

## 21 DAYS OF PRAYER – SEPTEMBER 2017

### DAY 1

#### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Psalm 103

#### DEVOTIONAL

Have you ever been in a place where you find it hard to praise God for anything? Nothing is going the way you hoped or planned. We wonder where the goodness, compassion, healing, help, refuge that we expected from God has gone. We are not alone. Many of others in the Bible have been in this same place: Moses, David, Abraham, and the disciples.

In Psalm 103, David reminds us that even in a season when our lives seem to be in constant turmoil, there are many things for which we can praise God. He forgives our sins, rescues us from the pit of hopelessness, and shows us great compassion and love. Praising God is remembering all He has done.

#### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Make a list of some of the things God has done for you just this week. Add to your list daily. It can be as simple as, "I woke up this morning." Pray those back to God in gratitude.

Bookmark Psalm 103 so that the next time life tries to extinguish your praise, you can be reminded of God's great deeds on your behalf. Pray the word of this Psalm back to God.

### DAY 2

#### SCRIPTURE TEXT

1 Tim. 2:1-4

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people- for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

#### DEVOTIONAL

Last year's presidential election may go down in history as one of the most divisive political events of our time. The division seems to continue to grow with new accusations from both sides emerging daily. Emotions surrounding these differences of opinions have severed friendships, family relationships, and business relationships. If family members are willing to exclude each other from gatherings and celebrations based on their political affiliation, how much more difficult is it to pray for those in power on that side? It does not come naturally or easily for us to pray for anyone who has hurt us, who we feel has done wrong to others, or who we distrust or disagree with. These verses tell us that it is pleasing to God to pray for ALL those in authority. The result is that we would all live peaceful and quiet lives. The 2016 election was no surprise to God when He inspired these verses. He knew there would be division and has given us the means to gain peace.

#### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, I ask that you bless and protect the leaders of our country and leaders around the world. Please give them guidance and insight for decisions. I ask that you help me have a patient and peaceful attitude toward those who hold different opinions.*

## DAY 3

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Psalm 2:10-12 (MSG)

“So, rebel-kings, use your heads;  
Upstart-judges, learn your lesson:  
Worship God in adoring embrace,  
Celebrate in trembling awe. Kiss Messiah!  
Your very lives are in danger, you know;  
His anger is about to explode,  
But if you make a run for God—you won’t regret it!”

Proverbs 21:1

In the Lord’s hand the king’s heart is a stream of water that He channels toward all who please Him.

### DEVOTIONAL

Do you sometimes see news that disturbs you? Do the nations on earth seem to be losing their bearings? God predicted this would happen and reminds us things will change when those leaders run to God. Today we get to pray for national leaders around the globe, inviting God to channel their hearts toward believers in every nation and to woo them to Himself.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*God, thank You for being the King of all kings and for shaping the hearts of kings toward the people who please You. Today, my heart is drawn to [country]. I ask that You would turn the heart of [country’s] ruler to do the right things for your people in [country].*

## DAY 4

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Psalm 18

### DEVOTIONAL

As you read this Psalm, whom did you image David's enemy to be? The vast armies that came against Israel or maybe even his own men, because they were unhappy with a decision he had made? Let us challenge our thinking and look at this Psalm from an Ephesians 6:12 perspective. In Ephesians, Paul tells us we are not fighting flesh and blood, but evil spiritual forces of the heavenly realm. Read the Psalm again, but this time read it as though you are the writer. You are the one under attack. You call out to God. He hears your voice. Do you feel the earth tremble? Can you hear the thunder? Victory is close at hand. The great I AM is close at hand. Call out and He will come!

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

What troubles have "coiled around you"? Close your eyes and imagine God, riding on the cherubim, coming to your rescue! Thank Him for sending rescue to you and ask Him to show you where He is in this day for you.

## DAY 5

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Psalm 46:10

He says, *“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”*

### DEVOTIONAL

Who do you know that’s not busy? Busyness is almost a badge of honor these days. Being still goes against everything we do naturally and culturally, but God’s word tells us to be still. When we withdraw from our busy lives to spend time with God, we find ourselves enjoying the reality of his presence. While we are not called by God to be lazy, neither are we called to a life of non-stop activity and service. God’s invitation to be still unlocks for us the joy of knowing him.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, being still when there is so much to do seems impossible, but Your ways are not my ways. Help me to relax in Your presence, to breathe deep, to be still and pause to hear You.*

## DAY 6

### SCRIPTURE TEXT:

Psalm 91

### DEVOTIONAL

When a thunderstorm is raging, we look for a safe place to find shelter. A mother bird will gather her young under her wings and provide that shelter while taking the beating of the storm on herself. When the fears and dangers of this life begin to storm around us, would it not be wise to seek shelter? Our heavenly Father desires to gather us under His protective wings to provide that shelter and refuge, all the while He is taking on the beating of the storm Himself. How comforting to know that God watches over us in times of great stress and fear. He will even command the angels to guard our steps.

