



REACH
OUR WORLD

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

GRACELIFE FAMILY

Since our beginning 10 years ago, we have watched in awe as God has worked miracle after miracle. Lives have been changed, relationships restored, and kingdom meaning and purpose found. REACH OUR WORLD represents the next chapter in God's story for our church family. The last 10 years have truly been a journey of faith. I am thrilled to see how God will work among us in the coming years!

The REACH OUR WORLD daily devotional is designed for you to use as a prayer guide for the next six weeks. My hope is that you will make a daily commitment to spending time alone with God. If you feel led, consider times of fasting over the next 28 days. Most importantly, pray! I would like to ask you to remember the following points as you pray:

PRAY that God will have His way in your heart. What matters most to God is that we trust Him in our lives and are surrendered to Him.

PRAY for me, the elders, and the staff of GraceLife. We realize that this is God's church, and we are only stewards. We need His wisdom and strength to faithfully execute this responsibility.

PRAY that each member of our church embraces God's vision for his or her life. PRAY that as a church family we will accomplish all that He has called us to do.

PRAY that God will provide all the resources needed to fulfill the financial needs of the REACH OUR WORLD initiative.

PRAY that God will show you specifically what part you can play as we move toward what God has for GraceLife Church in the future.

Thank you for your faithfulness to Jesus and to GraceLife. It's a privilege to me to pastor this great family. I look forward with great excitement to all God will do in your life, in our church, and in our community as we REACH OUR WORLD.

Pastor Jimmy Currence

REACH OUR WORLD
28-DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Week 1: Re-surrendering Everything to God

- A Revolutionary Life
- Resurrendering Self
- Resurrendering Family
- Resurrendering Relationships
- Intimacy with God
- Victory Through Surrender
- A Life of Victory

Week 2: Listening to God's Voice

- Hearing God's Voice
- The Road to Wisdom
- Entering God's Presence
- Listening Through God's Word
- Listening Through Prayer
- Listening to God's Spirit
- Listening to God Through Circumstances

Week 3: Obedience to God

- Understanding God's Plan
- Participating in God's Plan
- Standing on the Rock (Unshakable Faith)
- Priceless Lessons of Patience and Persistence
- Obedience to God's Word
- The Power of Agreement
- Obedience No Matter What Happens

Week 4: God's Intervention

- The God of Miracles
- Elijah's Test
- Elisha's Double-portion Anointing
- Five Loaves and Two Fish
- On the Road to Damascus
- God's Intervention in the Family
- Our Challenge

WEEK 1: RE-SURRENDERING EVERYTHING TO GOD

*The world has yet to see what God will do with and through
and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him.
—Dwight L. Moody*

DAY ONE

A REVOLUTIONARY LIFE

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. | Romans 12:1-2

What a difference it would make if we only understood the abundant life God desires us to experience! We were made in God's image. As children of the Creator, we are heirs to everything He owns: *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1).*

God desires the best for His children. All He requires for the greatest, most wonderful life is surrender to Him. He demands obedience. He wants us to present ourselves as living sacrifices. He wants us to avoid the influence by the world. He wants us to be constantly renewed—to resurrender daily. Then we can know God's "good, pleasing and perfect will."

Best of all, **He has already provided everything we need for a revolutionary life:** *"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:7-8).*

He wants to fellowship intimately with us. He wants us to participate in His divine nature and enjoy all of His creation: *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10).* You can have a full, abundant, revolutionary life!

During this month, get ready for a new life. Re-surrender yourself to Him. Put God to the test and see how He will perform His Word in your life, how He will turn your daydreams into realities.

Dwight L. Moody, one of history's greatest pastors and Bible teachers often said, "The world has yet to see what God will do with and through and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him." May we join those who seek to be that committed to the Lord Jesus.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWO

RESURRENDERING SELF

But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" | Genesis 3:9

"Where are you?"

That is not the question we want to hear, no matter where we are in life, for it requires us to take stock of ourselves and to get honest about the situation in which we find ourselves. We don't want to deal with where we are. We mostly want to find a quick, pain-free escape out of the challenges we face.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they hid from Him. The Lord wanted to give them His best, but they rejected it. **Yet even in the midst of their turmoil, disobedience and guilt, He wanted to show them the way back to fellowship with Him.**

It is the same today. Christ came for this reason: *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:17).*

"Adam—where are you?" God asked that question to get Adam to get honest about his dire situation. Each of us must answer this same question, taking stock of where we are. This is a prerequisite to rise above your challenges and move to a new level.

You cannot experience a revolution in your walk with God until you answer the question about where you are right now. The prodigal son, according to Luke 15:17, "came to his senses" before he could start the journey home. That is the first step toward any true solution.

Likewise, Jesus made this truth abundantly clear when he said, *"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Luke 5:31).*

"Where are you?"

You will never move into a more exciting walk with God until you look up into the face of God, recognizing your ever-present need for His help, and saying, "I am here, Lord. Be merciful to me, a sinner."

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY THREE

RESURRENDERING FAMILY

For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.” | Genesis 18:19

Did you know the Hebrew word for “parent” also means “teacher”?

