



Get F.I.T. 2023

Faithful. Intentional. Talking.

Book of
LUKE

Chapter
9

Verses
23-24



Prayer & Fasting Guide

Welcome To Our Get F.I.T. Fast

There is a flower called the Evening Primrose. I accidentally stumbled upon this flower while researching some things online. I was blown away by what I learned about this flower. The Evening Primrose is an incredibly special flower. It is a beautiful flower. The Evening Primrose has this amazing yellow color that's flattering to the eye.

Not only is it beautiful but it's also medicinal. There is an Evening Primrose Oil that's believed to be good for nerve damage caused by diabetes. It is also good for osteoporosis. It has been proven to help build bone density in elderly people.

However, the fact that it's beautiful and medicinal is not what makes it special. What makes it special is that it's also nocturnal. The Evening Primrose only blooms at night and that is mind blowing to me. That indicates that this flower is at its best in dark places. It looks its best and it produces its best in the dark situations.

This is proof that God can bring the best out of you in your darkest hour. Anything can bloom in the sunshine, but it takes something special to bloom in the dark. It is my prayer that the next 3 weeks of fasting and prayer will prepare us to shine brightly for God in every aspect of our life in 2023.

Get F.I.T. (Faithful, Intentional, Talking) Guide will provide information about fasting and encouragement through daily devotion while you fast. I am asking that you commit to the following:

- Commit to attending Sunday Service in person or virtually
- Commit to a full, partial, or absolute fast.
- Commit to personal prayer daily and corporate prayer every Monday at 6am.
- Commit to the devotional reading Monday-Friday.

The guide is designed to be used every day. How does this guide work?

- Sunday is aside for sermon notes and application.
- Monday – Friday provides daily devotions.
- Saturday is for rest and reflection on the week. We are asking that you write down which daily devotion spoke to you the most. Write down any answered prayers and prayer request for the upcoming week. We are also asking that you write down the names of anyone that is not saved or that is out of fellowship. Pray for them daily.

Pastor Eric D. Lee

What Is Fasting?

Fasting is defined as the abstinence from food and/or drink as an element of private or public religious devotion.¹ Food and drinks tend to represent the material things of life that can satisfy us physically but distort our view of life spiritually. It is easy to become dependent on and driven by the physical and material cares of the world and forget about the one who holds the world in His hand. David writes, “I humbled my soul with fasting” (Psalm 69:10). The goal of fasting is to separate ourselves from the physical and material things of the flesh and draw near to God spiritually.

What Are the Types of Fasts?

There are several types of fasting. The one you choose should challenge you. Remember that this is between you and God. It’s about spiritual discipline and drawing closer to God. Honor God with your best effort.

Type one—a **Full Fast**. Drink only liquids. Food is not permitted.

Type two—a **Partial Fast**. A partial fast is when you limit what food or liquids you eat or drink or limit the time you that you eat or drink. The Daniel Fast is considered a partial fast. You can combine the partial, full, and absolute fast. You can decide not to eat or drink from sunup to sundown or from sundown to sunup. The partial fast is flexible.

Type three—an **Absolute Fast** is not eating or drinking anything for a specified time. You should consult your family physician before beginning a fast.

If there are severe medical reasons that will limit your ability to fast from food or water, you should not attempt to do this. Rather, look for other ways that you can fast or participate, such as limiting how much time you spend watching television or surfing the Internet.

The Daniel Fast. Eat fruits and vegetables, and drink water and juice. **No** meats, sweets, or bread. The website <https://draxe.com/daniel-fast/> provides information about the Daniel Fast.

¹ Merrill, E. H. (1996). [Fast, Fasting](#). In *Evangelical dictionary of biblical theology* (electronic ed., p. 245). Baker Book House.

Week One: Faithfulness

Day 1

Sermon Topic _____

Scripture _____

Sermon Points _____

Day 2

God Is Committed to You

Romans 8:31-32

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Martin Luther King stated, “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” This is one of my favorite quotes because it challenges us to respond properly when we face adversity. How we respond to difficulties in life matters because of who our God is. Romans 5:3-5 says, “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us”.