Verses 14-16 are a promise in God's words for those who love Him: "I will rescue him: I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Read verses 14-16 again. This time put in your name wherever you see the word "him/he." What comfort does it bring to know that God will come to your rescue?

## DAY 7

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Psalms 119:116-117

### DEVOTIONAL

Every day millions of people board airplanes and travel safely, crossing oceans, time zones and countries. Most of us do not have detailed knowledge of Da Vinci's theory of flight or formulas involving velocity and trajectory, nor can we actually see these elements at work. While some of us board planes with complete confidence that the pilot and crew are well trained and are in control, others spend flights with white knuckles and fear, exhaling only at touchdown.

In these verses, David recognizes God's promises and his safety being assured as he lives within God's word. When it comes to trusting God's promises to sustain and uphold you, are you a "confident passenger" or a "white-knuckle flier"?

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, I ask that you give me the faith to believe all the promises You have for me. Please give me courage to trust that You are the one in control and I need only to live according to Your promises and You will uphold me.*

## DAY 8

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

John 15:7 (ESV)

*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

### DEVOTIONAL

The Greek meaning for the word abide is to stay closely connected, not be separated, joined together.

When we abide in Christ, our desires change, so our requests change, too. We won't come with a list of what we want Him to do for us, but we will seek His heart and desires for our lives. Our prayers will be influenced and directed by God's word and will. We will find ourselves praying for what he wants and that is what ensures our prayers are answered. We will be seeking His will and not ours because we are connected to Him.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Give me the understanding of Your love that I need to abide in You, Lord. Help me be aligned with Your will and purposes. Teach me what it means to stay closely connected to You and open my eyes to see You as I've never seen You before. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## DAY 9

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Acts 4:24-30

### DEVOTIONAL

We are living in times of uncertainty and turmoil all around the world. Nations are raging and people are plotting. There are wars and threats of violence that leave many of us fearful of the future. Today, just as in these passages, we still see people conspiring against Jesus and his followers. We see people willing to kill those who profess their faith in Christ. We have the freedom to vote for or against policies that we believe will make our country a more peaceful part of the world, or a stronger adversary. We also have the freedom to voice our opinions on social media and attack those who disagree with us. While this may make us feel superior and righteous at the moment, it is not what God has called us to do. Our role as God's servants is to "speak His word with great boldness." Ultimately, the most important matter isn't which side we were on, but that we represent Him well by loving people in our words and actions, on social media and in person.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, help me not to fear the uncertainty in the world. Help me to remember that there are no surprises to you. Help me to be bold in speaking Your word. I know that your desire is for all to come to know You, no matter which side we may be on. I pray that those who seek to harm in the name of their gods will come to know the One True God.*

## DAY 10

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Ephesians 1:16-23

### DEVOTIONAL

When was the last time you felt powerless? Ok, let's get real, when was the last time you felt powerless *today*? While we often waste our limited energy worrying over things we could never change anyway, it is often the heartbreaking reality of a sick child, a wayward teenager, a broken marriage, or choices we've made in the past, which can undermine our faith that we have the strength to face another day. This verse reminds us that, as Christ followers, we have hope. And this hope does not disappoint because it is placed in God who has the power to raise Christ Jesus from the dead. That same power is your inheritance as a child of God! This power is available to us the moment we believe. Whatever situations you face today, ask God for wisdom and revelation so that you know that God is with you and God is for you.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, I feel so powerless about \_\_\_\_\_. I believe that your word is true and that I am your child. Thank you that you will never leave me nor forsake me and that whatever I face today I don't have to face it alone, because you will be with me every step of the way.*

## DAY 11

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Ephesians 3:14-19

### DEVOTIONAL

A song from a few years ago had the lyric, “You don’t know you’re beautiful, that’s what makes you beautiful.” This reflects the popular, but not necessarily accurate notion that it’s attractive to be modest and self-deprecating. But how beautiful would it be if we truly knew, to the depths of our souls, how dearly beloved we are by God? God, who made heaven and earth, who moved heaven and earth to make sure that we would live fully alive in His love both now and forever, loves us and adores us. Think about it. Take this verse in and discover what knowing “this love that surpasses knowledge” means for you. Do you know you’re beautiful in God’s eyes? What does that feel like? Take this amazing truth into your spirit today and every day.

If anything hinders you from fully applying this truth to yourself today, take a few moments to consider what event, thought, or circumstance may be blocking you and then consider the source. It is not from God. Speak the above verses over your life until you can fully accept, appreciate, and apply them to your life in every possible way.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Personalize these verses by changing the words “you” and “your” to “me or I” and “my,” and offer this as a prayer several times throughout the day. For example, “I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen me with power through his Spirit in my inner being, so that Christ may dwell in my heart through faith...”

