bestselling author

PRAYING THE WORDS OF JESUS from your HEART

ADAM HOUGE

Praying the Words of Jesus from Your Heart—A 31-Day Devotional™

Copyright © 2015 by Adam Houge

Published by Living Tree Publishing in Harrisonburg, VA

All rights reserved worldwide. Permission is granted for quotations in all manner of religious assembly.

Portions of the text may be reprinted for use in small groups, church bulletins, orders of service, Sunday school lessons, church newsletters, and similar works, in the course of religious instruction, or services at a place of worship or other religious assembly with the following notice:

Praying the Words of Jesus from Your Heart—A 31-Day Devotional ™ by Adam Houge

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All Scripture taken is labeled as 'NASB'

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All Scripture taken labeled as 'ESV'

Want Free Books?

From time to time Adam gives away free copies of his new releases. But his promotions are highly temporary. If you'd like to be notified when he's giving his kindle books away for free, please consider signing up at the following link: GET ADAM'S BOOKS FREE

*****

If you like audio books, and are not a member of Audible, you can get one of Adam's audio books for free by signing up at the following link: GET ONE OF ADAM'S AUDIO BOOKS FREE

This link is good for any Audio book of Adam's, of your choice, and valid for

one title up to $25 in value.

*****

Also By Adam

The 7 Most Powerful Prayers That Will Change Your Life Forever

The 7 Spiritual Habits That Will Change Your Life Forever

The 7 Habits That Will Change Your Life Forever

Slaying Your Giants: How to Have Massive Faith

How To Memorize the Bible Fast and Easy

Table of Contents

Introduction

Day One

Dedicated to His Word

Day Two

The True Righteousness

Day Three

Be Perfected by Love

Day Four

The True Treasure

Day Five

Be Content with His Supply

Day Six

You Must Obey!

Day Seven

The Cost of Following Christ

Day Eight

Live for God and Forget the Rest

Day Nine

Keep Your Eyes Fixed on the Prize

Day Ten

You Must Evangelize!

Day Eleven

A Time to Stay a Time to Flee

Day Twelve

Let Your Words Be Seasoned with Salt

Day Thirteen

The Good Fear to Have

Day Fourteen

You Are Worth More Than Life to Jesus

Day Fifteen

The Good Confession

Day Sixteen

What It Takes to Be Worthy

Day Seventeen

A True Reward

Day Eighteen

The Hidden Wisdom Is Yours

Day Nineteen

The Easy Way Out Isn't So Bad After All

Day Twenty

Praise Without End!

Day Twenty-One

You Are a House of Prayer!

Day Twenty-Two

You Were Made in His Image, So Act Like His Image

Day Twenty-Three

Be Circumspect. Watch and Pray.

Day Twenty-Four

You Must Have Perfect Doctrine!

Day Twenty-Five

Praying for His Mighty Deeds

Day Twenty-Six

Praise God for Grace!

Day Twenty-Seven

Walk by the Light

Day Twenty-Eight

Increase Your Faith!

Day Twenty-Nine

Bear Your Fruit in Every Season

Day Thirty

The Need for Perfect Truth

Day Thirty-One

The Need for Spiritual Instruction

The Prayer

I'd Love to Hear from You!

Want Free Books?

Also By Adam Houge

About the Author

Introduction

There is nothing more powerful or life-changing than the words of Jesus. By His word the world was made, and by His word you are born again. When His words enter your heart, He has promised, they will not return to Him void. They will go forth and prosper your soul in the fruit of God.

Knowing this, take the next thirty-one days to be renewed and changed by praying the words of Jesus. Come out from the distractions around you and spend some time being recharged in His Spirit through prayer.

Day One

Dedicated to His Word

“But He answered and said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”’” Matthew 4:4

Jesus was referring to Deuteronomy in this passage. As it is written,

“So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.” Deuteronomy 8:3

Everything you have and everything you are is God’s. He provides all things, and there is no reason for worry. Only follow His Spirit, and all will come together for good. His Holy Spirit communicates the will of God to you on a moment-by-moment basis. He is the source of God’s voice, so it is imperative for you to be sensitive to His voice—that you may obey His words.

Notice that this verse doesn’t say, “Man lives by the written word of God (Bible),” but rather, “by every word that proceeds from His mouth.” The written word proceeded forth from His mouth and came from the Holy Spirit. His written word is not greater than His oral word. Anything God tells you to do, whether written or spoken inwardly by the Holy Spirit, must be obeyed.

Do not seek your daily bread, but let God give it to you. For Christ is your daily bread, and if you have any physical needs, God will provide even for those. His love compels Him to. If you have need, He will allow it to occur so that you may learn to live by every word of God. While He is teaching you, He’ll provide for your needs. It won’t be what you want, per se, but it will be what you need. Then, when He has finished teaching you that lesson of life, He will bless you with things you want because your heart has been tempered to receive and use them properly. If we have too much of what we want before our hearts are conformed to the Lord’s, we will be fleshly and contrary to His character. But if we learn obedience through the things we suffer, we will have a heart prepared to abound properly. For even Jesus was tested this way. As we read,

“…though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.” Hebrews 5:8

And as Paul wrote, so each of us must be able to say as well,

“I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.” Philippians 4:12

Learn to suffer need so that, through your suffering, you may become obedient. Learn also to remain sensitive to God’s heart, abiding always in the Holy Spirit when you abound. For it is easy to become distracted from the Holy Spirit by the many idle activities and toys that surround us through wealth.

So whether you are abased or abound, obey the Holy Spirit as He teaches you how to apply the written word daily.

The Prayer

Father, I know that I must not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from Your mouth. I choose to sensitize myself to Your Holy Spirit, that I can obey Him. For I know that if I don't pay attention to Your words, but allow life to distract me, I cannot obey you. How can servants obey if they don't hear their master's commands? Lord, I choose obedience. Provide for my needs as I learn to rely upon You for everything, even as Jesus did. And if I should suffer need as Jesus did in the wilderness, even then I will praise You and wait for Your mighty hand to save me and lead me out of my sufferings. From this day forward, I will live for Your word alone.

Day Two

The True Righteousness

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:17–20

While God has not called us to legalism, the law is still in full effect. Not one of the least of the marks (“jot or tittle”) will pass away until heaven and earth pass away. Jesus tells us that if we break the least of the commandments, we will be called least. How can this be so if we are not called to live according to the law? It would almost seem contradictory. But Paul explained it simply with one sentence:

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Galatians 5:14

God calls us to love and to be the image of His love. If we are not loving perfectly, then we are not putting on the perfection of Jesus. As we also read,

“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” 1 John 4:8

And also,

“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.” 1 John 4:20–21

This is why we also read,

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” 1 John 5:3

There is nothing burdensome or hard about love. However, sometimes we can overlook those who need love, and the Lord calls us to have open eyes to see

their need. Pray, therefore, that God will open your eyes to see those around you whom you have not seen, and who need a healthy dose of His love.

