



21 DAYS OF PRAYER

**DEVOTIONAL
BOOKLET**

JAN 9TH

PRAYER MEETING
6:30PM-7:30PM

Location
205 River Drive S
Leader
Bob & Cindy Johnson

JAN 11TH

TEAM NIGHT
7:00PM

Location
New City
4114 N Park Trail

JAN 16TH

YOUNG ADULTS
PRAYER & WORSHIP
7PM-9PM

Location
New City Youth Facility
4108 N Park Trail
Leader
Aaron & Megan Sybrant

JAN 17TH

PRAYER MEETING
7PM-8PM

Location
4114 N Park Trail
Discover Track Room
Leader
Lee & Udeen Barrows

JAN 18TH

PRAYER MEETING
7PM-8PM

Location
205 River Drive S
Leader
Eric & Kelsey Crawford

JAN 19TH

PRAYER MEETING
6:30PM-7:30PM

Location
3900 18th Ave S
Leader
Lloyd & Abby Taylor

JAN 20TH

YOUTH PRAYER & WORSHIP
7PM

Location
New City Youth Facility
4108 N Park Trail
Leader
Aaron & Megan Sybrant

JAN 23RD

PRAYER MEETING
6:30PM-7:30PM

Location
3215 7th Ave S
Leader
Mike & Cristy Frick

JAN 24TH

PRAYER MEETING
6:30PM-7:30PM

Location
108 14th Ave S
Leader
Noah & AJ McKenzie

JAN 25TH

PRAYER MEETING
6:30PM

Location
1701 4th Ave N
Leader
Joe & Lana Culver

JAN 26TH

PRAYER MEETING
12:00PM

Location
205 River Dr S
Leader
Steve and Christel Fleming

JAN 29TH

PRAYER & WORSHIP
GATHERING

Location
New City Church
4114 N Park Trail

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR AMAZING AUTHORS.

Kevin Bell
Rob Crumley
Emily Dunn
Matt Fleming
Steve Fleming
Miranda Herbert-Martinez
Jacob Miller
Bill Shirley
Megan Sybrant

3 QUICK THOUGHTS ABOUT FASTING

1. GOD REWARDS FASTING

MATTHEW 6:17–18

“...when you fast...your Father, who sees what is done in secret, *will reward you.*”

We didn't come up with this plan. He did.

It's God's desire to bless you when you pursue Him in practical ways. Rather than getting really specific in your idea of how He should bless you, pray for contentment with whatever He chooses as your reward. It may be different than you expect. It may come at a different time. But God is good and so are His rewards.

If you chose your reward, it might be a cheeseburger that you could eat immediately. *God can do better than that, but it might take patience.* Let Him decide when and how He will reward you, and look forward to it! He's your Father and He's good at blessing you!

2. JESUS EXPECTS US TO FAST

MATTHEW 6:17

“...*when you fast...*”

Jesus never said, “*if you fast*”. He said, “*when you fast*”.

As radical as it can seem to stop eating or to change your diet, this is normal behavior for a follower of Jesus. *Stirring hunger as we pursue God is good.*

Congratulations! You are fulfilling a command from Jesus, which is always good! Don't give up! You can do this! *Jesus expects you to!*

3. FASTING IS SUPPOSED TO BE HARD

MATTHEW 6:16,17

“When you fast, *do not look somber...*when you fast, *put oil on your head and wash your face...*”

When Jesus taught us how to fast, He had to emphasize how to *not look miserable*. He took time to teach us how to look normal. Why? Because fasting makes you feel miserable and not normal! Fasting is supposed to be hard.

That's the point. While I fast, I'm teaching my body that my spiritual craving for God is more important than my body's craving for attention. But my body is fighting back!

Don't give up when it gets difficult. *That's when you know it's working!*
Keep showing your stomach that God is the Boss!

