus' name we ask and pray. Amen, Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Thank You Jesus.

“Prayer to Not Borrow Trouble”

2 Corinthians 9:8 says, “And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work, Amen.”

Let us pray, Father, For the scenery You paint on the landscape of our life, and the breath You fill our lungs with, the friends You surround us with to share laughter, and the family to love and be loved by...all glory goes up to You. Your faithfulness is never-ending, Your mercies new every morning. There is none like You, Abba Father. We ask that You calm our anxiety, worry, and fear over when the calm water will kick up again. Help us not borrow trouble for hard days that aren't here yet. Increase our confidence in You, our wisdom, and our ability to let Your love flow freely through our everyday life, its In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

“Prayer for When You Want to Quit”

Romans 5:3-5 says, “Not only that, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint...” Amen

Dear Lord, Thank You that You sent Your Son to this earth as our greatest example of what it means to persevere. Thank You that we can look at His life and see that although His present sufferings were hard and one may have easily given up, He persevered. He did not give up, and his reward was the hope he had in us. Thank You that You are with us every step of the way, and even though we feel like giving up because what we see with our eyes is different than what we expect, we know that You are working on our behalf. We ask that You give us the strength to persevere. We ask that You

uplift us in times of discouragement. For when we are weak, You are strong. We pray that You would make our way purposeful and our steps firm in You when we are tired and weary. May we honor You by staying obedient and faithful on this journey. For we know that You have promised us that we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Thank You for this truth. Give us a heart to keep persevering, its In Jesus' Name we ask and pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

“Prayer for the What-If's of Life”

“to all that be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 1:7

Let us pray: Heavenly Father, When things happen outside our control, we remember our life belongs to You. We surrender to Your will for our life and Your plan for our day. Jesus, thank You for loving us enough to die on the cross to give us the gift of God's grace. Forgive us for the many times we've trusted in our own abilities and struggled to do things in our own power. Help us to rest in and trust Your enabling grace today. We know that in all our challenges, our grace will strengthen and enable us to live for You. Forgive us for letting stress and worry get the better of us. Thank You for the gift of peace. In this moment, we open our heart to receive the peace that only Jesus can give. No matter what happens today, help us to meet it with a calm spirit and peaceful heart. We'll receive Your grace and peace, Lord. We'll remember and receive Your love for us and Jesus help us to remember You are with us each moment of our life, In Jesus' name, Amen, Amen, Amen, Hallelujah, Thank You Jesus.

“Prayer of Repentance for Angry Words”

James 1:19-20, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God”. Amen

Let us pray, Father, Your Word has so much to say on the sin of anger, yet we give into this temptation all the time when we are challenged in our selfishness. So today we want to repent for sinning against those who have been made in Your image when we did not consider them above ourselves and allowed our words to cause pain. This is especially true in everyday life because we have allowed our pride to lead us into unrestrained anger by lashing out and interrupting in our disagreements. Help us to follow Your wisdom of being slow to speak and quick to listen so that anger does not cause us to walk in unrighteous behavior towards the people we love, as well as our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Thank You, Holy Spirit, for Your grace to empower us to walk more Christ-like. It's In Jesus' name we ask and 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

November

1 Luke 22-24
2 John 1-3
3 John 4-6
4 John 7 10
5 John 11-13
6 John 14-17
7 John 18-21

8 Acts 1-2
9 Acts 3-5
10 Acts 6-9
11 Acts 10-12
12 Acts 13-14
13 Acts 15-16
14 Acts-17-18
15 Acts 19-21

16 Acts 22-24
17 Acts 25-26
18 Acts 27-28
19 Romans 1-4
20 Romans 5-8
21 Romans 9-11
22 Romans 12-16
23 1 Corinthians 1-4

24 1 Corinthians 5-8
25 1 Corinthians 9-12
26 1 Corinthians 13-16
27 2 Corinthians 1-3
28 2 Corinthians 4-6
29 2 Corinthians 7-9
30 2 Corinthians 10-13

DECEMBER

1 GALATIANS 1-3
2 Galatians 4-6
3 Ephesians 1-3
4 Ephesians 4-6
5 Philippians 1-4
6 Colossians 1-4
7 1 Thessalonians 1-5

8 2 Thessalonians 1-3
9 1 Timothy 1-3
10 1 Timothy 4-6
11 2 Timothy 1-4
12 Titus 1-3
13 Philemon
14 Hebrews 1-4
15 Hebrews 5-7

16 Hebrews 8-10
17 Hebrews 11-13
18 James 1-2
19 James 3-5
20 1 Peter 1-2
21 1 Peter 3-5
22 2 Peter 1-3
23 1 John 1-2

24 1 John 3-5
25 2 John, 3 John, Jude
26 Revelation 1-3
27 Revelation 4-8
28 Revelation 9-12
29 Revelation 13-15
30 Revelation 16-18
31 Revelation 19-22

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

Name of God	Meaning	Application
EL ELOHE YISRAEL	God, the God of Israel	The God of Israel is distinct and separate from all false gods of the world.
EL ELYON	The God Most High	He is the Sovereign God in whom we can put our trust. El Elyon has supremacy over all false gods.
ELOHIM	The All-powerful One	God is the all-powerful creator of the universe. God knows all, creates all, and is everywhere at all times. The plural of "EL".
EL OLAM	The Eternal God The Everlasting God	He is the Beginning and the End, the One who works His purposes throughout the ages. He gives strength to the weary.
EL ROI	The God Who See Me	There are no circumstances in our lives that escape His fatherly awareness and care. God knows us and our troubles.
EL SHADDAI	The All Sufficient One, The God of the Mountains, God Almighty	God is the all-sufficient source of all of our blessings. God is all-powerful. Our problems are not too big for God to handle.
IMMANUEL	God With Us "I AM"	Jesus is God in our midst. In Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.

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.

Kingdomtide begins on the last Sunday in August and continues until the beginning of Advent.

The emphasis includes evangelism, world missions, and the work for peace and justice in all relationships. During this period, special emphasis is placed on the Kingship of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The observance is wrapped up in the heightened awareness of one of the basic tenets of the Christian faith – the hope of the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven

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

Advent is the season of expectation, hope and celebration of the past, present, and future comings of Jesus Christ to the world. Much of the focus is on the prophecy of the coming of the Messiah to Israel and the expectancy of that fulfillment. The Advent cry is “Come,” even though Emmanuel has come. Jesus has come, presently comes into the hearts of believers through grace, and is yet to return. This season is a time of anticipation as the Church makes ready for the coming of the Lord and the celebration of Jesus coming as a babe in Bethlehem. Therefore, Advent embodies a vital element of the Christian faith. The Advent season has marked the beginning of the Christian Year since the eight-century and consists of the four weeks before Christmas.

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.

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 Kingdomtide. 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.

Be blessed on your fast

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

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 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.

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

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.

juliesunne.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!

No Difference

Background Scripture:
Acts 10:34-47

EXALT!