But now the question is, “How is His love properly fulfilled?” Through His guidance. Remember that the first fruit of the Spirit is love. If the Spirit guides you, then whatever He does through you are the righteous, loving works of God. So surrender all things to the Lord in prayer. Learn to be led by His Spirit, that you can be the image of Christ through obedience.

The Prayer

Lord, open my heart. Show me the needs of those around me, that I can be the shining example of Your love. Give me a servant's heart also. I pray that You would work in me and through me so that your righteousness would be alive in me. I know that the law is good but that it is better to walk in Your love through the guidance of Your Spirit, for by doing so I fulfill the law naturally. Save me from the self-righteousness that a legalistic life brings. But make me righteous, as You are righteous, as I surrender to the inner working of Your Holy Spirit.

Day Three

Be Perfected by Love

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:43–48

Love knows no bounds. If the love you show is truly unconditional, then do not allow the actions of others to influence how you portray it. If you are loving in all things, then like Christ you will convict your enemies into repentance through kindness. As it is written,

“If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for so you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the LORD will reward you.” Proverbs 25:21–22

So look for those who act as enemies toward you today. Pray and ask the Lord how you can repay them with loving-kindness. Don’t just do a small deed, but be willing to do a great act if God calls you to it. Jesus convicted you through His cross, which was not a small act. Likewise, carry your cross today and become the image of God’s love in everything you do.

If you have no enemy, then look into other areas of your life. Sometimes those we’re closest to can act as enemies. Even our friends, spouses, children, or other family members can be guilty of this. But when they are, show them gentle love in return, and they will be convicted to repent and love you back. Remember that we can only reap what we sow. Knowing this, sow love; it will change everything.

The Prayer

Help me to be patient. When others are wicked to me, please help me to be meek. Teach me true love, that I can walk in it always. Be my strength in my weakness so that I may heal with my words rather than divide and will build up rather than break down others with my actions.

Day Four

The True Treasure

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?” Matthew 6:19–25

Whatever your eyes search for will determine who you are inwardly. If you seek wealth, or turn to money for help before you’d turn to the Lord in times of trouble, then the Lord makes it clear your heart is dark. Those who live to prosper themselves heap sorrows upon themselves. For such people are not content with the supply of God. If God supplies abundantly, then you shall prosper; but if not, will you still follow Him?

Jesus made it clear that the things your eyes desire determine whether you are dark or light inwardly. And as we also read,

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” 1 John 2:15–17

Those who get wrapped up and ensnared with the cares of this life forget to continue in the affairs and will of God. But those who surrender each of their steps to be led by God, whether in financial providence or in daily decisions, are full of the light because the Spirit orders their steps. As it is written,

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way.” Psalm 37:23

God deeply cares about your well-being. He didn’t give His life to watch you fall into ruin and abandon you in your most desperate hours. He gave His life to adopt you, and He will love you and care for you as any father does for his child.

Carefully consider this fact today and ask yourself if you’ve been living a life of total surrender or if, rather, you’ve been forgetting to be intimate with the Lord, as you are distracted by slaving away at the nine-to-five grind. While work is important, it is more important that you should meditate on the Holy Spirit through prayer and worship while you’re there. When you leave the secret place today, nothing should take your gaze off of God.

Sometimes in the back of our minds, we think of the presence of God as being in the secret place. Therefore, when we leave, we also leave God behind subconsciously as we continue about our day. We know that God is always with us, but we treat the secret moments as if they are a pinnacle—a peak of a mountain. Then, when we are done, we climb down and get back to our lives. But our lives belong to God at all times. When you offered your life to Christ, you gave Him twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, not a mere twenty minutes a day during a time of devotion.

You can and must carry the experience of the secret place with you. This is what it means to shine your light! Because as you sit in the secret place, your spirit becomes sensitive to the presence and voice of the Holy Spirit. If you carry that sensitivity with you while meditating on His presence throughout the day, then you will hear Him more clearly. Moment by moment, He is speaking to you to lead you to the Father’s will. If you aren’t listening, how can you obey? Those who obey have the light shining at full strength in their hearts. But those who disobey are only interested in living their own life and not the life God has made for them.

Examine your heart today to determine how you’ve been practicing obedience and living for the Lord’s will.

The Prayer

Lord, I surrender! Jesus, I want to be Yours and only Yours. I choose to grow in my relationship with You, day in and day out, so that I can lay up the true and heavenly treasures. Save me from distractions today while I take to heart to meditate on Your Holy Spirit. Fill me with Your light, that all my actions could represent who You are to those around me. Let them find Your love in me, and by Your work in my life, I pray they will be convicted to desire You more.

Day Five

Be Content with His Supply

“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” Matthew 6:31–34

God will always provide for you. Don’t worry about your needs; rather, just follow Jesus, and He’ll lead you to the circumstances that will fill those needs. It doesn’t mean life will be easy—because it won’t be. Remember, He calls you to carry your cross. But if you follow God, He will be with you in every situation of life. He will deliver you from evil in His perfect timing and give you a life of peace, even here on this earth. As it is written,

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ…” 1 Peter 1:6–7

And also,

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.” 1 Peter 4:12–13

And as Peter further says,

“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.” 1 Peter 5:10

The Lord will settle you and establish you. Though trials may abound, God will not leave you without help: He will strengthen your spirit through lessons of wisdom. Then, after you have gained His wisdom, He will deliver you from every evil thing that has burdened you.

So no matter the circumstances of life seek the kingdom of God. But what

exactly is Jesus calling you to seek? Is He calling you to merely "remain Christian" or is there a deeper concept to this scripture? For our Lord also says,

"Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, "See here!" or "See there!" For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.'" Luke 17:20–21

There is no kingdom without a king. And it is certain by the scripture that Jesus means to say this: The kingdom that has come is the Holy Spirit within you. For by the King of kings, the Lord's kingdom shall be established in your life. Thus, God is calling you not only to remain a Christian but also to pursue the Spirit of Jesus daily. It shouldn't matter what's going on in your life; you should always seek to grow in your relationship with the Lord. If storms abound, then rest in the presence of His Spirit. Do not live for an idle life in this world, in a pursuit to build your own personal Eden. Remember that God made Eden for mankind so we would have everything we need and could abide in His presence without distraction. And work came through the curse. Jesus, having come to lift the curses, has called you to rely on His daily provision. Can you do this? Can you be content with the Lord's supply?