DAY 1 // JAN 9
FIRST THINGS FIRST

MARK 12:28-30 ESV

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that [Jesus] answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’

Options. Options. Options. We live in a world with so many options and I would venture to say that we have now come to expect options. Even as Christians, there are so many good things that can capture our attention: studying your Bible, interceding for the lost, serving at church, hanging out with friends, listening to a helpful podcast, being generous to those around you... the list goes on and on. In the midst of all the options, let's never forget or neglect the greatest option of all -- the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the name above every name, the Almighty, the Alpha and Omega, the Infinite and Omnipotent, the Author and Creator, the Chief Cornerstone: Jesus Christ!

As Jesus reminded Martha (Luke 10:38-42), there is one thing that is more important than everything else and when we keep that in focus, what we find will never be taken away. Options, in and of themselves, are not a bad thing. But when we allow the multitude of options to overrun or undermine our approach to the greatest option that has ever been known, then we forfeit the wonder of drawing near to God.

Let's begin these 21 days of prayer with a renewed perspective on who we're after. This is not a religious exercise, a church-wide tradition, a novel idea, or anything in between. We are in pursuit of the most important, most powerful, most loving, most valuable, most terrifying, most faithful being in all of existence and He is in pursuit of you!

FOR THE KIDS:

Use the alphabet to remember who we are pursuing and name His attributes/character. Start with A (God is **A**lmighty), then move to B (God is **B**eautiful), and on through the alphabet.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Heavenly Father, you are the best option I will ever have. You stand alone as my first choice!”

“Lord, forgive me for letting you get lost in the shuffle of life.”

“God, remind me again of your wonderful splendor.”

DAY 2 // JAN 10

IMMUTABILITY – GOD NEVER CHANGES.

ISAIAH 54:10 ESV

“For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

A guy called Heraclitus once said: *“Everything changes and nothing remains still; and you cannot step twice into the same stream.”* (Before you’re too impressed: I googled it. The words resonated with me).

The reality of change is something that at times feels like vertigo-inducing, spinning chaos designed to test the limits of our sanity. We’re tossed about in a broiling storm of life, trying to get our feet under us, only to find shifting sand. Friends move away. Economies collapse. Trust is broken. Cultures shift. Promises are forgotten. Loved ones die.

Everything. Changes. Except God.

God’s unchanging character is called **“immutability”**. I like how A.W. Pink describes this attribute: *“God cannot change for the better, for He is already perfect; and being perfect, He cannot change for the worse. Altogether unaffected by anything outside Himself, improvement or deterioration is impossible. He is perpetually the same.”*

How awesome is God that He is above change; unaffected by the most persuasive arguments or darkest evils that can menace this world? He stands unmovable; completely, perfectly faithful. He’s the Promise Keeper, the Unchanging One, our Rock in the midst of the storm of life. Worship the Immutable God.

Let’s meditate on two truths today:

- 1) God never changes** (Heb 13:8, Heb 6:13-18, Mal 3:6, Jas 1:17).
- 2) He is our Rock of Refuge** (2 Sam 22:2-3, Psalm 18:2, 31:2, 62:6-7, 71:3, 94:22).

FOR THE KIDS:

Read through the Bible verses from today’s reading. Find a rock and permanent marker. Write on the rock a word or Bible verse from today’s devotion to remind you God never changes.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“God, the Unchanging One, I praise you simply for being YOU. Thank you for never changing.”

“Jesus, my Anchor of Hope, help me to trust in you during the storms I’m encountering.”

“Holy Spirit, kindle in me a desire to grow in faithfulness and trustworthiness just like you, the Perfect Faithful One.”

DAY 3 // JAN 11

CLOSER

PSALM 25:4-5 NIV

Show me your ways Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

I love the imagery these words evoke. As I look at my own children, I realize that the habits that have become second nature to them are the ones I took the time to consistently teach. It sounds obvious, but I had to be close to them to show them things they needed to know, like how to tie their shoes, brush their teeth, ride a bike, and eventually drive a car. What they needed to know were things they needed to be in close proximity to me in order to learn.

In that same way, I can see God as a loving, hands-on father who wants me close in order to show me His ways. When I stay close to Him, I receive instruction that will help me grow because what He teaches are the things that have eternal value. He can show me how to respond to unfair situations with humility, give kindness to those who I think may not deserve it, walk in truth, and be quick to forgive. I learn these things from watching my Father because this is who He is.