Abraham was chosen by God to establish His covenant with mankind. He was also chosen to be an example of how God wants to teach and guide His children. The pattern was set from the beginning of God’s relationship with His creation. Throughout the Bible, the importance of family and parenting is absolutely vital, and as you move into a new level of revolutionary living, it is important that we re-surrender our family to Him.

Moses understood this, for he admonished the parents of Israel this way: *“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).*

Resurrendering your family daily cannot be emphasized enough. As long as Israel’s families obeyed this commandment, they prospered. The strict adherence of many Jews to this principle through the centuries has preserved their race long after many others have disappeared. Conversely, disobedience to this command has invariably caused chaos and destruction.

Isaiah 39:4 records a question asked of Hezekiah: *“What did they see in your palace (or house)?” The answer: “They saw everything in my palace,” Hezekiah said. “There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.”*

What does your family see in your house? God’s treasures or something else? The lives you affect most are those who live with you. If you live a Christ-like life, they will see and receive it. As with the Philippian jailor in Acts 16, salvation can come to all who dwell there.

Begin a new, revolutionary heritage in your family. Pray together. Read the Word of God together. Surrender your family to God.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY FOUR

RESURRENDERING RELATIONSHIPS

Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. | Colossians 3:11

The Word of God is a textbook on relationships. At the heart of every page is the message of reconciliation. The life of Jesus exemplified this life, and we, as believers, must be involved in the ministry of building strong, positive relationships.

The apostle Paul understood this. Writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he touched on four major areas that have traditionally separated people: race (Greek or Jew), religion (circumcised or uncircumcised), culture (barbarian or Scythian) and economy (slave or free).

The answer to every challenge in society is **Jesus Christ living through us.**

A life of reconciliation starts in the heart. The primary issue is not race, religion, culture or economic standing. At the cross of Jesus Christ, all of us stand guilty. That is why Calvary stands for all as a means of reconciliation with God and each other.

This must certainly apply to everything we do as members of the same family: *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:10).*

Likewise, the ministry of reconciliation must extend to those outside the family. The cross of Jesus Christ does not belong to believers alone. We are called to share the Gospel with those around us through everything we do.

Resurrender your relationships today. Build bridges. Live your life as if you are the only Bible some people will ever read.

Moving into a new level with Jesus Christ begins when you start walking in the footsteps of the one whose Name we bear.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY FIVE

INTIMACY WITH GOD

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. | Mark 12:30

God desires close fellowship with you. He wants intimacy, so much so that He was willing to sacrifice His only begotten Son for your sake.

We are commanded to love God with all our soul. We are to love Him with all our emotions and will. He wants everything.

To love God with all your heart means with every atom of your being. This is what God desires. He wants you to love Him supremely and with everything that is within you.

When you love Him with all your strength and when you seek the Lord with your whole heart, you will find Him: *“I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me” (Proverbs 8:17).*

You can know the amazing, intimate fellowship with Christ, but it requires spending time with Him. Ephesians 3:14-19 tells us how:

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Believers must be rooted and grounded through intimacy with God. Deep fellowship requires seeking to know Him more and more.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY SIX

VICTORY THROUGH SURRENDER

And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us. | 1 John 3:23-24

An instrument must be tuned before it is played. A violinist, for example, tunes the A string to the international pitch, or A-440. This means that the A above middle C is vibrating 440 times per second. Once the A is tuned, all the other strings can be adjusted to play harmoniously together. Otherwise, the result would be a cacophony of chaos.

Violinists know they must tune the strings often, knowing that an accidental bump or simply playing the instrument can result in enough variation to cause discord. Likewise, it is easy to get out of tune as humans. Christ is the standard. If we are not in a right relationship with Him, we cannot get along with others. We either vibrate in harmony with Him, or we slide into dissonance.

How do we stay in tune with Him?

Obedience! **Resurrender daily.** We must allow Him to tune us to His perfect pitch. The Bible is very clear on this: *“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (1 John 3:22).*

Jesus Christ remains the centerpiece of history, the most powerful force known to mankind. Massive armies have come and gone, powerful political systems have risen and fallen, all-powerful dictators and kings have crumbled to dust, yet all of them combined have never impacted the world as did Jesus Christ the Savior. He continues to change hearts and lives today. And because He died on the cross in shame, the Word of God declares that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord. **We can do this now by surrendering to Him over and over, rather than staying on our own discordant pitch.**

Stay tuned to the Lord: *“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2).*

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY SEVEN

A LIFE OF VICTORY

Is it really possible to live a life without sin?

Living a life without sin seems so attractive, yet so unattainable in our human frailties. Our bodies of “weakness” have yet to be raised in “power” (1 Corinthians 15:43).

Yes, we have the promise that one day our corruption will put on incorruption, and sin will be finally and fully defeated in our lives. In the meantime, however, we are told: *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1: 8, 9).

Resurrendering daily is the key to a life of victory. The power to live victoriously is available to us moment by moment because of what Christ accomplished on Calvary’s cross.

The writer of Hebrews says, *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin”* (Hebrews 4:15). This is the reason why we must go to Him continually, for *“He is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them”* (Hebrews 7:25).