Now, we do not glory, because we are going through tribulation. No one likes to experience tribulations in their life. We glory because God can bring something good out of our tribulations, and He never leaves us or stop loving us through our tribulations.

A few months ago, I dropped my brand-new iPhone. I am a very tall guy, so it was a really long and hard fall for my iPhone. The moment it fell I knew that my screen was shattered, and that my phone probably would not work. Surprisingly, when I pick my phone up, my screen was not shattered, and my phone was working fine. I forgot that I had a protective case on my phone and a screen protector for my screen. I could see cracks in my screen, and I could see scratches and scrapes on the phone, but my phone did not fall apart and stop working because it was protected.

Long and hard falls in our lives can make us forget that we are protected. Falls may leave scars and scratches but don't allow them to shatter your faith and cause you to fall apart. Our devotional scripture on today tells us that God loves us so much that He did not spare His own Son from death and torture when saving us from hell. God did not allow His Son to die for you so that He can turn around and leave you during difficult times. God loves you too much for that. God is committed to you.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for your commitment to us through your Son Jesus. Please remind us to look to the cross whenever our days are dark and hard and find encouragement. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 3

The Best Possible Answer

2 Corinthians 12:8-9

Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Tests always gave me anxiety regardless of how prepared I was for them. I would stress myself out because I wanted to do my very best on the test. I remember preparing for the ACT test. This test would determine if I could go to college and play Division I basketball my freshman year. I sought out tutors for the test and asked friends that had successfully taken the test for advice. Some of my friends told me to choose “C” for any of the questions that I did not know the answer to. They told me to do so because “C” was the most common answer. Now, I’m not sure if that was true or not but I did score high on the test.

Sometimes we feel that “yes” is the most common answer that God gives us. Or, maybe we feel that yes is the only answer that God should give us when we pray. In our devotional text, Paul says that he asked God three times to remove the thorn from his flesh, but God said no. God told Paul that His grace was sufficient and that His strength was made perfect in Paul’s weakness. God has the right to say no, and it is right for God to say no. I would suggest that you read verse 7 as well. Paul understood that the “no” from God was the best thing for him because it kept him from being built up in pride. Sometimes God has to tell us no to protect us from dangers and devastation that we can’t see.

Find comfort in this. God told Paul no and never removed the thorn from his side, but God never moved from Paul’s side either. He covered Paul with grace, and He gave him the strength to overcome it. God is faithful to us whether the answer is yes, no, or wait. Make peace with the things that God said no to even if it was something you really wanted. No may not be your ideal answer, but it may be God’s best answer for that situation. Romans 8:28 says, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose”. Trust God.

Prayer

Heavenly Father thank you for always having our best interest at heart. We do not always understand but we trust You. We realize that it’s Your grace and strength that’s keeping us in our times of weakness. We love you Father, In Jesus name, Amen

Day 4

Don't Come Down

Nehemiah 6:1-4

Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates), that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm.

So, I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?" But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.

The first two days of our devotion focused on God's faithfulness to us. On today we want to switch our focus to our faithfulness to God. How often does a quick peek at Facebook turn into an hour-long journey through posts and stories on Instagram and TikTok? Time is wasted and tasks are incomplete because a quick peek turned into an hour-long distraction. Distractions are all around us. Have you ever watched the Kentucky derby or some other horse race? Trainers put blinkers or blinders on the eyes of racehorses to keep them focused on what's in front of them and not on the things going on around them. They want them to have a singular focus, because that gives them the best chance to be successful and win the race.

Nehemiah had a singular focus, and we should have the same if we are going to fulfill our God given purpose and reach our goals. At times it is necessary to put on binders and block things, people, and places out so that you can focus. Like Tobiah and Sanballat, distractions will not always present themselves as such. Distractions will disguise themselves as being something good, something needed or even something reasonable. Practice dealing with distractions just as Nehemiah did. Recognize them, avoid them, and stay focused on your goal. Don't allow anything to cause you to cease the work you are doing for God.