Declaration: Acts 10:34-47

Gentiles Hear the Good News

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in everyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰ but on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the gentiles, ⁴⁶ for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷ “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” Acts 10:34-47

Affirmation

We commit to spread the good news that Christ is for all who want to know him.

ENGAGE

Barriers often keep people from becoming part of particular groups. How are barriers removed? God reveals to Peter that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for all, and the power of the Holy Spirit is God's gift to everyone who accepts Christ.

We have been experiencing barriers among people from time immemorial-cultural barriers, racial barriers, language barriers, socioeconomic barriers, ethnic barriers, sexual barriers etc. We have been struggling with this problem throughout history trying to find ways of uniting rather than dividing peoples. We find it easier to associate with people of different backgrounds etc. when united by a common cause, such as war between our country and another, or any attack from a common enemy, common support of our favorite sports team etc. Without such, we simply separate into our own groups and seek to defend ourselves from all others.

Break into small groups and discuss your ideas regarding what keeps us separated and divided as human beings when life would be so much better if people did not erect or subscribe to barriers that separate us. What fears do we have of the other, those different from ourselves? What positive accomplishments could we achieve if we were united rather than divided, do you think? Can you think of any ways that we could break down the barriers? Do we need strength from outside human capacities to accomplish such goals? Or do we just need to make sacrifices for the greater good?

EDUCATE

Acts 10:34-43: The term Gentiles referred to anyone who was not Jewish. It literally means “nations” (Greek, ethnos), as in Acts 10:35. other words used of non-Jews in the New Testament are “Greeks”/Hellenas (Romans 3:9), referring to those in the Greco-Roman world who were not Jewish and “the uncircumcision”/akrobystia (Ephesians 2:11), referring to those who did not enter into a covenant relationship with Yahweh by keeping Jewish law. Paul would explain that Jesus has “broken down

(Released 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.

(Released from page 11)

the dividing wall” between Jews and Gentiles by giving both groups “access in one Spirit to the Father” (Ephesians 2:11-22). In other words, the way to unify warring factions of humankind was to first reunite both to God. Before Gentiles were welcomed into the church, the barrier between Jews and Samaritans was broken down (Acts 8:4-8). Samaritans were the product of intermarriage between Jews and Gentiles and were shunned by the Jews (John 4:9). Jesus’ promise to His apostles is that they would systematically break down barriers as they were filled with the Holy Spirit, being his “witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Acts 10:44-47: As these divisions were breached, they were accompanied by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 8:14-17; 10:44). Peter was present in each case. The meeting between Cornelius’s household and Peter was facilitated by visions given to Cornelius and Peter, even though they were separated by miles (Acts 10:1-16). As is commonly known, Peter was the apostle to the Gentiles, having encountered Jesus in his journey on the road to Damascus for the purpose of persecuting the followers of Jesus (Acts 9:1-19); and it was Ananias to whom Jesus spoke in a vision and told him to lay hands on Paul (then named Saul) whom Jesus had chosen to be His messenger to “Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel” (9:15). Yet, it was Peter through whom Jesus’s revelation to the Jews was to come asserting that the Gospel was for all people and indicating that the wall of separation was now broken down between them and all other people. As one commentary points out in reference to verse 45, “it was difficult for strict Jews who had not seen Peter’s vision to realize that God did not show favoritism in His offer” (ESV Reformation Study Bible).

ELEVATE

We, as disciples in our day, must affirm that Jesus came for the benefit of all people, not for one specific group of people. Break into small groups and share how we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth and to shape our character so that we are more like Jesus, feeling a kinship with other believers all over the world, and answering the call to spread the gospel to everyone equally. How do you think Jesus feels about the lack of unity in the church? What “dividing walls” need to be broken down within the Church of Christ today? Explain your answer. Has the Holy Spirit, originally sent to unify, ironically become an issue that separates believers from one another today? How does the Spirit manifest among us today?

ITHINK

1. Before class, move furniture in your classroom so participants will experience literal barriers in getting to their seats. Use this experience to begin a discussion of figurative barriers people face.
2. To begin class, have volunteers complete this statement: “I sometimes feel uncomfortable in a group of people who are different than me in terms of their _____.” (examples: wealth, education, nationality, age, religion, etc.)
3. Role-play an employment interview for the apostle Peter. The interviewer will attempt to find out why Peter is qualified to be on your church staff. Peter will respond by telling of his experiences with Jesus and with the early church.
4. Read Acts 1:8 aloud. Use it as an outline to trace the history of the church in the first ten chapters of the Book of Acts (origins in Jerusalem, expansion into Judea and Samaria, introduction of the gospel to Gentiles)
5. Ask participants to make a list of the characteristics of the most effective Christian leaders they know. Have them mark one or two characteristics on the list that they believe they are lacking. Close with individual silent prayers during which participants ask God to use the Holy Spirit to build those characteristics in their lives.

KEY VERSES

Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.” Acts 10:34-35

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

PRAY OR ACT?

Read: Acts 13:1-5

So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. Acts 13:3

A missionary comes to your church and says he needs some short-term help. Do you pray or do you act?

The youth pastor says your church needs some new musical instruments for the youth ministry. Do you pray or do you act?

A mission needs help in a soup kitchen. Do you pray or do you act?

Prayer is one of the most powerful tools we have at our disposal. It allows us to speak to the Lord and petition Him directly for guidance and help.

But sometimes we can be the answer to our own prayer. Those are the times when we should pray and act. Maybe that missionary's request can be answered by your willingness to go. Perhaps you can donate a musical instrument. Are you the person God is leading to help in that soup kitchen?

In the first century, the good news of Christ was spread by people going out and taking action. That's why their story is told in a book called Acts of the Apostles, not the Prayers of the Apostles.

We should never downplay prayer, for it is something God commanded us to do. But let's realize that sometimes we need to back up our prayers with action. —Dave Branon

MORNING PRAYER

Read: Psalm 92

It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night. Psalm 92:1-2

When British preacher and writer John Scott turned 80, a friend penned a tribute to him that highlighted his discipline of prayer. For decades, Stott began each day with a prayer like this: "Good morning, heavenly Father. Good morning, Lord Jesus. Good morning, Holy Spirit. Scott then went on to worship each member of the Trinity individually, acknowledging and praising them for their work in the lives of believers.

Then he continued, "Father, I pray that I may live this day in Your presence and please You more and more. Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow You. Holy Spirit, I pray that this day You will fill me with Yourself and cause Your fruit to ripen in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons in one God, have mercy upon me. Amen."

The psalmist said that "it is good to praise the Lord...proclaiming [His] love in the morning" (92:1-2). So why not use John Stott's prayer of praise and petition as a pattern for yours today? It's a wonderful way to begin a conversation with God. David McCasland

Prayer tip: Post a few prayer verse plaques or note cards around the house as reminders.