Live for the will of God and let the Lord take care of you, that you may not be distracted by the cares of this life. Dedicate yourself from this day forward to abiding in and meditating on the presence of the Holy Spirit so that you can live for the will of God in everything.

The Prayer

Take care of me, Jesus. I rest my needs in Your hands. Save me from the distractions this life brings and deliver me from the curse of daily need. You made my needs, and I believe that just as You have made them, so You also will fill them. Help me to abide in You today and continue to listen to Your Spirit. I choose from this day forward to grow in You always, not worrying about my life here on this earth but, rather, building a life eternal with You in the heavens.

Day Six

You Must Obey!

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” Matthew 7:24–27

True justification comes through obedience. Some claim grace is all that’s necessary, but they forget that they were saved through obedience to the gospel. When the Spirit convicted them that they needed Jesus as Savior, they happily obeyed—for which reason they are saved.

The works Jesus calls us to complete are not the impractical, idle works of the law but, instead, those of obedience to His voice. Remember that the Scriptures tell us this:

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17

Therefore, every time God speaks to you, your natural response must be with faith. But what good is it to believe only and not obey? True righteousness is faith in motion, and if you believe the Lord, then you must do something with your faith. As it is written,

“Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.” James 2:17

And also,

“But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

“Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” James 2:20–26

So commit yourself from this day forward to obeying the Spirit of God. It is how you came to Christ in the first place and how you should continue in Him. But those who do not obey, and believe they are justified by grace, deceive themselves. As it is written,

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.” James 1:22–25

It is not that works save us, by any means, for only the Lord’s work saves us. And that’s exactly the point: If we do not obey, then God is not working in us and through us for salvation. After all, works of obedience are really just the works of God in our life as we submit. When Gideon was told by God to fight the Midianites, the Lord only gave him three hundred men to do so. Then Gideon destroyed and put to flight an uncountable multitude of men. Thus, it was obvious that, by obedience, God worked through him. Likewise, God will work through you to give you victory according to how you act on your faith. And as it is written,

“For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” 1 John 5:4 ESV

So take it to heart to increase your faith today and to obey. Every time you hear the Lord’s voice, no matter how softly spoken it may be, listen to it and submit. For God has not called you to legalism but, rather, to faithful obedience.

The Prayer

Lord, I understand that I must obey You in all things. How else could You be the Lord of my life, unless I allow You to be my Lord? I surrender as Your vassal; justify me, Jesus, as You work in me and through me.

Day Seven

The Cost of Following Christ

“As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, ‘I will follow You wherever You go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.’ Luke 9:57–58 NASB

Some people may think that when God is leading them, victory will come first. Yet they forget that our Lord was crucified first, having been led to Calvary; only afterward was He risen. They forget that Peter likewise was led to his cross, and Paul was led to places where he was whipped, beaten, imprisoned, and stoned. Just because something goes wrong in your life doesn’t mean God hasn’t been leading you, and it doesn’t mean that He isn’t in control. Paul was called by God through a wonderful vision to head to Macedonia and preach the gospel. Then, when he obeyed, he ended up in prison. But rather than questioning God, he chose to worship the Lord cheerfully from the depths of his suffering.

We too should be like Paul, willing to praise God no matter the circumstances. For it was during a moment of praise that God loosened the iron bars, and not a moment sooner. Likewise, God may not always loosen your bars until you can learn to praise Him amidst your storms. So wherever God may lead you, follow Him. Jesus was homeless, and to follow Him when He walked this earth meant to follow Him into homelessness. What would He do when it rained, or in the cold of winter? No one ever said that following God would be easy, but the Lord has promised that if you do so, He will bless you with eternal life and take care of you while you yet live in this world.

So if something goes wrong in your life, don’t question God. If anything, you should question your motives and your own heart. For we know that God disciplines us, and it doesn’t hurt to ask the Lord if you have taken a wrong turn when everything falls apart. Then, if the Lord says you have, the way out is through getting back on track with God’s will. If He says you haven’t taken a wrong turn, then the way out is through bearing your cross. And if God confirms that you, like Job, have done nothing to merit your suffering, then know He intends to bless you in the end—just as He did for Job. This is reason enough to rejoice in the midst of a trial.

The Prayer

Lord, I will follow you everywhere You go. I pray that I would not have to suffer if it is not necessary. However, if it is for Your glory and You lead me into suffering, I will not question You. I will glorify Your name and preach Your love among the unbelievers, being an example of Your faithfulness through the way I practice my faith in You.

Day Eight

Live for God and Forget the Rest

“But Jesus said to him, ‘Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.’” Matthew 8:22

The Lord has called us to be sanctified. But how can we be set apart if we choose to cling to the people and things God calls us to leave behind? If we fellowship with the world, we will become like the world. Thus, it is written,

“You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” James 4:4 ESV

Therefore, the Lord also exhorts us through Paul,

“Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, ‘I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,’ says the Lord. ‘AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.’” 2 Corinthians 6:14–17 NASB

If there is any person, activity, or object that is taking your attention away from God’s will for you, then consider what God would have you do. Pray the matter through earnestly, that you may be led by God. For we cannot cling to the things of this world if we desire to partake in the Lord’s world. Do not be friends with the spiritually dead but, rather, increase in fellowship day after day.

The Prayer

I completely and wholeheartedly lay this life behind to embrace You. Your love is better than this place, so why should I give it more attention than I give You? I choose to bury my past life and lay behind my past sins, as well as people in my past who would influence me to cease from honoring You. I put You first above all things.

Day Nine

Keep Your Eyes Fixed on the Prize

“Another also said, ‘I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.’” Luke 9:61–62 NASB

In the days of Jesus, a plows required the driver to focus on the path he was carving out, lest he went off-course and did not keep a straight and narrow row for planting. What was left behind? A fertile, loose soil for planting seeds, creating life, and bearing fruit. God wants the trial you leave behind to bear the fruit of the kingdom. But if you look back to your former life and relationships, or your past sins, you’ll be distracted from the course God has plotted for you. Consider the wisdom of living in abandon for God, leaving everything behind to embrace the future He has for you. Be a pilgrim in this world, not a partaker of the worldly things. For when Lot’s wife was tempted, it was to her own undoing. As we read,

“But his wife, from behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.” Genesis 19:26 NASB

God commanded Lot and his wife not to look back, but she disobeyed the word of the Lord. Can we be saved through disobedience? Consider this and take it to heart to press forward in your journey with Jesus. And just as all the forefathers of the faith abandoned this life, so should we do likewise. As we read,

“All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.” Hebrews 11:13–16 NASB95

If we consider where we came from, we would have opportunity to return. However, if we love the Lord, we won’t consider such things but, instead, press forward in the faith.