What should we do if we stumble? The Bible is clear about that as well: *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9). Confess your sins. Ask for forgiveness. Turn your back on those sins. Then you will be free to enjoy the unfettered fellowship of the Holy Spirit in your life again.

John Piper, author and Bible teacher, says:

All things were created by him and through Him and for Him—even your worst supernatural enemies. In the end, it was they—not Christ—who were shamed at the cross (Colossians 2:15). In the end, everything and everyone serves to magnify the glory of our Savior and increase the gladness of his people in Him.

God desires for us to live victoriously, no matter what challenges we face: *“But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Corinthians 15:57). He wants us to live in victory!

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

WEEK 2: LISTENING TO GOD'S VOICE

The Christian should have an appetite for prayer. He should want to pray. One does not have to force food upon a healthy child. Exercise, good circulation, health and labor demand food for sustenance. So it is with those who are spiritually healthy. They have an appetite for the Word of God, and for prayer.

—Dr. Billy Graham

DAY EIGHT

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

—John 10:27

There are many voices clamoring for our attention. These voices seek to guide, distract, direct and even destruct. It is important to understand those voices and ultimately learn to discern God's true voice.

The most obvious voice that wants to direct our lives is our own. The “flesh” is a powerful voice. The mind tells us what to think. The will tells us what we want. The emotions tell us what to feel. According to Romans 8:5, this voice often rises from the natural, human flesh—*“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.”* We see images. We have emotions and feelings. Desires are ever-present. The “flesh” is unreliable, at best.

Another type of voice which seeks to direct us is the voice of people all around us. God does speak through others, but there are many “other” voices that are destructive. How do you know?

The third type of voice you will hear early, often and long is the voice of the enemy of your soul. The devil deceived one-third of heaven's angels, and he has perfected his act immensely since tricking Adam and Even. No, he doesn't necessarily appear as the red, cloven-hoofed terror with a pitchfork. Often he appears through our thoughts. He distracts with a barrage of ungodly messages. He seeks to overwhelm, terrorize, seduce and do whatever it takes to destroy you and your loved ones through his voice. No wonder God tells us, *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour”* (1 Peter 5:8).

God's voice, thankfully, is assured for each of us who call upon His name. His voice, however, is often the most subtle of all voices, since He seeks to speak through each person's spirit, not through the clamoring of the flesh and outside voices.

We want to hear God through supernatural, spectacular, sensational and scintillating words. God seldom speaks that way. He seeks to direct our paths through His presence, His Word, prayer, His Spirit and even sometimes through circumstances. To hear His voice, however, **we must learn to go beyond the shallow surface and go deeper** where the Spirit of God lives within us.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY NINE

THE ROAD TO WISDOM

Lay hold of my words with all your heart; keep my commands and you will live. Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them. Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. —Proverbs 4:4-7

God seeks to lead us through his voice. God’s wisdom is the best road to an abundant life.

A road or path is a common example throughout the Bible. Wisdom allows us to walk uprightly, so that we will not stumble through the paths of life. Wisdom means hearing and doing God’s Word as you walk out your faith. That is why the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all true wisdom.

Where does the road lead? In other words, how do you obtain wisdom? Here are some of the best road signs you will ever see:

Understand the fact that true wisdom comes from God. Proverbs 2:6 declares, *“For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.”*

Ask God for wisdom. James 1:5 declares, *“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”* If you want wisdom, ask!

Desire wisdom with all of your heart. Wisdom must be valuable to you. This is why Solomon wrote, *“If you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.”* (Proverbs 2:3-5).

Apply yourself to the study and understanding of God’s Word. Psalm 19:7 tells us, *“The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.”* The more you devote yourself to God’s Holy Word, you open yourself up to the greatest wisdom in the universe.

Do you want to hear God’s voice? *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight”* (Proverbs 3:5-6). Seek God’s wisdom.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TEN

ENTERING GOD'S PRESENCE

O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. —Psalm 63:1-3

Throughout the Old Testament, we are given a powerful illustration—through God's provision of the Tabernacle and Temple, of God's desire for believers today to move into the Holy of Holies. The psalmist David knew, as we must learn, that the initial move toward true intimacy with God was moving from the "flesh" to the "soul."

The flesh is likened to the sacrifice for sins in the outer court of the Old Testament tabernacle, which every studious Hebrew knew.

Inside the sacred tent, curtained away from the outer court, was the inner court, or the Holy Place, the place of the soul or inner desire. The Holy Place was twenty cubits long, and ten wide. It contained the table of shewbread, the golden candlestick and the altar of incense—each with specific significance.

Inside the Holy Place, ten cubits square, was the Holy of Holies, which contained the ark of the covenant, a sacred chest which was a symbol of God's divine presence. A veil of very costly material divided the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. No one except the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, and he was only permitted to enter once a year on the Day of Atonement.

Everything changed for believers at Calvary: *"And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split" (Matthew 27:50-51).*

Christ's death signaled the opening of a new and living way to God. Before, the veil kept people from coming into the most holy place where the Shechinah was.