Prayer

Heavenly Father we thank You for all that You allow us to do for You. Thank You for keeping us from dangers seen and unseen. Father help us to stay faithful to the work before us. We want to honor You with our life and work on today. Guard our mind and hearts today. In Jesus name, Amen

Day 5

Stronger Together

Ruth 1:16-17

But Ruth said:

“Entreat me not to leave you,
Or to turn back from following after you;
For wherever you go, I will go;
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
Your people shall be my people,
And your God, my God.
Where you die, I will die,
And there will I be buried.
The LORD do so to me, and more also,
If anything but death parts you and me.”

In 1941 Winston Churchill declared, “united we stand and divided we fall”. That statement resonated with people all around the world. The truth is we are stronger together and that we need each other. Christ said that people will know that we are His disciples by the way that we love one another. 1 John 4:20 says, “If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? God expects us to have a vertical relationship with Him and horizontal relationships with each other.

Ruth shows us what it means to stick by someone as a loving friend. Ruth was faithful to Naomi. Naomi was in a terrible state of grief because of the death of her husband and her two sons. Naomi was bitter because of all she had gone through. She did not feel that she had anything to offer anyone, especially a daughter-in-law. She urged Ruth to leave her and go back to her homeland, but Ruth refused. Faithful and loving friends are not concerned about what you can offer them. Faithful friends are concerned about what they can offer you. Naomi needed love, compassion, and someone to walk with her through the most difficult time of her life. Ruth was there for Naomi and it changed Naomi's life. Do not underestimate the impact your presence has in the life of others. God rewarded Ruth's faithfulness to Naomi and he will do the same for you. Blessings often come when we are a blessing to others. Focus on being faithful and Godly friend to someone that is going through a difficult time.

Prayer

Heavenly Father thank You for being a faithful friend to us. Now Father we are asking that you help us to be a faithful friend to each other. We want to be empathetic, compassionate, kind and loving to those that are hurting or in need. Help us to be more like you. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 6

Stick To the Plan!

Joshua 6:15-16;20

But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner. On that day only they marched around the city seven times. And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people: "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city! ; So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

I played with the Harlem Globetrotters and I loved every minute of it. I personally feel that Harlem Globetrotter show is the best family show ever. Most people that I meet have a Harlem Globetrotters story, even if it's just seeing the Globetrotters on Scooby Doo. Playing for the Globetrotters was simple and fun. All you had to do was stick to the plan, and the show would be a success. We always won! Likewise, success is imminent when we stick to God's plan for our lives.

Joshua was given a plan for God's people to conquer Jericho and the land that God had promised to them. Joshua was told to march around the walls of Jericho once a day for six days and seven times on the seventh day. Then they were to blow the trumpet and shout and the walls would fall down. The walls of Jericho were massive, and had never been penetrated, but everything happened exactly as God said. It was a strange plan, but it worked. Archaeologists have found pieces of the Jericho walls, so we know that this Biblical story is true. Impossible and amazing things can, and will happen when we are faithful to God's plan.

Sticking to God's plan requires faith, trust, and obedience. It might not make sense to you but trust God and keep moving. I encourage you to do whatever it is that God has told you to do and how He told you to do it. Remember that God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. Stay faithful to His plan and watch the difficult walls begin to fall in your life.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we know and understand that Your way is the best way for our lives. Father make Your plan clear to us and then provide what we need to follow it. Give us the faith we need to trust You blindly. Manifest Your promises in our lives. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 7

Rest, Reflections, Prayers

Take time to rest and reflect on today. Escape the business of the week and do something you enjoy on today.

1. Which daily devotion spoke to you the most this week?
2. Who are you praying for this week?
3. What are your prayer requests for the week?
4. What prayers were answered this week?

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Week Two: Intentionality

Day 1

Sermon Topic _____

Scripture _____

Sermon Points _____

Day 2

One Step Ahead

Jeremiah 29:10-11

For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you and cause you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

I have served in several leadership and management positions over the years. Hiring the right people has always been one of my responsibilities in those roles. I have conducted countless interviews. I always ask the interviewee to share their first 30-, 60-, and 90-day plan if they were offered the position. Their answer tells me if they are experienced, organized, structured, and proactive. The correct answer reduces my stress and gives me comfort and confidence in hiring. It assures me they have a plan and will always be one step ahead.