CARING PRAYER

Read: Roman 15:30-33

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Romans 15:30

I recently received an e-mail from someone I didn't know. It was from a teenager who set a great example we all can learn from. His e-mail showed how much he believed in the power of prayer.

He told about a teenage girl in his hometown who had become pregnant outside of marriage. Her parents were threatening to force her to get an abortion. When the young man heard about it, he got on his computer and sent an e-mail to more than one hundred people, telling of the girl's predicament and saying over and over, "Please pray for this girl." his compassion for her was evident—as well as his faith in God to answer prayer.

This teenager could have spent time on his computer doing many other things: looking up information about cars, playing video games, posting cat videos. Instead, he took the time to compile all those e-mail addresses, and then he wrote a caring, heartfelt note. In Romans 15:30-33, the apostle Paul showed that he knew the value of

concerted prayer—whether it's for ourselves or for someone else in need.

What a lesson! It reminds us to cling to the Lord in prayer, and it shows us an example of the compassion that leads us to team up with others in caring prayer. —Dave Branon

Prayer Tip: Don't forget to follow up with God and thank Him for the answers to prayer He sends your way.

ALL DAY WITH GOD

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18
Pray continually. **Pray without ceasing.**
1 Thessalonians 5:17

Brother Lawrence (1614-1691) felt intimately close to God as he humbly scrubbed pots and pans in the monastery kitchen. Certainly Brother Lawrence practiced specific times of devotional prayer. But what he found more life-transforming was prayer during the workday. In his devotional classic *Practicing the Presence of God*, he says, "It is a great delusion to think our times of prayer ought to differ from other times. We are as strictly obliged to cleave to God by action in the time of action as by prayer in the season of prayer." In short, he advocated that we "pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

That's a helpful reminder because sometimes we tend to compartmentalize our lives. Perhaps we pray only during church worship, small-group Bible study, family devotions, and personal quiet times. But what about during our workday? To pray on the job does not mean to fall to our knees with clasped hands and pray aloud. But it does mean that work decisions and relationships can be brought to God throughout the day.

Wherever we are and whatever we're doing, God wants to be a part of it. When prayer enters every aspect of our lives, who knows what God might do for His glory! —Dennis Fisher

Prayer Tip: "The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth" (Psalm 145:18).

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.

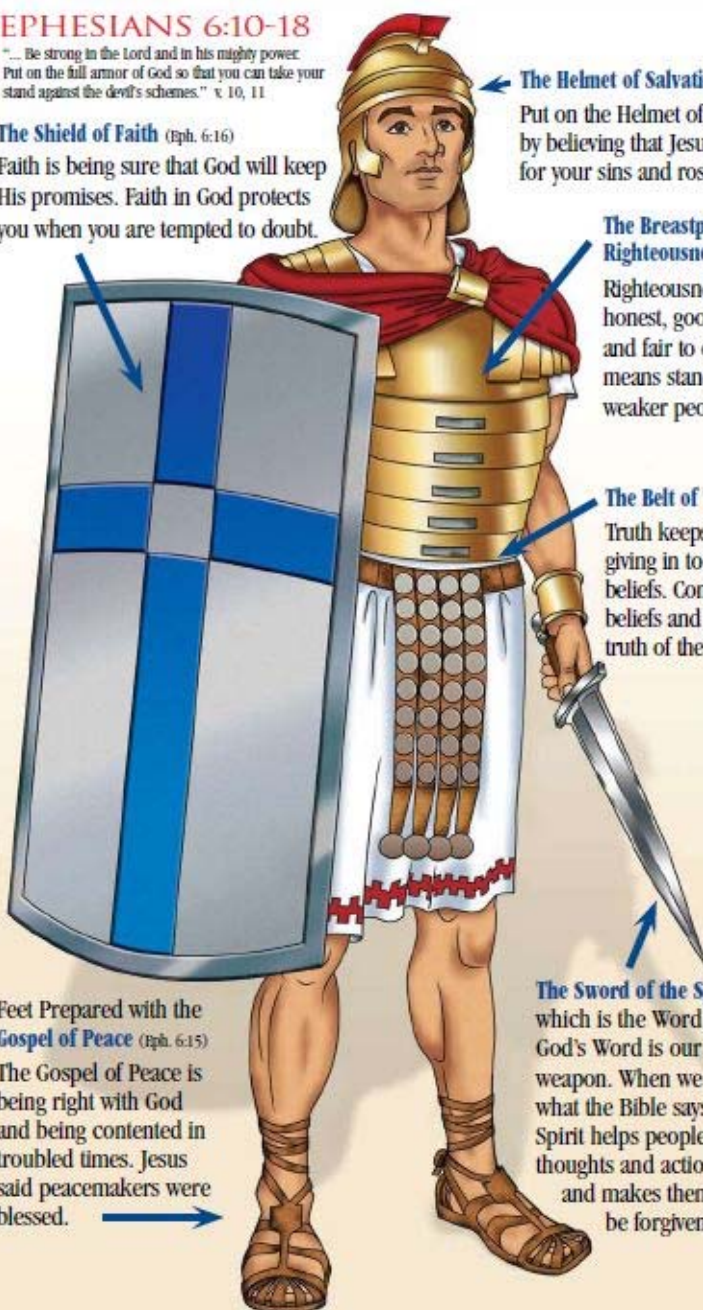
The Helmet of Salvation (Eph. 6:17)
Put on the Helmet of Salvation by believing that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again.

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,^[a] 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

(Joy page 1)

work in his or her life. One of these character traits is joy.

In the New Testament, "joy" is the Greek word *chara*. Related to both *charis* ("grace" or "gift") and *charos* ("rejoice; express joy"), joy is the natural response to a gracious gift. In every instance in the Bible, that gift originates with God, whether it be the arrival of the Messiah ([Luke 1:14](#)), the resurrection of Christ ([Matthew 28:8](#)), God's power over the sinful world ([Luke 10:17](#)), or God's salvation ([Acts 13:52](#)). God's grace is so strong that even the promise of His work can elicit joy ([Hebrews 10:34](#); [James 1:2-4](#)). And one of the greatest sources of joy is seeing God's redeeming work in others ([Acts 13:52](#); [1 Thessalonians 3:9](#); [Philippians 2:2](#)).

The modern world does not encourage joy in God. Instead, we're taught to value possessions, power, and position. But true joy is not found in those things. [John 15:1-11](#) says that joy comes from abiding in Christ's love. In [Philippians 2:2](#), joy flows from believers being united in mind, love, spirit, and purpose. John says that complete joy means to be united with the Father, Jesus, and other believers ([1 John 1:1-4](#)).

That doesn't mean that all worldly events are without joy. A healed illness, a hard-earned accomplishment, and even a material item can bring joy—if God's hand in the situation is recognized. The "Kingdom of God" is the manifestation of the sovereignty and glory of God. Sometimes God displays His glory and power by healing ([2 Kings 5:1-14](#)). Sometimes He puts a believer in a position of power ([Esther 8:1-2](#)). And sometimes He blesses His children with material possessions ([Job 42:10-17](#)). The key is that it is God who blesses, and although we may appreciate the gift, we rejoice that He has chosen to pour out His love, sovereignty, and power on us. We rejoice in the Giver, not just in the gift.