The price of His presence was paid in full, yet so few believers are willing to do what is required to enter in to the Holy of Holies. It begins with thirst and hunger for an intimate walk with Him: *"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).* Desire for closeness with Him, no matter the cost.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY ELEVEN

LISTENING THROUGH GOD'S WORD

King Solomon, a name synonymous with wisdom, once wrote, *"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings"* (Proverbs 25:2).

God's glory is concealed through His Word, but the believer can see His glory revealed through careful searching of that Word. God's Word is a treasure to be discovered. The deep truths cannot always be mined by merely scratching on the surface. Everywhere, it seems, the Father has given guideposts which point toward the ultimate treasure, His Son, Jesus Christ.

To mine these eternal riches, even as with earthly jewels or precious ore, you are required to dig beneath the surface. That is why it is so important to ask the Father to give supernatural wisdom as you search the Word for fresh, priceless, life-giving resources every day.

God's Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths:

You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light. With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall. As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him. For who is God besides the Lord? And who is the Rock except our God? (Psalm 18:28-31)

God's Word can illuminate our life today:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. (John 1:1-4)

Spend time each day reading God's Word, for it is the pathway to God's will and direction, taking us from a place of uncertainty to a glorious mountaintop of victory. The Bible will conform us into the image of our Savior as we seek to hear God's voice.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWELVE

LISTENING THROUGH PRAYER

Pray continually. —1 Thessalonians 5:17

The story is told that during the First World War a British soldier was caught one night while creeping secretly back to his tent from a nearby wooded area. He was immediately hauled before his commanding officer and charged with holding communications with the enemy. The man pleaded that he had gone into the woods to pray. That was his only defense.

“Have you been in the habit of spending hours in private prayer?” his officer asked roughly.

“Yes, sir.”

“Then get down on your knees and pray now like you’ve never prayed before!” the commander ordered.

The young man knew he could be shot at sunrise for the crime he was accused of committing. He knelt and poured out his soul in a powerful prayer that could have only been inspired by the Holy Spirit.

“You may go,” the officer said in hushed tones after the soldier finished praying. “I believe your story. If you hadn’t drilled often, you couldn’t have done so well at review.”

The young man had a breakthrough that saved his life. He did so because he had prepared for that breakthrough for some time, not knowing what challenges he would face. He had learned to commune with God intimately.

Prayer brings a revelation of self, allowing us to see ourselves in the light of who God is. This revelation of self is always followed by a revelation of God and His mercy.

Prayer brings cleansing. As you confess your sins, He cleanses you, allowing you to come boldly to the throne of grace with a pure heart.

Prayer reveals the Word of God, allowing Him to lead, direct and illuminate our pathways. Psalm 119:18 tells us, *“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.”*

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY THIRTEEN

LISTENING TO GOD'S SPIRIT

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation--but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. —Romans 8:11-16

Listening to His voice brings happiness, peace, direction and abundance. If you truly want to understand how the Holy Spirit speaks, read and reread these profound words found in Romans 8.

How do you listen to God's Spirit? Paul the apostle proclaimed, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). What did he mean?

- **Fellowship requires spending time in His presence.**
- **Fellowship means sharing with Him, pouring out our hearts and listening to Him.**
- **Fellowship implies participating with Him.** The Holy Spirit wants to become our partner in everything we do.
- **Fellowship requires intimacy.** God has chosen to pour out His love "into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us" (Romans 5:5).
- **Fellowship includes friendship.** The Holy Spirit longs to be our closest friend, someone with whom we can share our deepest secrets.
- **Fellowship also implies comradeship.** One of the Greek meanings of "fellowship" is "commander." The Holy Spirit wants to be our captain, a loving, friendly commander, instructing what we should do and where we should go.
- **Fellowship gives power to share what God has done in our lives.** Jesus said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Are you listening for His voice? Recognizing His voice requires hearing it often. Seek fellowship with Him, and invite Him into every area of your life.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY FOURTEEN

LISTENING TO GOD THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." ... and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. — Matthew 2:1-2, 9-10

What an unusual set of “circumstances” God designed to lead the wise men to the birth of Christ. The nearest planet to earth is thirty-seven million miles away. The nearest star is twenty-five billion miles away. Whatever light the wise men saw, traveling at 186,000 miles per second, had actually exploded at least five years before Christ’s birth for the sight of the explosion to reach earth. Some would call this star a mere “circumstance.” We know better!

Just as God gave the wise men an illuminated pathway to the Son of God, in His perfect plan, we can trust the pathway He gives us.

Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”* This passage assures us that if we really want the will of God and ask for it, He will see to it that we get it!

The only way to victory and accomplishment as believers is to trust God to keep us and guide us moment by moment, not to be ruled by circumstances. Simply put, we have the choice between relying merely upon judgments made upon the best organized facts that we can gather, or upon judgments made upon those facts as we seek God’s guidance.

We can learn to discern God’s hand through both positive and negative circumstances; however, circumstances are not always an indication of God’s plan for our lives. Maturity comes to believers who are less and less vulnerable to circumstances, for we know the promise found in Psalm 37:23-24: *“If the Lord delights in a man’s way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.”*

Whatever circumstances happen, we can know that God is in control.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

WEEK 3: OBEDIENCE TO GOD

To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge! To do the will of God is the greatest achievement!