The Prayer

Remind me that I'm a pilgrim, Jesus. I know I need to be wholly devoted to Your purpose in this world. So please, save me from being distracted by the affairs of this life, that I can grow more abundantly in You and leave behind a trial of holy fruits to Your glory.

Day Ten

You Must Evangelize!

“And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’” Luke 10:2 ESV

Each of us needs to have an evangelist’s heart. Have you been praying lately that God would send you out into the field? Remember that wherever God has you, there are people in your midst who need His salvation. Whether you’re a janitor, a corporate CEO, or a stay-at-home mother, you are surrounded by people who need to be changed by His love.

Consider that, as a parent, your children need the Lord. Be a shining example of His love toward them. Kindle friendships with them, that they may respect you. For it is certain that they respect a friend more than anyone else. So if you become their friend, you can guide them more easily to follow the Lord and to make the right decisions. In regard to those with whom you work, be an example of the loving-kindness and joy of God, knowing that it is written,

“Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?” Romans 2:4 NASB

Show them not only small acts of kindness, but also deep acts that lead them to ask, “Why have you done this?” Then you can reply, “Because God loves you and cares about what’s going on in your life.”

Ask yourself if you’ve been evangelizing as you ought? Sometimes we forget to do this; and then, through time, we build friendships with those we should be leading to Christ. We are not called to be their friends but, rather, to show them their need for the Lord so that they can become our brothers and sisters. Test yourself in this to see if you’re been obeying God as you ought. Pray that the Lord would send many laborers into the field to labor with you, that the unbeliever may be convicted by the presence of many brethren.

The Prayer

God, I pray You'd open my eyes to those around me who need You. I choose to be the example of You, that they can be led to You. But I also choose to share the gospel with the unbeliever, because I know that no one can be saved without faith and faith comes by hearing your word. Lord, I also pray that You would send me the easy ones—people who will convert quickly because they have already been prepared. I pray also that You will be with my hands to till up the soil of the hard-hearted through Your loving-kindness, that they can receive the seed of the gospel. Finally, I ask that You would bring more members of the faith to help me in my labors, that my efforts could be more fruitful as we work together to guide others to Your love. I especially ask this because I know that many hands make light work.

Day Eleven

A Time to Stay a Time to Flee

“When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.” Matthew 10:23

We are not always called to embrace persecution. While we are called to love our enemies, if they do not repent, there is a time and a place to flee. Remember that Paul was let down in a basket to flee the Jews of Damascus. As we read,

“When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.” Acts 9:23–25 ESV

Be attentive to the Spirit of God in everything. If He is calling you to endure persecution, then humble yourself and stoop your back to receive the blows. But if He calls you to flee, know that it is not righteousness to remain and suffer. Righteousness comes by obedience, so flee that situation and let God lead you into the next season of life. Sometimes persecutions come because God is doing a work. Those are the times when you must remain and endure. However, when God calls you to flee, He is allowing persecution to guide you from one season of life to another.

The Prayer

Save me from persecution! If it isn’t necessary for me to suffer it, then please keep it from me. But if it should come, I ask that You would strengthen me and make me the example of Your love toward my enemies for their salvation. And if they refuse, I pray You would give me a way out, to lead a life of freedom in You. Save me from the ongoing burden of persecution and set me free, Jesus!

Day Twelve

Let Your Words Be Seasoned with Salt

“Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.” Matthew 10:27

These whispers are the whispers of the Holy Spirit. Listen carefully to them and speak the words God gives you. But must we be given words to preach? As the Lord has said, according to the Old Testament,

“Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.” Exodus 4:12 ESV

The Prayer

Lord, share Your heart with me in the dark and secret place. Whisper in my ear, that I may have words to share. For I know that faith comes by Your word and not by my opinions. So help me to be silent before You, that Your words, not my own, may be on my lips.

Day Thirteen

The Good Fear to Have

“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Matthew 10:28

Revere God; remain pure. Do not let a sinner corrupt your relationship with God through fear. Whatever you fear will have power over you. If you fear Satan, you will act on fear and disobey the Lord. Consider that a woman who is beaten won’t leave her husband. Why? For fear of what he will do. Fear can be your friend or your enemy, but it will always enslave you. Whoever you fear, you will obey. So consider how wonderful it is if we fear the Lord who loves us. By loving, fearful respect, He will be given authority over our lives.

Look at your own life. Have you been tempted to please men, be it a neighbor, a friend, a relative, or someone at work? Do not give them power over your life but, instead, return that power to Jesus through faith.

The Prayer

Establish my heart in faith and save me from all my fears. I believe You are able and will do it as You have promised.

Day Fourteen

You Are Worth More Than Life to Jesus

“Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.” Matthew 10:29–31

If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground apart from the Father’s will, then how much more can nothing evil happen to you unless it passes through the hands of God first? He will not forget you or your need. Perhaps He will allow it for your growth, but He will not leave you in the midst of it and watch you apathetically while you suffer. He loves you more than life itself, and He proved it when He gave His life for you!

Consider all that Jesus suffered to love you. He was homeless, hated, and despised by His own nation. He was rejected by His own, and when His days came to an end on this earth, He was handed over to death by those who should have magnified Him as God and King. Then He was punched, spat on, brutally treated, despised, mocked, whipped, scourged, crowned with thorns crushed into His scalp, stripped naked, and left to die on a cross.

And this He did all for you—to love you. He has shown you by His sacrifice that He would rather step down from His throne, give up life, and be hated, tortured, and crucified than live another moment in eternity without you. You have always meant so much to Him!

Now let Him mean much to you. Devote yourself wholeheartedly to growing in Him, to drawing near to Him, and to growing in how you practice His love.

The Prayer

Thank You that I’m worth more to You than anything else. I can’t even begin to comprehend Your love, but I want it! Fill me up with You and wrap Yourself around me, Jesus. Help me to be more like You, and save me from my fears. Your love inspires me to be a better person.

Day Fifteen

The Good Confession

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 10:32–33

Do not hide your light, but take it to heart to shine it at full strength. As we read,

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God…” 2 Timothy 1:8 ESV

Shamelessly share the love of God, and do nothing without His words of truth. Show the unbeliever, unapologetically, his or her need for Jesus. Become a true evangelist for Christ and seek to spread the gospel far and wide as the Lord has commanded you.

The Prayer

I make myself available to be Your chosen vessel. Set me aside for Your purpose and use me for Your glory. I chose to confess Your name before men and give You the glory in all things. Make me a true evangelist for You, Jesus. Today I dedicate myself to sharing Your words, unapologetically, with the unbelievers around me for their salvation.