In our devotional text, God assures Judah that He has a 70-year plan for their lives regardless of how things looked and felt. Their situation was not favorable, but they were still favored by God. No one is more experienced, organized, structured, or proactive than God. Don't allow what you see and feel during this season to dampen your faith. Stop stressing about today and simply trust God. God is very intentional, and He is always one step ahead. Things may feel out of control but rest in knowing that God is always in control. He knows exactly where you are and what you need.

In Matthew 6:31-32 Jesus tells His disciples, "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things, the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. God is always one step ahead.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for always being one step ahead in my life. I may not understand some things, but I will trust you through it all. Today, I ask that you relieve my mind of worrying and remove stress from my life. Guide and comfort me with Your mighty hand. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 3

The Secret Ingredient

John 13:34-35

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another.”

In my opinion, my mom is the best cook ever. I'm not saying that because she knows how to cook everything, but I am saying that because she is excellent at cooking my favorite things. I know that most of you would echo the same about your mother. When I was learning to cook, I would call my mother and ask her how to make my favorite dishes. She would give me the recipe and talk me through it, but my food did not taste like hers. This would frustrate me because I would do everything she said to do, yet the taste was different. Years later, I finally realized my missing ingredient: a mother's love. My mother put her heart into cooking for us. Love makes everything taste better.

Christ commands and requires us to intentionally show love to one another daily. Christ tells us that people will know that we are his disciples by the way that we love one another. Christ understands that love will leave people with a better taste in their mouths about life. Christ knows this because He is the ultimate expression of God's love, and God Himself is love, according to 1 John 4:8. When we show love; we are actually, sharing God with someone that needs Him in that moment. My mother's love made food taste good, but my Father's love makes life taste better.

Today, practice loving someone the way that God loves you and the way 1 Corinthians 13 teaches us to - Be patient, kind, and long-suffering on today. Share the secret ingredient of love.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me. I pray that You give me the ability and the strength to love and help someone else along the way. Father, help me bless someone else in the same way You have blessed me. Today, I want people to see You through me and the love I show them. In Jesus name, Amen

Day 4

Dream On

Habakkuk 2:2

Then the LORD answered me and said:

“Write the vision

And make it plain on tablets,

That he may run who reads it.

One day during the summer of 1992, I was lying on my mother’s sofa and watching the Nike All-American game on ESPN. They also showed all the highlights from the Nike All-American camp. To be a Nike All-American, you had to be one of the country’s top 100 high school players; I was nowhere close to that then. However, I said to myself that I would attend that camp and be a Nike All-American in the summer 1993. God blessed me to do and be exactly that. That was when I realized the importance of having a dream and a vision for my life.

God told Habakkuk to take the vision He gave him and write it down. He told him to make it plain so the people could run with it. You must do likewise. Write your dreams and vision down so you can run with them. Your dreams and vision give you a sense of direction in life and will keep you focused and on track. Success doesn’t happen by accident. It starts with a dream. It is essential to dream big and believe that you can do the impossible.

You serve a big God. Know that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. All it takes is the faith of a mustard seed, and you can move mountains. Always remember that God is able to do exceedingly and abundantly above all we could ever ask or think. Dream on.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I recognize that the Earth is Yours and the fullness thereof. I know that nothing is too hard for You. Father, I ask that You align my dreams with Your purpose for my and provide everything needed to accomplish them. I will be sure to give You all the glory and use my platform to draw all others to You. In Jesus name, Amen

Day 5

Regular Maintenance

Daniel 6:10

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

Most people have some type of air conditioning and/or heating unit in their home. The units require regular maintenance to be at their best. It is suggested that you change the air filters in your home units every three months. This is important because your filters catch stuff that you can't see. Changing your filters will help your home units run more efficiently. The air in your home will be cleaner. Your quality of life will be better. Failing to change your air filters regularly will make your units clog up and break down. It will cost you a lot of money to repair or replace them. Regular maintenance will help you avoid all of that.