This is important to remember when circumstances are less than joyful. [James 1:2](#) says, "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds" (see also [1 Peter 1:6](#)). In trials, joy is not found in the immediate situation but in the promise that God's Kingdom will be revealed through the situation. [First Peter 1:7-9](#) says that current trials bring an assurance of faith, making the future joy even greater when Jesus returns. Similarly, [James 1:3-4](#) says that trials will strengthen our character. We can rejoice in that trials point to a future gift.

True joy is found only in Jesus ([John 15:11](#)). If we look for God's work and gifts in our lives, we will always have joy. If we get caught up in temporary hardships and worldly desires, our joy will be fleeting and weak. Even in hardship, our joy remains, because it depends on God and His promises: "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" ([Isaiah 35:10](#)).

The joy of the Lord – What is it?

The joy of the Lord is a supernatural confidence that God is sovereign, loving, powerful, and for us. It is the inner understanding, granted by the Holy Spirit, that no matter our circumstances, our condition, or our surroundings, God is working things out for our good ([Romans 8:28](#)).

The joy of the Lord is evident throughout the Bible, especially in regards to Jesus.

Before He was born, Mary sang of her joy ([Luke 1:47](#)) and Jesus' cousin John, still in his mother's womb, leaped for joy ([Luke 1:44](#)). On the night of Jesus' birth, the angels brought "good news of great joy" to the shepherds, announcing the coming Savior ([Luke 2:10](#)).

Jesus Himself lived with joy. Once, He said He was like a bridegroom at his own wedding feast ([Mark 2:18-19](#))—that is unmatched joy! At one point, people accused Him of being too joyful ([Luke 7:34](#)). Jesus told His followers that He taught them for His own joy and for a full portion of joy for them ([John 15:11](#); [16:24](#)).

Jesus' stories often resulted in joy—for example, the shepherd, woman, and father in [Luke 15](#). Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit ([Luke 10:21](#)).

When the church began, it was known for its joy ([Acts 2:46-47](#); [13:52](#)). When Paul wrote about the fruit of the Spirit, he included joy ([Galatians 5:22](#)). And, there is more. See [Acts 13:52](#), [Romans 14:17](#), [Philippians 3:1](#) and [4:4](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:16](#), and [1 Peter 1:8](#).

This joy of the Lord permeates the Bible. It extends deeper and further than mere happiness, which is temporary. It is constant ([John 10:28-29](#); [1 Peter 1:3-9](#); [Matthew 6:20](#)).

Joy is a cornerstone of our relationship with God and that's why He spends so much time telling us about it in the Bible. The joy of the Lord is our strength ([Nehemiah 8:10](#)).

Our entire relationship with God, made through the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus, is set on a foundation of joy. "Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" ([Hebrews 12:2](#)).

(Experiencing from page 1)

has done and what He is doing. The Greek word for "joy" is related to the Greek word for "grace." Truly, joy is a grace bestowed on us by God. So how can we accept and experience the gift of joy?

In many ways, perspective is key. When we look at what God has done for us, we naturally respond with thanksgiving and joy. When we look at difficult circumstances or the frustrations of life, we naturally respond with discontent. This is not to say that we do not acknowledge the difficulties of this life or the lack in our world. Rather, we do so while still recognizing that God is in control and that He loves us. The Psalms display this truth beautifully. David, for example, poured out his complaints to God. He did not deny the hardships of life, his depression, his hurt, or his disappointment. Yet by the end of each psalm, he generally seemed encouraged (for instance, [Psalm 3](#); [6](#); [7](#); [13](#); [16](#); [18](#)).

When we voice our concerns and allow ourselves to be reminded of the goodness of God, we release our burdens. Jesus said, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" ([Matthew 11:28-30](#)). We can experience joy when we give our burdens to Jesus. He helps carry the heavy load. He also reminds us of Who He is. Knowing of His care for us and our ultimate victory in Him, we can experience joy even in our hardships.

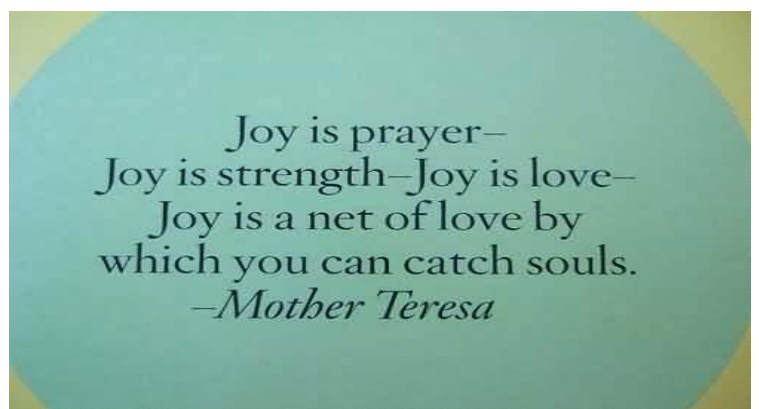
Paul was no stranger to hardships ([2 Corinthians 11:23-27](#)). And yet he was also prolific on the topic of joy, particularly in his epistle to the Philippians. Paul writes, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" ([Philippians 4:4-7](#)). We give our burdens to God through prayer and do so with thanksgiving.

But we don't stop there. Paul goes on to say, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" ([Philippians 4:8](#)). After we have given our requests to God, we keep a proper perspective. We think on things that are pure, full of splendor, excellent, right, and praiseworthy. We do not dwell on our heartache but on the goodness of God and the beauty He infuses into our lives.

In addition to prayer and proper perspective, we glean joy from community. [Ecclesiastes 4:9-12](#) says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken." We were created for community, as can be seen by God's creation of Eve to be a helper for Adam and in Paul's description of the church as a body of believers ([Romans 12:3-13](#)). Christians are instructed to encourage one another ([Hebrews 3:13](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:11](#)). We can share both our hurtful and happy moments with friends ([Romans 12:15](#)).

Ultimately, these practical tips for experiencing joy are just a small part of living a joyful life. Jesus describes what it means to abide in Him in [John 15:1-11](#), linking it with remembering His words, living in His love, depending on Him, and obeying His commands. He then says, "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full" ([John 15:11](#)). We experience joy in our Christian lives by giving our lives completely over to Jesus, accepting His gift of grace. When we truly abide in Him, we will know the fullness of His joy.

From www.CompellingTruth.org



(Lament from page 1)

understand both the context as well as the substance.

That Biblical passage dwells on the concept of joy as in complete satisfaction and pleasant acceptance. The 3rd chapter says in part; “.. to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness”.