—George W. Truett

DAY FIFTEEN

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S PLAN

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. —Matthew 6:31-33

We know from God's Word that **He cares about the things that concern us and the decisions we face every day**, both huge and small. He understands what makes us tick, and He knows our needs.

Likewise, **He cares about the choices we face**: *"For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end."* (Psalm 48:14). More importantly, He desires for us to make decisions that reflect His will in our lives: *"Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is."* (Ephesians 5:17).

With these verses in mind, here are three quick principles for knowing God's plan for our lives:

God's will is available only through the Lord Jesus Christ. While the world seeks guidance through a smorgasbord of beliefs and rituals, the Savior proclaims Himself in a clear-cut way that leaves no room for error or misinterpretation: *"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'"* (John 14:6).

To know God's will in your life, you must first offer your life to God. The apostle Paul wrote, *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship"* (Romans 12:1). We must be willing to be living sacrifices before we can be used by Him as a reasonable service. Only then can we begin to understand His design for our lives.

To know God's will, your mind must be renewed supernaturally. Romans 12:2 tells us, *"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will."* As we consistently present ourselves to God by spending time with Him and reading His Word, then He can transform and show us His plan.

God's plan is perfect and complete. He seeks to bring each believer into His perfect will. With the Psalmist, we must pray, *"Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground"* (143:10).

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY SIXTEEN

PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S PLAN

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.

—Hebrews 13:20-21

Archimedes, upon discovering the power of the lever, said, “If you find me a fulcrum to rest my lever upon, I can move the world.”

God desires to reach the world, but He has chosen to use us to be His hands extended. To participate in His plan, however, requires faith in His plan and an active belief that helps us carry out that plan.

One of the Greek meanings of New Testament words faith and belief is fulcrum. With faith, we have a lever. With that fulcrum we can participate in God's plan with mountain-moving faith. How?

We must understand that there is a difference between faith and believing. That difference means everything as we seek to participate in God's plan. Believing is faith in motion. It means applying the truth. Faith helps us put confidence in God and exercise what we know to be true.

Faith is God's gift, but believing requires our will. Faith is God's gift just the same as breathing, walking, hearing and seeing are gifts. However, just as God does not breathe, walk, hear or see for us, neither does He believe for us. He has given us the capacity to believe in Him, and requires us to actively participate in whatever He directs us to do.

Faith and believing become stronger as you exercise them. They also tend to become weaker when you neglect them. Those who are active in participating in God's plan will certainly become stronger.

Faith and believing are not limited. This is why Jesus tells us, “*With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible*” (Matthew 19:26).

Take God at His word by receiving His gift of faith, then begin to leverage the world as you believe and participate more and more in His plan.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY SEVENTEEN

STANDING ON THE ROCK

He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

—Psalm 62:6

The great Bible teacher, Smith Wigglesworth, once wrote:

Nothing in the world glorifies God as much as simple rest of faith in what God's Word says. "This is the work of God, that you believe." Jesus said, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working" (John 5:17). He saw the way the Father did the works; it was on the groundwork of knowledge, faith based upon knowledge. When I know Him, there are so many promises I can lay hold of, and then there is no struggle, "for [he] who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened" (Matthew 7:8).

Problems come and go all the time. Things change. This is why we must say, with the apostle Paul, *"I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day" (2 Timothy 1:12).* Obedience to God requires nothing less!

There is a time when no one can encourage us like we can encourage ourselves, reaching deep inside for God's secret, unshakable provision. People can talk and counsel with us. They can pray for us, and thank God for that external help. But eventually **everything comes down to our direct, unfathomable, intimate, solid relationship with the Creator.**

Too often people have a horizontal, external viewpoint, not a vertical, internal one. They look around at all the problems—the price of fuel, unemployment statistics, always-fluctuating markets, wars, the Middle East, crime rates and so much more. It is no wonder people wallow in distress, debt, and discontentment. When we look at the worst of things, especially all the external problems, we find things getting worse.

God has given a better way, a new revelation, built upon the Rock of our salvation: *"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:19-20).*

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY EIGHTEEN

PRICELESS LESSONS OF PERSISTENCE

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'" —Luke 18:1-5

We live in an “instant” world. We have little tolerance for anything that requires patience or persistence. Therefore, maybe it is not surprising that too often believers have the attitude that our relationship with God should be something like a cosmic vending machine—“Do it, Lord, NOW!”

We get so charged up to see instant results that we forget **God's timing and divine providence are always perfect.** We neglect to remember that His infinite wisdom should not be challenged by our human, finite reasoning and expectations.

A major part of obeying God is not giving up, even when faith is not rewarded instantly.

Jesus believed in persistence. One of His parables was given to teach us that we should not give up and lose heart. He told the story of a widow who went to a wicked judge. Her request was that he would somehow get justice. The judge, either too busy or disinterested in the case, said “Go away!” What was the woman's response? She firmly declared, “No, I am not leaving until you do what I am asking of you.” Finally, because of her tenacity, the judge agreed to hear her case because she would not give up.