Prayer is one of the ways we perform regular maintenance in our lives. Prayer is one of the filters for our life. Daniel truly embodied praying without ceasing and man alt to always pray. Daniel was intentional in praying three times a day. He prayed from the same place, at the same time, and in the same way every day. Daniel understood that prayer would catch things he could not see and do things he could not do. The Bible says that the prayers of a righteous man avail much. Just like changing the air filters in our home makes our units run better; prayer makes our life run better. Prayer will clean some stuff up and keep some things from clogging up. Sometimes the reason blessings are not getting through in our lives is because of the need for more consistency in our prayer life. An inconsistent prayer life will cost you a lot at some point in your life.

In chapter 6, Daniel was on his way to the lions' den, and death was certain for him. Prayer dispatched God's angel to the lions' den before Daniel got there. The angel held the lion's mouth shut and Daniel survived. Stay ahead of the game as Daniel did. Make prayer a part of your daily routine, and watch God handle the lions for you.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I recognize that it is a blessing and a privilege to be able to call upon You in prayer. I also recognize that it is a need and a command to pray. Today I am committing to conversing with You regularly. Father, I ask that You dispatch Your angels before me and cover me as I continue to draw closer to You. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 6

Change The Channel

Philippians 4:8-9

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

This will be shocking to some, but I remember when TV used to go off at 12am each night. I'm not talking about a TV show going off, I'm talking about TV channels shutting down for the night. They would play the national anthem and show the American flag, and the entire channel would go off for the night. Nothing else would come on that channel until the morning. Unfortunately, you didn't have a lot of options that you could change the channel to. Things are a lot different now. TV never goes off and you have several options and platforms to choose from when it comes to TV. You can choose to watch satellite TV, cable TV, or use a streaming platform. All of them give you numerous options and choices in channels. You get to choose what you give your attention to. If you don't like what's on one channel, you can simply change to another channel.

We have to remember that our minds and our emotions have several channels that we can change to when needed. You don't have to stay stuck on a channel that's going to make you go off. You can turn from a channel that makes you sad. You don't have to watch a channel that's going to make you buy into things that you don't need in your life. You have options and the ability to change the channel of your mind and emotions and choose to watch something better.

In our devotional scripture, Paul admonishes the Philippian church to choose those things that are lovely, praiseworthy, and of a good report to meditate on. Paul literally tells them to change the channel from the negative to the positive. What we focus on is what we will manifest in our lives. If our thoughts are negative, then negativity will show up in our lives. We have to choose to see the good even when things are challenging. I know that this can be difficult because of the trauma and pain that some have experienced in life. However, we have to be adamant about not allowing those things to define our life. Proverbs 23:7 says, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he". Changing your emotional and mental channel will change your life.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, this is the day that You have made, and I will rejoice and be glad in it. Thank You for all that You have done for me. Father, help me to see the good instead of the bad and victory instead of defeat. I make the choice to praise You and be positive on today. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 7

Rest, Reflections, Prayers

Take time to rest and reflect on today. Escape the business of the week and do something you enjoy on today.

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4. What prayers were answered this week?

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Week Three: Talking

Day 1

Sermon Topic _____

Scripture _____

Sermon Points _____

Day 2

Word-of-Mouth Advertising

Mark 5:18-20

And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

60 to 70% of advertisers agree that word-of-mouth marketing is the most effective way to market your company. People try new foods, products, TV shows, and destinations based on the recommendation of people we know. Most people read the consumer reviews on a product to determine whether or not they should purchase the product. All of those things represent word-of-mouth marketing. It’s human nature to trust the testimony of those who have experience with something that we are about to embark on.

In our devotional text on today, Jesus delivered a man that was demon possessed, living in a graveyard, and hurting himself. After his deliverance, the man wanted to get in the boat with Christ and follow Him wherever He was going but Jesus forbade him to do so. Instead, Jesus told him to get out of the boat and go back to his home and tell others about what He did for him. Jesus was instructing the man to go out and do some word-of-mouth advertising.