The writer explains that; “All of us all experience hurt and disappointment at various stages in our lives - burned by life. But God doesn't expect us to sit in the ashes of the past, He wants to trade our brokenness for healing. He wants to give us beauty for our ashes, joy for mourning, and praise for despair”.

This anonymous writer further says that; “ashes represent what is left over after something has been burned up—our broken dreams, our hurts, our disappointments and our failures. The key is that we have to be willing to give up the ashes in order to receive the beauty. We cannot have both because the old has to go before the new can come”.

The question is whether we are willing to trust God with our past hurts? And willing to let go of the pain, to forgive others and ourselves so we can move forward in freedom? He suggests not to waste another day sitting in the ashes. That is simply because “The past is over, but our future remains. Our best days are ahead. Let God give you joy instead of mourning, and let Him make something beautiful out of the ashes of your life today”, he concludes.

These “word of hope” messages always end with a “PRAYER FOR TODAY”. And this one was, and I fully quote here: “God, thank You for promising to sweep away the ashes of my past and to give me something beautiful in their place. I choose to give them up to You and to receive Your healing and restoration in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.”

After reading that particular message with its prayer, I had to confess and also to repeat the old clique that “*growing old is not for sissies*”. This is not to scare anyone who is still growing to be old. It's just that, I want to connect the message and it's reference to Isaiah, which I quoted earlier, and to offer assurances and comfort to all of us. Also, I'm not concerned about those who are already head and heels in the process of getting old. Why? Because not only do they mostly agree with me, but they may even have their own anecdotes and real life references to the quoted clique.

Seriously, let us reflect on this. A thought came to me recently, that hit me like a ton of bricks. It has so occupied my mind for the past few days, that I have to share with some one else. Think about this. It seems clearly to me that all of us appear to be riding in this might Eternal Train that started long before now. It miraculously shows up at all virtual stations and admits everyone; male, female, black, white and in between, all ages; without asking for tickets or any pass or even destination. In effect, everyone is qualified to ride in it, regardless of one's desires or aspirations and station and purpose in life. What astounds me is that everyone appears to know everyone. We all appear to acknowledge each other and accord nothing but respect for each other. But guess what? We don't necessarily know any person by name or age or gender or creed. Just by existence and proximity. Yet, we

know who is here and who is not. We know who was on the past moment and who is not here at the current moment. We know who just came on board and who's been on for a while. Communication is of a different dimension. Speech and language are unknown but awareness is obvious.

I have carefully moved around and about on this train, and what occurs to me is the acceptance without conditions and prejudice that what is going on in this community is really, what has to go on. What? No concept of hierarchy. Just the presence of existence. And finally, the inability to object to or to accept anything.

For example, I realize that some who used to be all around and within my mental circle are no more in the circle. One time they were and then another time they aren't. I know for sure that this is not some kind of a dream. As I specified earlier, it is a thought that came to me and completely occupied my thinking. So, what do I get out of it?

Growing old. All the ailing and the aching, the pains and the stumbles; they all come with maturity and wisdom. Those attributes are not taught in institutions. You cannot acquire them with any level of effort. You get it when when you get there. There are no “stupid” or ignorant seniors. Technically, they may not be adept with your modern ways of life. But the embedded wisdom and maturity that only come with the “ring of fire” of age and survival, qualify all seniors to be wise, witty and matured. Sissies are not welcomed.

After all said and done, we got on the train of life willingly, but paradoxically, we couldn't have refused and we couldn't reconsider. It is that reality that makes growing old and matured the mark of wisdom and experience. That calls for Joy. Look all around, the mental acceptance of life itself and the mechanizations and maneuvering of all the effort to be counted amongst the living call for joy. We made it, otherwise we wouldn't be on the train. As I ponder on my own individual experience, I wonder if any one else can share in the same experience.

Sit still, somewhere. Stay calm and close your eyes. Think of yourself as being part of this train ride - for so long - according to your own existence and presence on board the train. Then think of all the souls that used to be in your physical circles, but are no more. Think of the suddenness and the abruptness that whisked each soul off the train, as they disembarked without ever saying a word, or giving any hint as to their motives and desires and pleasures and intentions. Think about the fact that you continue to enjoy this ride, that you face each mental thought with courage and that you have an anchor that keeps you grounded and firm. Think, feel and accept the Joy that surrounds your being and say a prayer to the Lord that you love it here and as long as it lasts, you choose to be joyful for who you are rather than to lament on what might have happened in the past. You are a survivor (still riding the train) and that calls for Joy.

Amen!

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.

© Copyright 2002-2021 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. www.GotQuestions.org



Our Daily Bread

A THANKFUL HEART

Devote yourself to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
Colossians 4:2

Seneca, the great philosopher of ancient Rome (4 BC-AD 65), was once accused by the empress Messalina of adultery. After the Senate sentenced Seneca to death, the emperor Claudius instead exiled him to Corsica, perhaps because he suspected the charge was false. This reprieve may have shaped Seneca's view of thankfulness when he wrote: "homicides, tyrants, thieves, adulterers, robbers, sacrilegious men, and traitors there always will be, but worse than all these is the crime of ingratitude."

A contemporary of Seneca's, the apostle Paul, may have agreed. In Romans 1:21, he wrote that one of the triggers for the downward collapse of humankind was that they refused to give thanks to God. Writing to the church at Colossae, three times Paul challenged his fellow believers in Christ to gratitude. He said we should be "overflowing with thankfulness" (Colossians 2:7). As we let God's peace "rule in [our] hearts," we're to respond with thankfulness (3:15). In fact, gratitude ought to characterize our prayers (4:2).

God's great kindnesses to us remind us of one of life's great realities. He not only deserves our love and worship, He also deserves our thankful hearts. Everything that's good in life comes from Him (James 1:17).

With all we've been given in Christ, gratitude should be as natural as breathing. May we respond to God's gracious gifts by expressing our gratitude to Him. —Bill Crowder

What are some of the biggest, most enduring blessings you've received in life? What everyday blessings have you experienced that are often easy to forget?

Loving Father, forgive me for the times I've taken You and Your blessings for granted. Create in me a thankful heart, so I'll honor and praise You for all You've done and are doing.

Today's Scripture: **Colossians 4:2-6**

² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

INSIGHT

In Colossians 4:2-6, Paul draws our attention to his commitment to the Great Commission. Before we tell others about Jesus, Paul instruct us to spend time talking with God about those who don't yet believe in Him. The Greek word translated "devote" (V.2) means "to give attention to; to spend much time together." effective evangelism begins with praying for opportunities to share our faith in Jesus, asking for courage to talk about Him and for clarity of our message (VV. 3-4). We're "make the most of every opportunity" when it comes to sharing the good news (V.5). Paul advocates living a life that draws others to Christ (V. 6). Jesus spoke of letting our "light shine before others, that they may see [our] good deeds" (Matthew 5:15-16). Peter tells us to "be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks ...the reason for the hope that [we] have" (1 Peter 3:15).