## DAY 12

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Ephesians 3:20-21

### DEVOTIONAL

Use the following breakdown of this verse as a basis for your prayer time today.

*Now to him* – begin with acknowledging that God is God.

*who is able* – God can do all things; nothing is impossible with God (Matthew 19:26).

*to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine* – God sees the end from the beginning and knows the deepest desires of our hearts (Psalm 37:3-5). As we trust his hand and his heart he will lead us into more than we could even think to ask him for.

*according to his power that is at work within us* – God works in and through believers as we trust in his promises and follow his word (Ephesians 2:10).

*to him be glory in the church* – God gets the glory as his church leans on him and not on our own limited strength and understanding as he works out all things together for our good (Proverbs 3: 5-6; Romans 8:28).

Review the whole scripture.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

The above is also a great way to memorize this scripture. What a powerful way to begin and end your prayer time by praying God’s word back to Him! Pray this verse back to God, phrase by phrase, pausing to take in the power of each line.

## DAY 13

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Philippians 1:9-11

“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”

### DEVOTIONAL

Often the best way to influence someone is to pray for him or her. Paul’s prayer for the Philippians was that they would be unified in love. Their love was the result of a greater knowledge of Christ. It wasn’t based on feelings, but on what Christ had done for them. Paul’s prayer shows us not only how we should be living, but also how we should be praying for other Christians.

Paul prayed that the Philippian believers would “discern what is best,” meaning that they would have the ability to differentiate between good and bad, and right and wrong because of their closeness to Christ. We should pray for discernment to help maintain our Christian morals and values.

This prayer was that the Philippians (and us) would be filled with all the character traits flowing from the righteousness of God.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Help me to grow in love and knowledge and to discern what is right and wrong, Jesus. Help me bear the fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. In your name I pray. Amen.*

## DAY 14

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Colossians 1:9-14

### DEVOTIONAL

Knowledge is just a button push away. You can google anything you want to learn. As a society, we sometimes believe that the more formal schooling you have, the further you can go in life. That is what the Colossians believed. They valued the gaining of knowledge above all else. Yes, knowledge is wonderful. I praise God for doctors, but with the same exuberance I praise Him for the auto-mechanic. While their formal training and years of schooling are vastly different, they both have knowledge that benefits my life. Therein lies the truth. Are we gaining knowledge just for the sake of knowledge alone, or are we gaining knowledge that leads to a life change and right living? Is your knowledge of God as strong as the knowledge required to do your job? Has what you know about God's character spurred your desire to help others? Our prayers this month are just the beginning of putting our spiritual knowledge into action.

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS

Help me to put my knowledge of you, Lord, into action. I know I can trust your commands. Help teach me knowledge and good judgment, and strengthen me so that I have endurance to do Your work. Thank you for the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide me in this path. Show me opportunities to act. In all things, remind me to have a joy-filled spirit and give thanks back to You, for all that You have done for me.

## DAY 15

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Colossians 4:2

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

### DEVOTIONAL

Devoted, watchful and thankful are great words to ponder when I start trying to overcomplicate my time with Jesus. These words challenge me. How about you?

Being devoted to prayer means that you are not forgetful. It means you take steps to see that prayer is part of your regular life, the same way eating and sleeping are. I know I don't need to be reminded to eat or to sleep!

To be watchful means that I need to fight distractions and hindrances. I need to do what I have to do to stay awake and focused.

Prayer should also include thankfulness, thanking God for what he has done. When our hearts are thankful, our eyes turn from our problems and ourselves to the Lord.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Father God, empower me to stay devoted to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart. Help me pray more confident prayers that can only happen through Your power. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## DAY 16

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

“Now may our God and Father himself and our LORD Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the LORD make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our LORD Jesus comes with all his holy ones.”

### DEVOTIONAL

Are there some people in your daily life who are easy to love? They just seem to exude positivity, and make you smile without even trying. Showing them love is effortless, and they return it equally.

But is the opposite also true? That you encounter people daily who seem to cast off any attempts you make to show love or affection? Are there people in your world that you would rather not be around because they seem to bring the mood down?

Paul's prayer helps us remember that we can pray for God to strengthen our ability to love so that we can love each other. Loving is not always easy, but it is always worth the effort. Love has the power to change, and God has the power to give us a strength of heart to love at all times.

### PRAYER SUGGESTION

*Heavenly Father, thank you for always loving me, and for showing me the power of unconditional love. Please help me to remember to show love to others, so that they will come to know You. Help me to love all those I encounter, not only those who are quick to return it back. Love is not something that must be earned, but something that is freely given. Please strengthen my heart so that I will show love at all times, to all people.*



## DAY 17

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

1 Thessalonians 5:17

“pray continually”

### DEVOTIONAL

Easy to say; hard to do. That is, depending on what your idea of prayer might be. If this simple instruction brings up images of kneeling at your bedside, eyes closed, hands pressed together, then to pray continually seems to be an impossible expectation. But is it?