So many times, we focus on being inside of the church or in the boat, as this man did. However, Jesus wants us to go beyond the doors of the church and share our testimony with others. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.” This command literally means to share Christ as we go about our everyday lives. Get out of the boat and focus on being a word-of-mouth advertiser for God on today.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for saving me. I don’t know where I would be or who I would be without you. Father, open the door for me to share my testimony with my friends and family. Use me to draw them to you. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 3

Builder or Burner

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Mark Twain once said, "I can live for two months on a good compliment". For Twain, six compliments would change his emotional forecast for an entire year. Twain's statement speaks to the power that we possess in our tongue or words. James 3:5 says, "Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!" Some say that sticks and stone may break my bones but talking doesn't hurt. How about the one that says, "I am rubber and you are glue, whatever you say bounce off of me and stick on you"? I don't agree with either of those statements. We have the ability to build people up or burn people down with the words that we use.

Our devotional text tells us that life and death is in the power of the tongue. We have to choose to speak words of affirmation, instead of words of degradation. The words that we speak verbally, reflect the condition of our heart inwardly. Matthew 15:11 Jesus says, "Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man". We watch what we eat to be physically healthy, so we must watch what we speak to be spiritually healthy. Vulgarity, proclivities, gossip, insults, and negativity should not be a part of our daily lives. On today, choose to share, compliments, encouragement, humble words, and kindness. Be a builder and not a burner.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, guide my tongue on today. Help me to use my words wisely. Teach me how to build people up and not tear them down. Hold my tongue while I am angry. Help me to speak life and hope into the lives of others. In Jesus name, Amen

Day 4

My Biggest Fan

1 Samuel 30:6

Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

Have you ever attended a very competitive sports event? Maybe it was a football, basketball, or baseball game. Fans get really excited and intense at sporting events, especially when their team is fighting through a very tough time in the game. Fans begin to scream, pump their fists, hold up signs, and cheer their team on to victory. The players on the field or the court draw strength and energy from the cheers and the chants from the crowd. True fans know this and that's why they invest in showing up and supporting their team at all costs.

There comes a point in life when you have to be your own biggest fan. You have to cheer yourself on. You have to show up for yourself, support yourself, and motivate yourself. You have to forgive yourself for the failures of the past and extend grace to yourself as you push through the challenges of your right now. Strengthen and encourage yourself just as David did in our text on today. David didn't have anyone but God in his corner, but that was all that he needed.

There will be days when you look around and you will not see anybody that you can lean on. The people were angry with David because they were hurting. They did not see that David was going through the same things that they were going through but he still had the responsibility of leadership. Please know that people will not always understand your situation because they are going through difficult situations as well. Be confident in who you are in Christ and know that you are going to be OK. You have to find a way to block out the noise and speak positivity into your life. You have to be your biggest fan.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to see how precious I am to You. Remind me that I am wondrously made. Teach me to encourage myself when no one else does. I want to find strength in my relationship with You. In Jesus name, Amen

Day 5

Can't Nobody Do Me Like Jesus

John 4:28-29

The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

I heard a story about a puppy that stumbled onto the porch of a very kind and loving family. The family fed the puppy and gave him water to drink. To the family's surprise the puppy ran away shortly after eating. The next morning the puppy showed back up, but this time he wasn't alone. There were two other puppies with him. The family realized that the puppy didn't run away, but he went and got others so that they could receive the same kindness that he did. The puppy knew that if they could do it for him then they would certainly do it for the other puppies as well.

God's children should feel about Him the same way that puppy felt about that family. When you experience the love, kindness, grace, favor and mercy of God, it should make you go and tell someone about it.

Our devotional scripture is part of a redemptive conversation that Christ had with a Samaritan woman at a well. The Samaritan woman was considered the worst of the worst by the religious sect and the community of her day because of the life she lived and her heritage. Samaritans were looked at as dogs by the Jewish community. No one wanted this woman as a friend or associate. However, Jesus went out of his way to show love and compassion to her. Because of that, the woman went out of her way to tell people to come with her and see the Man that changed her life.