—K. T. Sim

WE NEED OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

[Let us] not [give] up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but [encourage] one another. Hebrews 10:25

I grew up the firstborn son of a Southern Baptist preacher. Every Sunday the expectation was clear: I was to be in church. Possible exceptions? Maybe if I had a significant fever. But the truth is, I absolutely loved going, and I even went a few times feverish. But the world has changed, and the numbers for regular church attendance are not what they used to be. Of course, the quick question is why? The answers are many and varied. Author Kathleen Norris counters those answers with a response she received from a pastor to the question, "Why do we go to church?" he said, "We go to church for other people. Because someone may need you there."

Now by no means is that the only reason we go to church, but his response does resonate with the heartbeat of the writer to the Hebrews. He urged the believers to persevere in the faith, and to achieve that goal he stressed "not giving up meeting together" (Hebrews 10:25). Why? Because something vital would be missed in our absence: "encouraging one another" (V. 25). We need that mutual encouragement to "spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (V. 24).

Brothers and sisters, keep meeting together, because someone may need you there. And the corresponding truth is that you may need them as well. —John Blase

What are the top four reasons you either go to church or don't go? How does knowing "someone may need you there" make you feel about meeting together?

Heavenly Father, as I meet with others to worship and praise Your name, help me to also encourage others in Your name. Forgive me when I overlook the latter because I'm too preoccupied with myself.

Learn more about the importance of church
DiscoverySeries.org/Q0904

Today's Scripture: **Hebrews 10:19-25**

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

INSIGHT

The letter to the Hebrews was written to Jewish believers in Jesus who, due to persecution and hardship, were in danger of drifting from the faith. Therefore, it makes sense that the author would remind them of the confidence they could have in Christ, for it provides an antidote for their doubts. The New Bible Commentary says, "The word translated confidence is found in four important contexts in Hebrews (3:6; 4:16; 10:19; 10:35). Fundamentally, it's a confidence of free and open access to God...Based on the unique sacrifice of Jesus (by the blood of Jesus)." as a result, the believers were encouraged to embrace the confidence that they were truly part of God's "house" (3:6), to enter God's presence confidently in prayer (4:15-16), to enter God's presence in worship (10:19), and to maintain that confidence in living out their lives (10:35). Bill Crowder

Ministries, Grand Rapids, Michigan
Reprinted by Permission

Words To Live By

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: JOY

JOY is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It has its beginnings in God and is produced by Faith. It is based on the reality of God and His promises. JOY is not to be confused with happiness which is dependent upon favorable circumstances to sustain it.

The source of JOY must be the Lord. We are to share in the JOY of Christ by a daily walk with Him and a daily practice of rejoicing in the knowledge of Him and His salvation. Unlike worldly happiness, JOY often comes after great affliction and sufferings. JOY is the feeling Jesus had when he suffered for mankind.

look for JOY in -

- persons who in the midst of difficulty have a cheerful, peaceful spirit.
- persons who are "happy in the Lord"
- persons who get excited when they talk about the things of God
- persons who are looking forward to being with the Lord and sharing eternal JOY
- persons who love sharing the Gospel and enthusiastic about the salvation of souls
- persons who demonstrate JOY in their singing, praying, testimony, preaching, teaching, with musical instruments, praise and in their daily walk.

Read:

Nehemiah 8:1; Psalm 16:11; Psalm 35:9; Psalm 66:1,2; Isaiah 29:19; 16:24, I Peter 1:3-8.

Remember to look for and acknowledge the signs of JOY within yourself.

WARNING

Watch for the enemy of JOY - worldly sorrow which, if allowed, will try to destroy your JOY.

Additional Scriptures:

Isaiah 12:1-6, Acts 2:28, Romans 14:17, Romans 15:13, Jude 1:24,25, Hebrews 1:9, Hebrews 12:2, 2 Corinthians 8:1-4

“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

Realize the Power Within You

Realize the power that is within you, and you will no longer be the victim of a depressed spirit. And what is this inner power? Simply the God-given ability to believe. To the extent to which you develop this faculty, you will master the defeats in your life. The great issue is to learn to believe.

This is stated in one of the most important of all Scripture passages:

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are

possible to him who believes." Mark 9:23

Learn to believe. Learn to cast out doubt. This is done by the practice of affirmation. Affirm faith, think positively, visualize achievement. Never think doubt. Always think faith.

This text affirms that when you learn to believe, the area of the impossible is vastly reduced and the area of the possible is greatly increased. If you set this text firmly at the center of your thought patterns, you will never again be a victim of low spirits.

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 until they find peace in God; then we know pure joy.

30. Joy of Spiritual Fellowship

For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them. Matthew 18:20

One effective way to get your spirits lifted is to arrange for periodic times of spiritual fellowship-to think and talk and pray

with a few people who, like yourself, are seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. This practice will bring you one of the most glorious experiences in life. You will be aware that Jesus Christ is in the midst of such a group, and the warmth and uplift this knowledge will bring to your heart is impossible to describe.

Cast Your Care on God

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

Therefore humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care

upon Him, for He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7

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

Afraid of Nothing

Fear haunts the minds of so many people. It is a paralyzing sickness. One verse that has helped many is this:

The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1

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

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

He Makes You Whole

Depression of spirit is often caused by a haunting sense of incompleteness and by unresolved conflicts. Jesus Christ, the skillful Physician, heals the personality as surely as he heals the body and soul. This described in a wonderful passage:

Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him

that they might touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well. Mark 6:56

To experience His healing power, yield yourself to Him willingly. Make the first move, however timidly. He will respond with the miraculous touch that makes you whole in body, mind and spirit. How your spirits will rise as you gain a deep inner sense of wholeness!

. Victory in the Battle of Life

Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Ephesian 6:16, 17.

to protect the head. So must we protect our hearts and minds against negativism, pessimism, evil thoughts, hate. The mind must be kept clean. Take the sword of God's word and put to flight those enemies of the good life: wrong thinking and wrongdoing. Thus armed, you can win the battle of life.

The shield was used to protect the heart; the helmet was

Barbara Perry Speaks

“Don’t Lose the Awe”

Read Deuteronomy 8:10-11.

Let us pray, “Father thank You that Your hand has been upon our life in so many ways. Thank You for the countless things You have made happen for our good that we could never make happen. We stand in awe of Your goodness to us, and we will not forget it, Hallelujah as we give the highest praise. Thank You Lord.

In Deuteronomy 8, after promising the Israelites that He was bringing them

into the Promised Land, a land filled with abundance, favor, and blessing, God gave them a warning that they not forget He was the source. God was saying, “When you get that promotion, when your health turns around, when you have that house you asked Me for, don’t ever forget that it was My goodness. Always take time to thank Me for what I’ve done.”

See God has done something amazing for us and if we forget that everything comes from Him. God won’t

share His glory. If we don’t stay grateful, if we don’t recognize His goodness, the same God who opened the door can close the door. A lack of gratitude will cause our blessings to not last.