After telling this story, Jesus said, “*And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?" (Luke 18:6-7).*

Christ never criticized the woman in the parable because she was unrelenting. He didn't say she was lacking in faith. He commended what she did.

Keep your requests constantly before the Lord. Don't give up. Don't stop asking. Don't stop seeking. Don't stop knocking at your Father's door.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY NINETEEN

OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.
—Psalm 19:7*

Roadmaps are handy. Global Positioning Systems are even more incredible. Both, however, pale in comparison to the amazing spiritual roadmap-GPS available through God's Word.

The more we devote ourselves to God's Holy Word, the more we open ourselves up to the greatest wisdom in the universe. The wiser we become, the more we realize that God requires obedience to His instructions.

The Hebrew meaning of wisdom includes separating yourself to God, opening your life to Him, and allowing Him to reveal His roadmap to you. Throughout the Scriptures, wisdom and obedience are tied together. Moses, for example, taught us that wisdom consists in knowing and doing the commandments of God. Says Deuteronomy 4:5-6:

See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the Lord my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

Essentially, Christ Jesus said the same thing in Matthew 7:24: *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."*

Godly wisdom means hearing and doing God's word. People who obey Him and humble themselves to Him understand the fact that the fear of the Lord is the beginning, wellspring and unending source of all true wisdom.

If you want God to work in your behalf, the first step is total obedience to His Word. People often quote John 8:32—*"...you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* The verse before it is seldom quoted—*"Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then..."*

Hold to His teaching and obey His Word!

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY

THE POWER OF AGREEMENT

Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

—Matthew 18:19-20

Many people read Matthew 18:19-20, but they neglect what Jesus taught in the preceding verse: *“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

As Jesus taught, agreement is the key to releasing the power of the Almighty. **It is through agreement with God and His people that we move from the natural to the supernatural, from the ordinary to the extraordinary.**

How important is the unity of believers? Throughout the Bible when people united together, the results were remarkable:

- Moses joined with Aaron and Hur for great victories.
- Naomi and Ruth received an answer from God.
- David made a covenant with Jonathan.
- Jesus ministered with His disciples.
- The prayers of Paul and Silas brought deliverance.

Is it any wonder why the Bible admonishes us to come into agreement with each other? Glance through the New Testament and see how often we are told such things as:

- “Love one another” (John 13:34).
- “Serve one another in love” (Galatians 5:13).
- “Be humble and gentle...bearing with one another” (Ephesians 4:2).
- “Forgive...one another” (Colossians 3:13).
- “Encourage each other” (1 Thessalonians 4:18).
- “Build each other up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11).
- “Spur one another” (Hebrews 10:24).

Throughout Scripture, we are told the importance of agreement. Unity is commanded by Christ—*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another”* (John 13:34).

Jesus prayed, *“... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe...”* (John 17:21).

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY-ONE

OBEDIENCE NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS

*Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time.
—Jonah 3:1*

Obedience, no matter what happens, gives sharper vision and determined faith.

When John and Charles Wesley met and heard General James Oglethorpe, founder and governor of Georgia, speak about life in America with the natives and pioneers, they decided to go and bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the new land. The result: Charles, who went as the governor's secretary, fell ill. John, who went to preach, fared even worse. The pioneers did not like his preaching or mannerisms, and the natives were unconvinced.

When the brothers returned to England, they should have been crushed by the overwhelming, highly-publicized failure. Instead, it was apparent to all who know them that their vision burned brighter than ever, though narrowed and sharpened by the fire they had endured.

The God of the second chance turned the Wesleys' attention on England, a debased, degenerated country. At that time every sixth house in London was a saloon. Drunkenness, child abandonment, bands of hooligans and crime was everywhere. The church had grown into a cold social club with fox-hunting parsons—the upper classes laughed at it and the lower classes ignored it as irrelevant. Once again, the Wesley brothers seemed destined for failure. Their fiery preaching style was greeted with boos. They were pelted with stones, mud and rotten eggs. Something was different this time, however.

John literally leaped into the saddle, traveling throughout England, preaching up to five sermons a day for over fifty years. His message to the rich and poor was the same—"Repent and be saved!" He made faith in Christ a living reality. The nation began to be stirred. One of their converts, Robert Raikes, formed the first Sunday School, a movement which spread throughout the country and abroad. Society began to see the need to help abandoned children, the needy, illiterate and prisoners.

Not only did the Gospel burn like wildfire throughout England, the message of faith sparked a flame that encircled the globe. Much of what is being done today is a result of the fact that John and Charles Wesley, like Jonah of old, heard the Word of the Lord when it came the second time.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

WEEK 4: GOD'S INTERVENTION

That the Almighty does make use of human agencies and directly intervenes in human affairs is one of the plainest statements in the Bible.

I have had so many evidences of His direction, so many instances when I have been controlled by some other power than my own will, that I cannot doubt that this power comes from above.

—President Abraham Lincoln

DAY TWENTY-TWO

THE GOD OF MIRACLES

Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

—Acts 2:22

We now have strict truth in lending facts, product content information, nutrition data, service estimate figures, consumer statistics and more. People today want to see what they are getting. They want the facts before their eyes. Is it any wonder the world desires to see real Christians reflecting a God of miracles?