Know that you are not alone when life gets lonely. Jesus went out of His way to be your friend so that you can talk to Him whenever you need to. Take a moment to reflect on your life and remember all of the difficult situations that God brought you through. Allow those moments to lead you to invite someone to get to know Jesus. Let them know that can't nobody do them like Jesus.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus out of His way to save me. Thank You for Your love, compassion, and favor. Father, You lifted me from some very low places in life and You stuck by me when no one else would. Create the opportunity for me to tell others about Christ. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 6

Sound The Alarm

Luke 16:27-28

“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’

For residents of tornado-prone areas; the screeching cry of outdoor sirens is a warning to seek shelter because a dangerous tornado is on the way. Tornado sirens were first used in the 1970s. Tornado sirens have helped to save more lives than can be counted. The siren does not stop the tornado from tearing things up but it warns people and give them enough time to seek out shelter. The siren was designed to give people a chance to live.

Hell is not a popular topic to discuss, but it is a real place that some people will go. In our devotional scripture on today, a rich man finds himself in hell. He enjoyed all of the comforts, luxuries, and privileges of life while he lived. He looked down on poor beggars like Lazarus. One day he died and went to hell. The rich man was being tormented so he begged Abraham to send someone to his father’s house and warn his family about the place that he was in. He did not want to see his five brothers come to hell when Paradise was available to them.

We should not want to see anyone, especially our family, go to hell either. For this reason, we should walk around as God’s sirens and warn people of the pending danger. We should tell them to repent now before the devastation comes. Let them know that the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life. Encourage them to take shelter now because when Jesus comes back it will be too late. Did you know that 119 million people in America identify themselves as a non-Christian? The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. SOUND THE ALARM on today and help save a soul tomorrow!!

Prayer

Heavenly Father, give me the courage to share the Gospel with the lost. I know that hell is real, and I do not want to see anyone I know go. Father, grant me the wisdom needed to know when to speak and when to keep quiet. Give me the words needed to prick their hearts. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 7

Rest, Reflections, Prayers

Take time to rest and reflect on today. Escape the business of the week and do something you enjoy on today.

1. Which daily devotion spoke to you the most this week?
2. Who are you praying for this week?
3. What are your prayer requests for the week?
4. What prayers were answered this week?

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Week Four: Growing

Day 1

Sermon Topic _____

Scripture _____

Sermon Points _____

Day 2

Standard Operating Procedures

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

According to techtarget.com, standard operating procedures are written instructions that describe the step-by-step process that must be taken to properly perform routine tasks and duties. SOPs are important because they guarantee that the organization remains consistent and in compliance with industry regulations and business standards. They benefit a business by reducing errors, improving efficiency, increasing safety, and producing guidelines for problem solving. SOPs are instrumental to the success of any company.

In John 10:10 Jesus says, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly". God wants us to live a life of joy, peace, success, and abundance but we must follow His standard operating procedures to do so.

God's SOPs for our lives are in the Bible. 1 Timothy 3:16-17 explains that God breathed the words of the Bible and used man as an instrument for writing. That means that God is personally guiding our lives through every word of the Bible. The Bible provides instruction, correction, and encouragement, so we can excel in life. A profitable, peaceful, and powerful life is available to you through God's SOPs. God's word is the key to success.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I want to get life right and bring honor to You by the way I live. I know that I must live according to Your word to do that. Father, I pray for the desire to read Your word, the capacity to retain Your word, the knowledge to understand Your word and the wisdom to apply Your word. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 3

One Stop Shop

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Walmart started selling groceries in 1998, the same year that they open their first supercenter. It was a bold move. The idea was to make Walmart a one-stop-shop for consumers. Walmart wanted shoppers to find whatever they needed under one roof. This turned out to be a very smart and profitable business model. Shoppers love the concept because of its convenience, and it helps them save money and time. Other stores have adopted this model, because of the success that Walmart experienced.

God sent Jesus to be a one-stop-shop for us. We can go to Jesus and find whatever we need. We can go to Jesus whenever we need. Jesus is our Counselor, Savior, Intercessor, Mediator, and Redeemer. Jesus is our friend, our light, and our example.