So I encourage to remember every morning when you wake up, the first thing you should say is, “Lord, thank You for Your goodness.” Hallelujah, Thank You Lord.

“Fill This Prescription”

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

Let us pray, “Father, thank You that Jesus has overcome the world through His death on the cross and resurrection. Thank You that though we have challenges and tribulation, we can still be of good cheer. We receive Your joy as

our strength to rise up and overcome the tough times in Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

Jesus acknowledged that we’re going to have challenges in this life, and everything is not going to be perfect. Nevertheless, He added, “Be of good cheer.” he didn’t say to be discouraged, to be upset, to be sad, or to be offended. In the tough times, we need to be full of joy, because the joy of the Lord is what gives us strength. If the enemy can deceive us into living weighted down, discouraged, and somber, he’ll be able to defeat us at every turn. Don’t fall into

that trap. Our circumstances may not change, but we can change. Quit letting everything burden you down. Make the choice that right in the midst of difficulties we’re going to be of good cheer. Because I have a prescription for you from our Creator. He says stay cheerful, be good-natured, laugh every day, find the humor in life, and keep a joyful atmosphere in your home. If we stay on this prescription, we’ll have the strength to make it through the tough times, Amen, Hallelujah, Thank You Jesus.

“Keep Praying”

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint,” Luke 18:1

Let us pray, “Father, thank You for the great promises and the desires You have put on our heart that we can bring to You and ask You for. Thank You for the clear word to keep praying until the answer comes. We believe that our times are in Your hands, and You will answer in Your perfect timing, we Thank You in advance for blessings that ‘s on it

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

From the time we ask God for help with a need in our life until the time it comes to pass is called “the trial of our faith.” that’s when it’s easy to get discouraged and give up on what we’re believing for. When it’s taking longer than we thought, it’s easy to talk ourselves out of it and think, “I tried. I did my best. It’s just not meant to be.” no, keep praying, keep believing. It may not have happened yet, but what God promised us, He’ll still going to bring to pass.

See God is working behind the scenes in answer to our prayers and is about to break stubborn things. God is about to break down those strongholds that have held us back and look permanent. Suddenly, things are going to turn around. Suddenly, we’re going to be free from that addiction. Suddenly, that depression is going to be broken. Suddenly, our business is going to take off. Keep praying. Keep praising. Keep believing, Amen.

“He Has the Last Word”

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” 1 Peter 5:10

Let us pray, “Father, thank You that there is a purpose for whatever pain comes our way, and You have great plans to use it for our eternal good. Thank You that though we may not

understand it now, the day is coming when You will put us back on our feet, and we will see it clearly, it’s In Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen, Amen. “Hallelujah, Thank You Jesus. When we go through difficulties we don’t understand, remind ourselves that God is our heavenly Father and if we have children, we know how much we love them and do our best to watch after and protect them.

See we may have been knocked down, but be encouraged that our generous God is about to put us back on

our feet. Sicknesses, betrayals, and disappointments don’t get the last word. God does. The difficulty is simply a setup for God to launch us to something greater than we’ve ever imagined. The process may be painful, but the purpose is well worth it. One day we’re going to look back and see how God worked it all for our good. Stay in faith. We’re going to come out promoted, vindicated, stronger, healthier, and to a new level of our destiny, Amen.

THE BEAUTY OF HOLLAND

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

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

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

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

BUT THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE FLIGHT PLAN. THEY LANDED IN HOLLAND AND YOU MUST STAY. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THEY HAVEN'T TAKEN YOU TO A HORRIBLE, DISGUSTING, FILTHY PLACE, FULL OF PESTILENCE, FAMINE AND DISEASE. IT'S JUST A DIFFERENT 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 ITALY, LESS FLASHY THAN ITALY. BUT AFTER YOU'RE BEEN THERE AWHILE AND CATCH YOUR BREATH, YOU BEGIN TO LOOK AROUND, AND YOU BEGIN TO NOTICE THAT HOLLAND HAS WINDMILLS, HOLLAND HAS TULIPS. HOLLAND EVEN HAS REMBRANDTS.

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

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

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

SOURCE UNKNOWN

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

“Look from the place Where You Are”

14 The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, Genesis 13:14

It seems that life always has its ways of bringing us to a place where we need to make a fresh start.

In the Bible, Abram found himself in that very place when his nephew Lot chose the best land in the area, leaving Abram with the less desirable land. But God didn't abandon Abram.

Instead He showed up and gave Abram a bold new vision.

I like what the Lord told Abram after

he and Lot parted ways. He told him, 'Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are.'

It's that phrase, "look from the place where you are," that stirs me. That's the point of a fresh start, a new beginning. God Himself will bring us to that point occasionally.

You might be there right now. Maybe you want to break a bad habit or revive a lost dream. Maybe you want to get a handle on your finances, start your own business, write a book, whatever it is, God could be telling you to get started right now. This could be your new beginning!

After God told Abram to look from that place, the next thing He told him was, Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to

you' (Genesis 13:17 NKJV).

God could be telling you right now to get up and get on with your dream or vision, your assignment, your life, because He is giving it to you. Your part is to walk it out.

Do what you need to do. It may not be easy. It might take some time. But trust God and go for whatever it is. Look from the place where you are right now—and go!

Prayer starter: God, regardless of what's happened in the past, help me look up from where I am now. I thank You for Your new beginning for me. I will boldly step into it and walk out Your calling for me.

“Living with Contentment and Satisfaction”

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.” 1 Timothy 6:6

The Bible says that godliness accompanied with contentment is great and abundant gain. What I take from that is, a godly person who is content is in the very best place he can possibly be.

Joy doesn't come from having your circumstances in order and under control; it comes from what's in your heart. For example, the world is full of people who have what they think they want, and they're still not happy. In fact,

some of the most unhappy people in the world are people who seem to "have it all."

Contentment is not about fame or being well-known, how much money you have, your position at work or your social circle. It's not found in your level of education or what side of the track you were born on. Contentment is a heart attitude.

There's nobody happier than a truly thankful person, a truly content person. The word content means 'being satisfied to the point where nothing disturbs you no matter what's going on, but satisfied to the point that you never want any change.'

We all want to see things get better. But where you are right this minute doesn't have to disturb you. You can choose to believe that God is working and things are changing, and you will see the result of it in due time.

Life is all about the choices we make, so choose contentment and satisfaction every single day of your life. You won't go wrong when you do.

Prayer Starter: God, I want to be content and satisfied with where I am, right now. Give me the strength to choose to be content every single day.

“Making the Most of Your Time”

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil” Ephesians 5:15-16

Time really does fly, doesn't it? On the other hand, in some situations, it may seem like time crawls! No matter how fast or slow it feels like time goes by, each of us only has a certain amount of time on this earth. With that in mind, I want to ask you, what are you doing with your time?

Time is such a gift from God! I see every day how He takes His time to make us what He wants us to be. And then, in His mercy and grace, He gives us time to get in agreement with what

He's doing in our lives so we can experience His goodness. What a loving God!