Jesus lived in the midst of miracles during His three-year ministry on earth. The things which He did—the resurrection of Lazarus, healing the blind, restoring the maniac—could not have been done through human power. He performed these miracles, not in secret, but before friends, family, enemies, fault-finders, down-and-outers and the elite alike. His works were such that those about Him could not deny the facts. And He freely welcomed examination of His miracles.

The apostle Peter recounted, *“We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty”* (2 Peter 1:16).

Jesus, before He ascended into heaven, sent out His followers with this miracle-filled mandate, *“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father”* (John 14:12).

A life of ministering the miraculous begins with a holy dissatisfaction with the way things are. Jesus came to earth to change things for all eternity. The apostles understood that they were agents of change. They were to take His message of salvation and miracles to the nations. They spent the remainder of their lives carrying that message to a lost and dying world.

God desires to intervene miraculously in the hearts and lives of all mankind. He has called us to continue this miracle-filled legacy that extends throughout the Old and New Testaments until today! Are we willing?

Meanwhile, the world wants to see the facts, the “greater works.” This will only happen when enough believers experience a holy dissatisfaction with the way things are, a Spirit-breathed discontent, **a desire for God’s intervention in everything we do.**

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY-THREE

ELIJAH'S TEST

Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." —1 Kings 24:21

One of the greatest stories in the Old Testament of God's intervention took place on Mount Carmel when Elijah openly threw down the challenge to 450 idol-worshipping prophets of Baal. He did so by asking the question, "Which one is the true God?" This was not a test for the timid. **Elijah wanted the people to see a concrete, unique demonstration of God's intervention and power.**

Each side quickly agreed to make an altar of wood and stones with the meat of a bullock placed upon it. The worshipers of Baal prepared the bullock, placed it on the altar, called on the name of Baal from morning until past midday. They even leaped around the altar, cut themselves with knives and cried loudly to heaven. No response.

Then it came for Elijah's test. He prepared an altar with twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel. After the wood and the meat were in place, he asked for four barrels of water to be poured over the sacrifice to prove the power of the Almighty. Then Elijah told the helpers to douse the sacrifice a second and third time with four more barrels of water each time. There was so much water that it ran all around the altar and filled the trench that encircled it

Elijah then looked up to heaven and offered one of the most powerful prayers ever recorded: "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again" (1 Kings 18:36-37).

God's servant had a specific request and God gave a specific answer: "Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!" (1 Kings 18:38-39).

Elijah was called to a life of holy dissatisfaction with the idol worship that ran rampant throughout the land. Today a statue near Mount Carmel in Israel, commemorates the victorious and divine intervention over the false prophets, and the Old Testament account has emboldened centuries of believers to become courageous agents of the Kingdom.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY-FOUR

ELISHA'S DOUBLE-PORTION ANOINTING

Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours--otherwise not." —2 Kings 2:9-10

From the moment sometime around the year 856 BC when Elijah saw Elisha plowing the field with a massive team of oxen, all 120 feet or so of beasts pulling the plow, something happened that would affect generations to come. The anointing on Elijah was so powerful that Elisha immediately slaughtered his oxen on the spot, held a massive barbeque for those around him, then followed the prophet and became his servant (1 Kings 19), much as Joshua assisted Moses.

We hear little more about Elisha during the remainder of Elijah's years of ministry until the time when it became apparent that the Lord was going to take Elijah in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2). After Elisha's double-portion request, Elijah tested his servant's commitment by asking him three times to remain while he went to Bethel (2 Kings 2:2), Jericho (2:4) and then over the Jordan (2:6). Elisha refused to leave his master. Why? He did not want to be separated from the promised anointing. As when he was called from the field of oxen, Elisha knew there was no anointing without **action and obedience**. He kept moving, close to the prophet, and suddenly a chariot of fire appeared and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind (verse 11).

As Elijah's mantle fell, Elisha rushed to grab it and he caught the promised anointing: *"He picked up the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. Then he took the cloak that had fallen from him and struck the water with it. "Where now is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" he asked. When he struck the water, it divided to the right and to the left, and he crossed over. The company of the prophets from Jericho, who were watching, said, "The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha." (2 Kings 2:13-15).*

God arranges times when we are near the anointing, but if we hesitate or hold back, His touch will pass us by. **Elisha had a holy dissatisfaction with the way things were and refused to accept anything less than the double-portion anointing.** A lot of people want to receive great things from God. Few, however, are willing to pay the price. Today, we must activate our faith and get ready to receive what God has in store for us. May the cry of believer's hearts be, "Lord, I hunger for a double portion. Let your mantle fall on me!"

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY-FIVE

FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISH

Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish.

—Mark 6:41-44

Two different times, as recorded in the New Testament, Jesus took a small amount of food, multiplied it miraculously and fed a huge multitude. In the instance recorded in Mark 6 (as well as in Matthew 14, Luke 9 and John 6—the only miracle afforded such an honor to be mentioned in all four Gospels), these facts are known: Jesus taught a multitude of 5000 men, plus women and children. It was a remote area, a desert place near Bethsaida, and when it got late, the disciples suggested that the people should be dismissed to go buy something to eat. Jesus replied, “You give them something to eat” (verse 37).