Our devotional text calls Him Wonderful. The Hebrew writer calls Him the Author and Finisher of our faith. He has and is everything we need. In John 15:7 Jesus said, "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you". In John 16:24 Jesus said, "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full".

Look no further than Jesus. Make Him your first and last stop. He has it all and He can do it all.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Jesus being all that I need. Thank You for Him always being present and available to me. Please forgive me for running to things and people when I should always run to You. Father, I vow to seek You in my moments of anxiousness. In Jesus name, Amen

Day 4

Let Freedom Ring

Proverbs 22:7

The rich rules over the poor,
And the borrower is servant to the lender.

In 1988 the New Jersey Bell company introduced caller id to the public. Before caller id people had no idea who was on the other end of a call, but you prayed that it was someone that you wanted to talk to or was expecting to talk to. Caller id took the guesswork out of answering the phone and empowered people to accept or decline calls based on who was calling. Some use the service to avoid bill collectors and collection agencies. Avoiding the collection call is not avoiding the debt.

It's hard to imagine that debt dictates when a person answers a phone that they are paying for. Debt will make you do strange things. Debt will make you incur more debt to pay off other debt. Debt will take your entire paycheck and only leave you pennies to live on. Debt literally says "go to work for me and I will determine what I'm going to give you to enjoy". Debt will destroy your life.

God does not want anyone living as a slave to debt. God wants you to live a life free from the burden of debt. Here are some simple things that you can do to live a life free from debt.

1. Honor the Lord with your possessions. Proverbs 3:9-10
2. Don't be a lover of pleasure. Proverbs 21:17
3. Pay your bills on time. Romans 13:7-8
4. Have a generous heart towards the less fortunate and leave an inheritance for your family. Proverbs 22:9; Proverbs 13:22
5. Work, save, and invest. Proverbs 6:6-11; Ecclesiastes 11:2

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for blessing me with all that I have. I want to honor You with all my possessions and my life. Father, free me from or keep me free from the burden of debt. Grant me wisdom so I can manage resources properly. Father, enlarge my territory so that I can be a blessing for others. In Jesus name, Amen

Day 5

No Excuses

John 5:6-8

When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk."

George Washington Carver said, "99% of the failures come from people who have a habit of making excuses". Benjamin Franklin said, "He that is good for making excuses is seldom good at anything else". Excuses will never help you reach your goal or your full potential. At some point you have to let the excuses go so that you can get going in life.

In our text today we find Jesus in conversation with a man that had an infirmity for 38 years. Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be made well and the man responded by telling Jesus what people did to him or didn't do for him. Everything that the man needed to get better was in front of him, but he was focused on everything behind him. Fortunately, Jesus healed the man in spite of the excuses that he was making but the man could have easily missed his blessing.

How many blessings have you missed because you've made excuses instead of making steps? It's time to let the excuses go and move forward. The things that you want to accomplish in life are on the other side of the excuses that you make about life. No more excuses! Get it done!

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for another opportunity. I promise to make progress instead of making excuses on today. Please strengthen me and give me the courage to overcome the challenges before me. In Jesus name, Amen.

Day 6

True Prosperity

3 John 1:2

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

Harvard Health Publishing published an article on the declining life expectancy in the United States. The article said, "COVID-19, drug overdoses, and accidental injury accounted for about two-thirds of the decline in life expectancy, according to the 2022 report. Other reasons included heart and liver disease and suicides". The decline is alarming, but life expectancy is still very high. Because of this, the age requirement for Social Security has increased to help relieve the financial strain on the system due to people are living longer.

God wants us to prosper in all things, including our health. A longer life does not mean quality of life. It's hard to enjoy wealth when you are not healthy. Now more than ever we must take care of our mental, physical, and emotional health. We must be intentional about self-care. Christ took care of our sick soul on Calvary, and we have to take care of our bodies and minds here on Earth. Living a healthy life is a part of living an abundant life. Focus on resting adequately, eating properly, and being active. Being the best version of yourself is your responsibility and good health is true prosperity.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, Thank You for things being as well as they are. I pray for healing within my body and mind. Strengthen me to do the things needed to promote good health and stability. Please prosper me in all things. In Jesus name, Amen.

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