Day Sixteen

What It Takes to Be Worthy

“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.” Matthew 10:34–37

Sometimes you don’t know how much you need Jesus until He’s all you have. Friends and family will abandon you, but He will always love you. Put Him first in everything. Make certain you are taking the time you need to be refreshed in His presence daily. Many priorities would beckon us away from meditating on the Lord, but we must remember to wrangle our thoughts back in and live for His will.

Sometimes those of our own household will be our enemies, and it will seem we don’t have a friend in the world. But whether they are good to you or persecute you, put God first, for even your family can become an idol. Examine yourself in this today: Are you honoring people whom the Lord doesn’t honor? Are you fearing a friend or family member and refusing to sacrifice your peace with him or her, which you have attained only by hiding your light? If you truly love others, then you must show them how much they need Jesus. Otherwise, they will depart into hell, and you will be separated from them forever when you go home to the Lord. So show them real love, and don’t be afraid to break the peace of the home by sharing Jesus.

If you have to remove the Lord from your lips to have peace, then it’s a false peace, to which God doesn’t call you. It would be better to be at odds with another in the short term so that you can receive him or her as brother or sister forever. Then, at that time, true peace will overtake your house.

If your family is saved but sinning, you are required to rebuke them for repentance sake. Do not think you are keeping the peace by keeping your peace. If you love them, you will speak up and help them come to peaceful terms with the Lord. For as we read,

“Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.” Proverbs 27:5–6 ESV

The Prayer

I know that You came to bring peace between me and the Father. But I know that my peace with You will bring a sword between me and my unbelieving members. I know also that my brothers in You will not always walk uprightly with You. I will not hide my love for them. Give me words for their sake, that they may repent. I would rather be at peace with You, loving You with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength, than allow my relationship with them to become and idol. If any will not receive You, and You desire me to leave them so that I can focus on the kingdom, I will obey You. Only, let such a circumstance be Your hand guiding me and not my own heart running.

Day Seventeen

A True Reward

“For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward.” Mark 9:41 ESV

“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.” Matthew 10:40–41

How have you been showing the love of Jesus lately? Have you been going out of your way to find someone in need of comfort, prayer, or a helping hand? Commit your day today to finding someone named a brother who needs some help. Put on a servants heart and be prepared to do whatever God may call you to do, whether a small deed or a great one. But be certain you show this act of kindness to a brother. Many show the love of God to the world but forget to do the same for a believer. When a brother is in need, they say, “He has God, so let God help him. But who does the world have?” The world doesn’t want Jesus; that’s why they don’t have Him. But justice would suggest that those who have been faithful to God should be blessed. Meanwhile, the unsaved who refuse to be faithful should be shown kindness to convict them, but not at the expense of a brother. As it is written,

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35 ESV

And it is also written,

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Galatians 6:10

Put on Jesus and show kindness to everyone you meet today, but especially for your brethren. However, do not do it for your own blessing in Christ. You already have that coming because you choose to be like Jesus. Instead, tell your brother or sister that your blessing is to love him or her today, and watch your sincerity truly affect his or her heart.

The Prayer

Lord, I dedicate my day today to showing Your love, so please send someone my way to bless. If there is a need that is greater than I anticipated filling today, I pray You would open my heart up to do it, and provide for my needs as well.

Day Eighteen

The Hidden Wisdom Is Yours

“At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.’” Matthew 11:25

God reveals and teaches all the hidden wisdom of the Father to us. This isn’t something we are taught by men, but which God teaches us for our own personal growth. Be attentive to the Spirit’s voice today and commit to growing. Examine your own heart right now and ask yourself if you know what the Lord is trying to teach you in this season of life. He is always trying to teach you something, but are you paying attention? If you don’t know what He’s teaching you, then spend some time in prayer today and over the next few days asking Him what lessons He’s teaching you. Read your Bible today, especially, so that you can grow by meditating on the word of God:—this should be a daily practice.

If you’re facing a major decision or a change of seasons, pray earnestly that the Lord would give you revelation and show you what you should do.

The Prayer

Please speak to me in the Scriptures today. Make them come alive and give me revelation. Teach me from Your book, God, and let me learn from You. Show me the decisions I should make today and guide my heart in wisdom. I surrender to Your Spirit, that I may have Your mind today.

Day Nineteen

The Easy Way Out Isn't So Bad After All

"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Matthew 11:29–30

The law is a heavy and encumbering weight to bear. But when we allow God to work through us, suddenly that burden is made light. It is not that we should try to apply the law, for this would be legalism, which does not justify. But when we walk in the Spirit, the law is fulfilled by nature. Examine your heart today and ask yourself how you've been walking in the Spirit lately. Have your words been founded in love? Have your actions portrayed Jesus?

Now one may ask, "How do we walk in the Spirit?" Every time God speaks to you and you obey, you have taken a step in the Spirit. So the key to walking in the Spirit is being more sensitive to His voice and determining to obey immediately when you hear Him speak. So dedicate your day today to listening carefully to the voice of the Lord.

Surrender to Jesus and rest from your own works and good deeds. Let God work through you. It isn't wrong to be eager to do the works of God. Most likely, whatever work you're doing is from the Lord. But take today to confirm this in prayer. If God isn't working through you, then you're following your own heart and not bearing the easy yoke and light burden of God.

The Prayer

Lord, please open my ears to hear You more clearly. I choose to rest from my own ambitions and good deeds today. I pray that Your Spirit would show me how to work out Your love today. Please confirm to me that You're working through me, and if there is any way in which You aren't, I pray You would convict me to stop. That way Your Holy Spirit, not my flesh, would do the work.

Day Twenty

Praise Without End!

“But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:23–24 ESV

To worship isn’t merely to sing praises about God; rather, it is to adore Him to His face. God desires that we should praise Him not with the mouth of the flesh but, rather, with sincerity in the Spirit. Focus on the presence of God while you worship, and sing directly to it as if talking to His face. You will feel His presence more powerfully by singing “You are holy!” versus “He is holy!”

We know that He is relational in every way. So why wouldn’t He want us to speak directly to Him when we worship? How is it different from prayer? Commit yourself today to praising the Lord earnestly. Worship Him privately whether at work at a desk or at home doing dishes. Make it your effort today to show God a heart of gratitude through continual praise.

Do not slack! Try to worship Him every waking moment. It is hard, and it takes practice. You have an enemy who will try to distract you with idle thoughts. But try to recognize when your mind is wandering and bring it back constantly to worship and pray. This is something you should do every day to abide earnestly in the Holy Spirit. And as it is written,

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” Hebrews 13:15

And likewise,

“I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.” Psalm 34:1 ESV

Apply the word today and worship the Lord with an earnest heart in the Holy Spirit.