When one considers that prayer is simply having a conversation with God, this instruction makes a little more sense. Viewing prayer as simply talking with God allows you to see how we can attempt to follow this verse. Just talk to God throughout your day about anything and everything. Preferably, talk to Him out loud as often as is practical. The Holy Spirit is with us always. Acknowledge God’s presence and include Him in all that you experience. You can even extend this continual prayer throughout the night by inviting God into your sleep (Psalm 16:7). When you awake, thank Him before your feet touch the floor. Since prayer is a conversation, take time to “listen” by being still, reading His word, and learning to hear His voice.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

When you wake up, before your feet even swing out of bed, begin the morning by greeting God and thanking Him for the breath in your lungs and the new day. Spend five minutes in prayer before you get out of bed.

Check in with God throughout the day, making an effort to make this a habit. Thank Him for little blessings throughout your day.

End your day with time with God. Recap moments when you know you have seen His presence, and thank Him for it.

## DAY 18

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Hebrews 13:20-21

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

### DEVOTIONAL

In the verses right before these (13:18-19), the author of Hebrews acknowledges his needs by asking his readers for prayer. He then returns the favor by praying for his readers. He conveys that God has provided everything for our salvation through Jesus Christ and through him all that we need to live for his glory is provided.

God has promised to do everything in these two verses yet the author prays that it would be so. God has ordained that prayer is the way for us to lay hold of his promises. Sometimes we struggle with how to pray. Pray God’s word back to him. When we pray God’s word back to him, he must honor it. True to his character, he cannot go back and will not go back on his word.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, you are a God of peace. Thank you for that. Through Jesus you have provided salvation and all I need to live for your glory. It’s in the name of Jesus I pray. Amen.*

## DAY 19

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

1 John 5:14

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

### DEVOTIONAL

Have you ever had a toddler, or for that matter a teen, come to you and in a very demanding tone, ask for something? In your heart, you want to give them all they desire, but sometimes what they are asking for would not be wise for them to have. They either just aren't ready for the responsibility, or it is something that would do more harm than good. At times we approach God our Father in the same way. We believe that if we "ask, it will be given". It is almost as though we are trying to change God's mind, and have Him come to our side. We miss the part of asking "according to his will". God always hears our prayers; we can be confident of that. That confidence should produce in us a boldness as we "discuss" with Him what He wants for us. When our prayers align with his will, He not only listens but He will answer.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, Your ways are higher than mine. Help me have a softened heart to your plan, understanding that if I submit to You, You will make my paths straight. Please help me to remember that You hear all my prayers. Help me to pray boldly knowing that all things will be answered in Your timing because You have a plan for me.*

## DAY 20

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Rev 4:8, Rev 4:11

### DEVOTIONAL

I remember when my daughter was young, and I would lavishly tell her how much I loved her. One day she asked me, “Mommy, why do you love me so much?” The question took me by surprise because I had never thought about my love for her in those terms. “Because you’re mine,” was my answer. That didn’t seem to satisfy her. Her face seemed to say, “Of course I’m yours, but that doesn’t answer why you love me.” She wanted some concrete reasons. For some of us, we feel like we must have concrete reasons for God to love us as well. But, we don’t. He loves us because He created us. But let’s think about why we worship God. Is it only because of what He has done for us? Of course we should be grateful for His blessings and mercy, but we cannot forget to show honor for a holy God. These passages foretell of a heaven where creatures never stop declaring our God as holy. He is the One Creator and His creation was meant to display His glory.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Lord, You alone are holy. You deserve my honor and praise. You created all things by Your will and I stand in awe of Your infinite authority and power.*

## DAY 21

### SCRIPTURE TEXT

Rev. 5:12-14

"In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped."

### DEVOTIONAL

Have you ever looked back at a point in your life and realized you missed a great opportunity? A job you turned down? Maybe a relationship you walked away from? For most of us, we have made decisions that cannot be changed; it's too late and the opportunity has been missed. These verses tell us that every creature will realize Jesus is worthy of honor and glory and praise. Not just those who have accepted Him as their savior, but every creature, those already in heaven and those left on earth. Will it be too late at that time to make the decision? We are called to spread the message that Jesus is the way to heaven to all those we can reach so that it won't be too late.

### PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

*Jesus, I know that you came to earth and died on the cross so that we all can have eternal life. I know it is Your desire that no one miss out on an eternity praising and worshipping you. I ask for the boldness to share Your word and my story of what you have done for me. I know that you have saved me for a purpose and I ask for your guidance in fulfilling this in my life.*