So, ask yourself, "Am I in agreement with what God is doing in me? Or, am I struggling and fight, impatiently trying to do things my way?"

I can assure you, if you're struggling with God, you're just wasting your time, but if you're in agreement with Him, you're using your time for great things.

Remember, God is gracious. He takes His time. We might think He's taking too long when, in His goodness, He is just waiting for us to line up with the work He's doing in us. He won't rush. He is patient. Our struggling only delays our progress.

So maybe this is a good time to change your outlook and start looking

ahead to a new way of doing things, a new vision for life, a renewed faith and trust in the One who is always at work in us, and always for our good.

My encouragement to you is to trust God and spend your time getting in agreement with what He is doing in your life. Let Him define your purpose. Know in your heart that He has great plans, and no matter how much time He takes, He loves you, and He always has your best interest at heart.

Prayer Starter: Lord, I want to spend my time agreeing with, not fighting, the great work You are accomplishing in me. I thank You that when I start to waste time, You always remind me that You love me and that Your timing is always best.

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.



(What is Joy? from page 1)

like physical fruits need time to grow, the fruit of the Spirit will not ripen in our lives overnight. As we mature in our faith, all the characteristics of our spiritual fruits will grow as well.

The second fruit of the Spirit is joy. The word 'joy' appears nearly 200 times in the Bible, which helps us understand just how important this second sweet fruit of the Spirit really is. Joy is a condition of the heart. People often confuse joy with happiness, but they are not interchangeable. Joy is from within, regardless of what is going on around us. Happiness can be a blurred emotion, dependent on a situation. Joyful people make a commitment to gratitude regardless of the circumstances.

In Greek, the word for joy is 'chara.' This describes a feeling of inner gladness, delight or rejoicing. This inner gladness leads to a cheerful heart and a cheerful heart leads to cheerful behavior.

The most important attribute of joy is that we can find joy in adversity. This can be a difficult idea to grasp, because joy might be the last thing we are feeling when facing struggles. God knows our sorrows, heartaches and fears and He calls us to rejoice anyway. He wants us to live a life full of joy and promise. Particularly in these difficult times we are facing during the worldwide pandemic, it may seem difficult to be joyful. Our lives have changed, and we are facing adversity that is unprecedented. Certainly, many of us are not happy. But, joy is an internal experience, and even through our own unhappy circumstances, we can find joy in the midst of the storm with our faith in God Amen 🙏

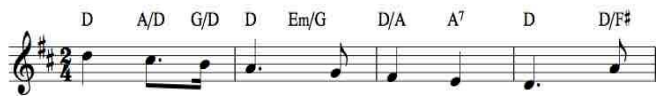
Ps. 30:5 says, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," 🙏

Nehemiah 8:10 says, "For the joy of the LORD is your strength," Amen 🙏 🙏 🙏 🙏 🙏 Barbara Perry

Joy To The World

Isacc Watts

Handel



1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns; Let
 3. No more let sings and sor - rows grow, nor
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and



earth re - ceive her King; Let ev - 'ry
 men their songs em - ploy; While field and
 thorns in - fest the ground; He comes to
 makes the na - tions prove the glo - ries



heart pre - pare Him room. And and na - ture
 floods, rocks, hills and plains, re - peat the sound - ing
 make His bless - ings flow far as the curse is
 of His righ - eous - ness. And won - ders of His



sing, and heav'n and na - ture sing. And
 joy, re - peat the sound - ing joy. Re -
 found, far as the curse is found. Far
 love, and won - ders of His love. And



heav'n and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 -peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 as, far as, the curse is found.
 won - ders, won - ders of His love.

©MichaelKravchuk.com

A Prayer for Joy

Dear Jesus, I thank you for the gift of Your Son.

For the gift of joy, hope, and love.

Lord, I pray today

the walls from around my heart and the blinders covering my eyes, simply fall away so I can finally embrace the fullness of You.

Today, I want a joy that overflows and springs forth from within my soul.

I want to see the moments You give me and feel the gratitude deep within my heart.

Lord, I ask You

to show me when I am choosing to look past You to focus on the hurt.

Then give me the strength to put my eyes back on You

and soak in the unexplainable joy that comes from You alone.

Give me eyes to see the miracles of Your love.

In Your Name I pray.

Amen

CHRISTMAS CHILD

Today Scripture: **Philippians 2:6-11**

He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. Philippians 2:7

Imagine the One who made cedars spring from seeds starting life over as an embryo; the One who made the stars submitting Himself to a womb; the One who fills the heavens becoming what would be in our day a mere dot on an ultrasound. Jesus, in very nature God, making Himself nothing (Philippians 2:6-7). What an astonishing thought!

Imagine the scene as He's born in a plain peasant village, among shepherds and angels and bright lights in the sky, with the bleating of animals His first lullabies. Watch as He grows in favor and stature: as a youngster, astounding teachers with answers to grand questions; as a young man at the Jordan, getting His Father's approval from heaven; and in the wilderness, as He wrestles in hunger and prayer.

Watch next as He launches His world-changing mission—healing the sick, touching lepers, forgiving the impure. Watch as He kneels in a garden in anguish and as they arrest Him while His closest friends flee. Watch as He is spat on and nailed to two wooden posts, the world's sins on His shoulders. But watch, yes watch, as the stone rolls away, an empty tomb ringing hollow, because He is alive!

Watch as He is lifted to the highest place (V.9). Watch as His name fills heaven and earth (VV. 10-11).

This Maker of the stars who became a dot on an ultrasound. This, our Christmas Child. Sheridan Voysey

What would life and history be like had Jesus never been born? What prayer or poem can you offer God to thank Him?

Jesus, thank You for making Yourself nothing so I could be forgiven.

⁶ Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on the cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

INSIGHT

Along with Jesus' ultimate and horrific sacrifice of death on the cross to pay the debt we owned for our sins (Philippians 2:8), Jesus also sacrificed by coming to earth as a man. Why was this a sacrifice? Philippians 2:7 says, "he made himself nothing." although still God (and possessing His attributes, such as omniscience and omnipotence), Jesus didn't cling to the privileges of deity. Instead, He gave them up (including heavenly communion with the Father) to become a man subject to pain, suffering, temptation, thirst, hunger, and a need for sleep. And though He could have come as a king with a palace full of servants, He instead was born to a poor couple in a lowly manger. He suffered pain, betrayal, and desertion; He humbly served as a healer and teacher; and He was obedient to God—even to death—so that we could be reconciled to Him (Romans 3:23-26). Alyson Kieda

Ministries, Grand Rapids, Michigan,
Reprinted by Permission



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
 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 & in the front lobby. If you would like a PDF copy sent to you, Email your request to: 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 2nd Sunday of each Month. **You may submit your information in the following ways:** place the information on a CD (Window format) and leave it in the Cross Street office, E-mail Ken Simmons (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