The Prayer

Thank You, God for everything You do for me. Thank You that You offer me atonement through Your Spirit and that by Him You give me a new heart to praise You with all I say and do. Today I choose to be a living worship for You. From this day forward, I dedicate my days to praising You with everything I say and in everything I do. May your Spirit be with my heart and incline me in the words I should use.

Day Twenty-One

You Are a House of Prayer!

“Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, ‘It is written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer,” but you have made it a “den of thieves.”’” Matthew 21:12–13

The temple that was is no longer. Now we are the temple, and God dwells in us. Let us not be filled with evil desire, self-seeking, or the pursuit of wealth, but let us be filled with the Spirit of God in all righteousness and holiness. For the Lord has come to prosper us in the spiritual things. If the Lord has come to give us what is best, why would we thrust His plans aside to live for idle gain? Will not this world be destroyed? Do not cling to the goods of this life, but cling to Jesus Christ and live for the will of God. You, Beloved, are not called to allow a den of thieves to build up in your heart. But let yourself be sanctified and holy as a house of prayer to your God.

The Prayer

Jesus, I read about what You did in the temple, and I pray You will do it likewise in my heart. Drive out the things that are contrary to You. Drive out the things that buy my time so You won't have any, and that sell me out to sin. Overturn the tables of self-seeking and reliance on money. Why, my Lord, should I sell the dove of peace that You have given me? If I should be sold out to idleness on my spiritual chair, I pray You would overturn that chair for my sake. From this day forward, I devote myself to be a house of prayer for You, my God.

Day Twenty-Two

You Were Made in His Image, So Act Like His Image

“Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, ‘Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?’

“But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, ‘Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the tax money.’

“So they brought Him a denarius.

“And He said to them, ‘Whose image and inscription is this?’

“They said to Him, ‘Caesar’s.’

“And He said to them, ‘Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’ When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.” Matthew 22:15–22

In whose image have you been made? Who has inscribed you on the palm of His hands? You are loved beyond comprehension! Do not live for the idleness of this world or the casual pleasures of its entertainment. But entertain yourself with godliness, walking in the Holy Spirit at all times. Let love guide your heart and listen to the voice of the Lord, that you may become like Him. For love makes a man perfect, and the Holy Spirit cleanses our walks.

Commit yourself today to living for the Lord’s purpose. Wherever you’re at, remember that you were made to bring glory to the One who made you.

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV

Furthermore, the Scriptures instruct us,

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:17 ESV

The Prayer

I commit each of my deeds to Your glory, that I can represent the image of who You are. Make me more like You—I surrender to Your guiding hand in everything. I render all of me, all of my works and words, to You so that I can become like you –reflecting Your love with everything I am.

Day Twenty-Three

Be Circumspect. Watch and Pray.

“Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, ‘What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’” Matthew 26:40–41

Whenever you’re tempted, enter into prayer immediately. Remember how Jesus instructed us in prayer:,

“So He said to them, ‘When you pray, say…’” Luke 11:2

Then, getting straight to the point, He finishes the prayer with these words:

“…And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” (Luke 11:4)

So when you’re tempted, pray immediately for deliverance and keep praying. Keep your mouth focused on prayer rather than on choice words. Keep your hands folded together rather than operating in sin. After a while, the temptation will pass and the Lord will strengthen you to act in holiness. As it is written,

“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness…’” 2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV

And why is His power made perfect? Because in your weakness, you’ll allow Him to be your strength and work for you rather than trying to work and fight temptation under your own strength. Jesus will be your strength. All that’s required of you is faith. As we also read,

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” 1 John 5:4

Your victory comes through faith in God’s ability to help you. A strong Christian is not defined as a person who is strong in and of himself or herself. Rather, strong Christians are actually weak but have the ability to humble themselves and admit their weakness. They only appear as strong because they have God as their strength.

Now. one may ask, “Why does God allow me to have temptation, anyway? Doesn’t He want me to be holy? Why would He give me the chance to be unholy?”

God allows the temptation to give you a choice. Will you follow your own heart or God’s heart? Will you follow God’s heart even when it doesn’t appeal to you? Will you love Him with sincerity and refine your heart through His Spirit?

Let God refine your words and your deeds today. Choose works that build up in love and words that heal. Be the image of Jesus.

The Prayer

Jesus, I pray You would give me strong conviction in my sins. My spirit is willing to honor You always. Help me when I'm tempted to use those choice words that I know I shouldn't. Save me from the actions I'll later regret. I know that if my hands operate in Your love and through Your Holy Spirit, there will be nothing to regret. So please remind me to pray and hold my tongue when tempted to speak as I shouldn't. Afterward, may my mouth speak Your praises and not the evil thought that was on my mind.

Day Twenty-Four

You Must Have Perfect Doctrine!

“Jesus answered them and said, ‘My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.’” John 7:16–17

“How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? —but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” (Matthew 16:11–12)

Doctrine is one of the most neglected issues among the churches today. Some may argue this, but if it were not the case, then why are there so many denominations, and so many interpretations of any one scripture? If we all had the mind of Christ, we would have the doctrine of Christ, thus making everyone likeminded in Jesus. But few people take this issue to heart, as if doctrine were not as important as other issues in the church. Yet doctrine dictates what you’re putting your faith in, what your faith looks like, and how you apply it. Imagine, then, the supreme significance of the scripture that says,

“For by grace you have been saved through faith…” Ephesians 2:8 ESV

Doctrine therefore determines whether you’re saved and whether or not you’ll please the Lord. As we also read,

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” Hebrews 11:6 ESV

Since faith saves us and it pleases the Lord, doctrine is integral to salvation and how a believer relates to God. Without proper doctrine, our relationships with the Lord will fizzle, even though we may perceive them as going well. But what we perceive is worthless compared to how the Lord judges us. In the end, His opinion is all that matters, and we should be faithful to cling to that reality. That doctrine is central to our salvation is evident, however, for it is written,

“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” 1 Timothy 4:16

And it is also written,

“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.” 2 John 9:1

So the question is this: How have you been taking to heart to abide diligently in the doctrine of Jesus? If you are not certain, then consider making a change in this area of your life. Be passionate for the Lord! Earnestly seek to know Him for who He is. Listen inwardly to the Holy Spirit while you read your Bible, for He will tell you what the Scriptures mean. Even though you may feel you already know, He will add to your knowledge—or rewrite it. Therefore, remain completely submissive to His voice because nothing He teaches is wrong. By contrast, the teachings of men can and will be wrong if the Holy Spirit has not led their teachings.

The Prayer

Teach me Your doctrine, Jesus. I understand the importance it holds for my life and want to draw nearer to You through a constant pursuit of the truth. I know that You are the truth and the life, and to seek truth in doctrinal purity is to seek You. I want to know You for who You are and not who I want You to be. Share Your heart with me and let me know it perfectly.