Several points stand out that should help us see ourselves more clearly today:

- We tend to procrastinate (verse 35), pass the buck (verse 36) and worry (37) when we truly, desperately need a miracle. There is a better way!
- Preparation for a miracle requires an honest accounting of the current situation (verse 38). The people were hungry. It was late. With perhaps 15,000 or more people on hand (counting women and children), the situation could quickly become desperate. God always starts with what we have and where we are.
- As with the boy who volunteered his five loaves and two fish, we must willingly give God what we have (verse 38).
- We can expect God to work miracles (verse 42). That is what He does! **He desires to pour out miracles and multiplication upon His children.**

Said Saint Augustine, “Miracles are not contrary to nature, but only contrary to what we know about nature.”

Get honest with God about your need. Seek a holy dissatisfaction with the way things are today. Prepare for miracles. **Expect God’s intervention.**

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY-SIX

ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." —Acts 9:1-6

Saul of Tarsus had a clear-cut agenda. He had received authority from the high priest (likely Caiaphas) to represent the Sanhedrin in persecuting Christians throughout the region. That was his purpose in traveling to Damascus. Then God intervened!

God changed everything in an instant. Note that Saul, soon to be called Paul, did not debate theological dogma or even the significance of what happened. He simply asked: "Who are you, Lord?" The answer, "I am Jesus," was enough to impact the world for all eternity. Saul did not know this, of course. He was told to wait for more instructions. He did not know that he was making a transition from leadership in Jewish society to being used to turn the world upside down with the Gospel. He did not know that he would be used by the Holy Spirit to pen more than half of the New Testament. **All he knew what that he was giving up all that he had previously attained, and he did so without argument.**

Everything changed on the road to Damascus. He went from being the persecutor to becoming a chosen vessel of God's intervention to the world, for the as Lord told Ananias to minister to the blinded Saul, "*Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel*" (Acts 9:15).

Though we may not be headed to Damascus today, wherever we go, we have plans and agendas that crowd our lives. We are called to a greater pathway, for Daniel 11:32 declares, "*The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits*" (NKJV).

Discard your agendas for God's divine intervention!

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY-SEVEN

GOD'S INTERVENTION IN YOUR FAMILY

I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save.
—Isaiah 49:25

God has promised that He will fight for you and your family. He will save your children. The principle of salvation for your household is clearly given throughout the Bible:

God established the family from the beginning, as expressed in Genesis 1:27-28: *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number.”* Genesis 7:1 declares, *“The Lord then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation.”* Noah’s entire family was saved from the flood. That principle comes through loudly in the Exodus 12 account of the first Passover: *“Each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household”* (verse 3). It was not a lamb for each person. The shed blood was to cover every person in the household.

Then in Joshua 24:15, we read: *“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”*

In the New Testament, Acts 16:14-15 shares the story of the Lydia, a new believer in Jesus: *“The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message...she and the members of her household were baptized.”* Recorded later in that same chapter, the Philippian jailer, became not only a new believer, but also witnessed the miracle of household salvation.

Because of the principles given throughout Scripture, you have the legal right to claim every member of your family for Christ. The promise is yours. Of course, each person in your family has free choice. Ultimately, each is responsible to God for the decision to accept or reject His simple plan of salvation, but we can intercede that God will draw loved ones to Himself.

God loves our family even more than we do, so much that He sent His Son to die for them. He wants to save your household and bring them into a new dimension of relationship with Him.

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...

DAY TWENTY-EIGHT

OUR CHALLENGE

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
—1 Peter 2:5

We are called to a life of miracles, and the greatest miracle of all is salvation. The greatest calling, as a result, is our commission as “living stones.”

“Living stones”—what does that phrase mean?

God has called believers to lives of holy dissatisfaction with a lost and dying world. “Living stones” are called to touch our generation in a powerful, dynamic way, winning multitudes of souls. We have been given the divine directive and privilege of taking the message of God’s saving and healing power to the ends of the earth.

Throughout the centuries since Jesus Christ gave the Great Commission, every believer has received a divine mandate from heaven to be share the Gospel: *“Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation”* (Mark 16:15). That calling was demonstrated in the lives of the disciples who were transformed into bold, dynamic witnesses for Christ. The world was changed forever.

The late J. Hudson Taylor, a dynamic English missionary to China during the 1800’s, said, “The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed.” His life as a “living stone” was a powerful example. At his death in 1905 the China Inland Mission he led included 205 mission stations with over 800 missionaries and 125,000 Chinese Christians.

We must never become content and complacent with the victories of yesterday, for **the future is filled with new and incredible opportunities to proclaim the Gospel.** The greatest days are ahead! There are millions of souls waiting to hear the Gospel, and we must not be distracted or delayed from doing what God has called us to do together.

Best of all, we have the greatest reward waiting, for on that great day we who are “living stones” have the blessed hope of standing before the Chief Cornerstone to hear, *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord”* (Matthew 25:21).

Today I feel God saying to me...

My response is...

My prayer for today is...



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