Day Twenty-Five

Praying for His Mighty Deeds

“So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, ‘A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.” Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.’” Matthew 13:57–58

Constantly seek to increase your faith. America doesn’t see the mighty deeds of God as the early church did because of the unbelief here. You hear about the dead rising in Africa; you hear about miraculous healings in India; but what do you hear about in American? Nothing with the consistency and magnitude of what seems to occur in other nations. Why? Because Christians in those nations are poor and rely wholeheartedly on God for everything. Hence, the saying “You don’t know God is all you need until God is all you have” could never be truer.

It isn’t that wealth is wrong. But what we choose to put our trust in determines what is right or wrong. Test your own heart in this. Do you believe God can and will commit mighty deeds, right now and today, as He did in the old church? Can you trust Him with everything? It’s easy to say in this moment, but imagine if your bank account froze right now. What would you do?

Trust in God and pray for greater intimacy with Him. When He performs His miracle for you, He is being intimate with you. So pray for more of His miracles in your life and have faith He will furnish them.

The Prayer

I believe. Jesus, I believe in Your power. Please commit mighty works in my life, that I can be more intimate with You through them. Stretch out Your hand before me and perform many mighty signs and wonders to Your glory, that others may see the working of Your hand and have faith in You, Jesus.

Day Twenty-Six

Praise God for Grace!

“When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, ‘Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?’

“She said, ‘No one, Lord.’

“And Jesus said to her, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.’” John 8:10–11

Thank God for grace! This woman was in the middle of sin, yet Jesus didn’t attack her. He didn’t yell or rebuke sharply. He said lovingly and gently to “sin no more.” Can you imagine that? Look at your sins and all the grief you’ve caused your own heart. Then consider that, as you’re bowing before God in judgment, Jesus will draw near and lift up your face. With tears in His eyes, He’ll say, “I don’t condemn you. For this reason I came, and for this reason I died. Come enter your master’s happiness.”

Take today to reflect on His forgiveness. Show Him the gratitude He deserves, and make today a day of worship and thanksgiving for all He’s done to love you, nourish you, and forgive you. Then be inspired by His forgiveness, and go and do likewise.

The Prayer

How can I keep from worshiping You, God? How can I ever say “enough”? You’re so amazing! Your love inspires me, Jesus. Give me a heart like Yours, that I may gently convict those who offend me and swiftly forgive them. If you receive them, then who am I to remain angry? Forgive me this sin also and purify my heart, that it may be like Yours.

Day Twenty-Seven

Walk by the Light

“Jesus answered, ‘Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.’” John 11:9–10

To “walk by the day” means to walk in the light of God, which is the Holy Spirit. The light is in you because you have the Holy Spirit. When you walk, do you rely on the light of day to keep you from stumbling? Undoubtedly. Go and do likewise in your walk with God. Rely on the Holy Spirit to light your way. Let Him show you each and every step you should take in life, lest you take a misstep and stumble. A misstep is a step not taken in the Spirit of God.

So listen carefully to the inward voice of God. Don’t allow the circumstances that surround you to distract you from God’s voice. Don’t allow the affairs of life or cares of this world to captivate your thoughts. But keep your mind steadily focused on God’s voice all day and every day. That way, when He speaks, you may walk rightly in the light of Christ.

The Prayer

Lord, show me the way I should walk. Show me each step I should take, and keep me from stumbling. Open my eyes to Your light to see the way I should go. I ask this both for the small, daily steps in life and for the bigger decisions. Be with me through all of them, and teach me what I should do. I choose to sensitize myself to Your voice. I know that You don’t speak unclearly at any time. As if anything You say or do could be imperfect! But when I don’t understand You, I know it’s an issue with my ability to comprehend. Give me wisdom and discernment in Jesus’ name. Help me to understand You, that I can obey and do everything You want me to do.

Day Twenty-Eight

Increase Your Faith!

“Then Jesus answered and said, ‘O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.’ And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

“Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’

“So Jesus said to them, ‘Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, “Move from here to there,” and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.’” Matthew 17:17–20

It wasn’t the unbelief of the father or child, but of the disciples, at issue. Sometimes when a miracle doesn’t happen, one person may be inclined to blame the other. However, the first person we should consider in this regard is our own self, and the first heart we should inspect is our own. We won’t see many miracles in our lives without faith. Notice that Jesus basically said, “If you have faith like a mustard seed, mountains will move and nothing will be impossible for you.” So why do the bigger miracles seem harder to obtain? It’s as if we think the miracle must have a possibility of happening for us to believe. But the condition of a miracle does not require possibility—it requires faith. Perhaps, then, the greater miracles are lacking when faith is lacking as well.

Yet no miracle will happen if God hasn’t told you it will. Some try to perform miracles and wonder why they won’t happen, but this is due to a misunderstanding regarding faith. It is written,

“…faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17

When God tells you to perform a miracle, it shall be performed. But if He hasn’t specifically said it will happen, then it will not likely happen. If God hasn’t said He will perform a miracle, then pray and ask Him to do so, and He likely will if you have faith He can. In such a case, it is a matter of His will. But if you don’t believe that He could even be willing to perform a miracle, He likely won’t. Trust God and have all faith, for if a little faith can do great wonders, what can much faith do.

We could even elicit God’s admiration in this way! As we read,

“When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!’” Matthew 8:10

The word for marvel in original Greek is *thaumazō*, which means “to take a pause and stand in admiration” or “to be in wonderment” or “marvel.” This word is used many times throughout the New Testament regarding people marveling at Jesus. They marveled over His words, His actions, His miracles, and many other things. But only two times did Jesus marvel: when someone lacked faith despite all obvious reason to have it, and when someone had great faith. In which way do you want Jesus to marvel at you?

We know that faith pleases God, saves our souls, and makes the Lord marvel. So it is evident that we should all be on a constant pursuit for greater faith. Take today to dedicate yourself to growing in faith—which you should be doing always. Pray that the Lord would increase your faith as well.

The Prayer

Lord, increase my faith! Grow me in faith, that I can truly please You. I want You to marvel at me as You did the centurion. I dedicate myself from this day forward to increasing my faith in You.

Day Twenty-Nine

Bear Your Fruit in Every Season

“And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, ‘Let no fruit grow on you ever again.’ Immediately the fig tree withered away.” Matthew 21:19

The fig tree is harvested in the fall, but Jesus came looking for fruit in the spring. Why would God curse the tree, then? What would He mean in doing this? It is written,

“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.” 2 Timothy 4:2

You are commanded by the Lord to be ready, in season and out of season, to bear the fruit of the Lord. Walk in His love, even when life is unseasonable. If you walk in the Spirit, then the fruit of the Lord should be on full display all day, every day, year round. Examine yourself and consider: If God took a tour of your heart right now, what would He find? Would He be pleased? What would He think when He opens the closet and finds something nasty lurking in there?

Let there be no hidden issues but, rather, be purified through continually abiding in the Spirit. Two of the best ways to do this are by constant prayer and by continual worship. As it is written regarding prayer,

“…pray without ceasing…” 1 Thessalonians 5:17

And also,

“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving…” Colossians 4:2

Pray without ceasing, all day and every day. Have you ever practiced this? Have you taken to heart to pray at every moment and be in constant connection with the Lord, being sensitive to His voice? The more you pray and the more you worship, the more sensitive you will become. Then, when He speaks, you will hear and understand Him with clarity. When you understand and obey, then you’ll bear the fruit of God.

Do this always and practice His love toward everyone you know.

The Prayer

I commit myself to bearing fruit for You always. Jesus, take a tour of my heart right now, and if there is anything at all within me that displeases You, please reveal it to me and cleanse me. Teach me how to have a holy, godly walk in You at all times. Save me from idle distractions and help me to focus on Your voice, that I can walk in You without hindrance.

Day Thirty

The Need for Perfect Truth

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” John 16:13

Seek the truth always! To seek truth is to seek Jesus. As it is written,

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” John 14:6

Jesus is the truth, and to seek the truth in your doctrine is to seek Jesus. Remember also that no one comes to the Father except through the truth. When we walk in the truth and pure doctrine, it pleases the Lord. As the Spirit said through the Apostle John,

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” 3 John 4:1

So pursue truth with all your heart; seek to please the Lord, and the Holy Spirit will give it to you. Today we will rededicate ourselves to the truth. Due to the extreme importance of walking soberly in God’s true doctrine, we will revisit the concept and commit ourselves to it again.

The Prayer

As I have prayed before, so now I pray again: Jesus, I commit myself to Your truth. Purify me in doctrine, that I can walk in Your light. For I know that to love Your truth is to love You.

Day Thirty-One

The Need for Spiritual Instruction

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” John 14:26

The Holy Spirit must teach us all things. As it is written,

“These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” 1 Corinthians 2:13

Seek, therefore, to be taught by God. As we mentioned in a previous prayer, you must listen inwardly to the Holy Spirit while you read your Bible. He will tell you the hidden meaning behind the Scriptures. Whenever the pages seem to come alive, this is the Holy Spirit speaking to you. Pay attention to these parts and memorize them because they will apply to the current lessons the Spirit is teaching you. When memorizing, ask the Holy Spirit to help you retain the words. Even as Jesus said, the Spirit will “bring to remembrance all things I said to you.” Everything Jesus has taught, and everything the Spirit is pointing out to you in the word, He will bring to remembrance—but only if you memorize with faith. As we read,

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord…” James 1:5–7

Trust in the Lord and pursue His wisdom. Don’t presume to know something and ignore God’s voice in the process. If the Holy Spirit clearly tells you that a scripture means something contrary to what you thought it did, His teaching is above whatever you’ve been holding onto.

Hold onto His teachings, knowing that His knowledge is perfect.

The Prayer

Lord, teach me in everything. Give me wisdom and help me to retain Your word. Show me what You want me to read, and make the pages come alive. Read the word to me when I sit to meditate on the pages. Give me Your mind and teach me Your doctrine. I choose to have a humble heart, that I may learn from You.

I’d Love to Hear from You!

As an author I regard the feedback of my readers highly. When considering a book, many people weigh reviews in the balance.

If you enjoyed this book, please consider helping others make an informed decision. Leaving a review can help spread the message of the gospel and increase other’s faith through these books, and it would be a great way to support this ministry for free!

Want Free Books?

From time to time Adam gives away free copies of his new releases. But his promotions are highly temporary. If you'd like to be notified when he's giving his kindle books away for free, please consider signing up at the following link: GET ADAM'S BOOKS FREE

*****

If you like audio books, and are not a member of Audible, you can get one of Adam's audio books for free by signing up at the following link: GET ONE OF ADAM'S AUDIO BOOKS FREE

This link is good for any Audio book of Adam's, of your choice, and valid for one title up to $25 in value.

******

Also By Adam Houge

Adam Houge has over 100 titles on the Christian faith. You can search through them on his Amazon author page, located on the following link:

ADAM HOUGE'S AUTHOR PAGE

The following is a list of his bestselling titles, which may interest you.

The 7 Most Powerful Prayers That Will Change Your Life Forever

The 7 Spiritual Habits That Will Change Your Life Forever

The 7 Habits That Will Change Your Life Forever

Slaying Your Giants: How to Have Massive Faith

How to Memorize the Bible Fast and Easy

About the Author

Adam is a preacher, teacher and #1 internationally bestselling author of over 100 books on the Christian faith. He is a devoted husband and father of three boys. Through his travels, he’s seen the need for a new awakening and a new revival: a revival of the heart. Come join Adam on this journey of redemption and experience God like never before!

Table of Contents

Introduction
Day One
Dedicated to His Word
Day Two
The True Righteousness
Day Three
Be Perfected by Love
Day Four
The True Treasure
Day Five
Be Content with His Supply
Day Six
You Must Obey!
Day Seven
The Cost of Following Christ
Day Eight
Live for God and Forget the Rest
Day Nine
Keep Your Eyes Fixed on the Prize
Day Ten
You Must Evangelize!
Day Eleven
A Time to Stay a Time to Flee
Day Twelve
Let Your Words Be Seasoned with Salt
Day Thirteen
The Good Fear to Have
Day Fourteen
You Are Worth More Than Life to Jesus
Day Fifteen
The Good Confession
Day Sixteen
What It Takes to Be Worthy
Day Seventeen
A True Reward

Day Eighteen
The Hidden Wisdom Is Yours
Day Nineteen
The Easy Way Out Isn’t So Bad After All
Day Twenty
Praise Without End!
Day Twenty-One
You Are a House of Prayer!
Day Twenty-Two
You Were Made in His Image, So Act Like His Image
Day Twenty-Three
Be Circumspect. Watch and Pray.
Day Twenty-Four
You Must Have Perfect Doctrine!
Day Twenty-Five
Praying for His Mighty Deeds
Day Twenty-Six
Praise God for Grace!
Day Twenty-Seven
Walk by the Light
Day Twenty-Eight
Increase Your Faith!
Day Twenty-Nine
Bear Your Fruit in Every Season
Day Thirty
The Need for Perfect Truth
Day Thirty-One
The Need for Spiritual Instruction
The Prayer
I’d Love to Hear from You!
Want Free Books?
Also By Adam Houge
About the Author