PSALM 145:8 NIV

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.

FOR THE KIDS:

Pick a simple hand motion pattern to teach your family. Stand in a different room and try to teach them how to do the pattern. Now stand in the same room and try again. How much easier is it to teach and learn when you are close?

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Lord, help me learn from you today. Show me your ways because they are good.”

“Teach me the things that are close to your heart. Help me become more like you as you show me how to live.”

“Thank you, God, for making yourself known and drawing near to me.”

DAY 4 // JAN 12
GOD IS LIGHT

1 JOHN 1:5 AMP

This is the message [of God's promised revelation] which we have heard from Him and now announce to you, that God is Light [He is holy, His message is truthful, He is perfect in righteousness], and in Him there is no darkness at all [no sin, no wickedness, no imperfection].

One of my favorite things to do is just sit and look at the stars. So many stars! What a joy to find a place away from city lights and look up at the stars. Seeing their beauty, the path of the Milky Way, the sheer number of stars, reminds me of the greatness of God. Looking at all those stars gives me a sense of security knowing my God created and placed them all.

That was not always the case. I recall many years ago, before I chose to trust in God, looking up at the stars and realizing that something... no, someONE, must have put those stars there. I remember being absolutely terrified. Terrified of whoever had created all those stars. Knowing a power beyond anything I could imagine was so close was terrifying. Who was this power? The Power that created all those stars must be relevant and impossible to know while I am irrelevant and powerless to change. The universe is so **BIG** and I am so ... small.

Read Romans 1:20. It reminds us that God put the stars in the sky so I would know His eternal power and divine nature. The stars are the works of an infinite God desperately trying to communicate with a very finite humanity. God is Light! He is not hiding. He is proclaiming His love from every mountain top, through every leaf and snow flake, through every star in the sky.

How should I respond to the God who painted the sky with stars of love? I respond with my breath, my words, my actions. I offer all I have realizing how truly insignificant of an offering I bring. He embraces my offering as though it were a rare jewel and pours His worth into my life. He turns my darkness into His light.

FOR THE KIDS:

God IS Light and He is always near. Grab a flashlight and dim the lights. Choose an activity and use the flashlight as your guiding light. What can we learn about Him?

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Father, reveal yourself to me in a new way today, help me to see your invisible attributes and realize your eternal power and divine nature.”

“God, forgive me for making you small and insignificant in my life. You are light, constantly revealing yourself for my benefit.”

“Thank you, Lord, for calling me into the light and using my life to shine your light.”

DAY 5 // JAN 13

HE KNOWS

PSALM 139:1 NLT

O LORD, you have examined my heart and you know everything about me.

If you were to continue reading Psalm 139 (I would suggest you do, it's incredible), you would read over and over again that God knows you. Everything about you, He knows. He knows you better than anyone ever could. What a humbling thought... God knows even the things you don't want Him to know.

Even further than knowing everything about you, He knows everything. Period. God would be great at Jeopardy. This characteristic of God is called Omniscience or "*The state of knowing everything.*" What an incredible God we have, that knows us down to the tiniest detail and also knows how the cosmos functions better than we will ever understand.

If you're like me, you have found yourself caught up in the small details of this life and let it lead to stress, worry, anxiety and a myriad of other things that God never intended for us to carry. Instead, take a moment and think about the God that knows EVERYTHING. Let the knowledge that your God knows you fully, lead to a greater worship and understanding of Him. He's got you. He knows!

(Also, check out Psalm 8)

FOR THE KIDS:

After reading Psalms 139, draw or create a list of ways God is a part of your everyday life. How does He know you? What does He know about you?

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"Lord, I know you know me. Help me to know you more fully."

"Lord, show me your character as I read your word. I desire to trust you more"

"God, I am amazed at your wisdom, your understanding, and insight."

DAY 6 // JAN 14
DOESN'T ADD UP

ROMANS 9:2-22 THE MESSAGE

Who in the world do you think you are to second-guess God? Do you for one moment suppose any of us knows enough to call God into question? Clay doesn't talk back to the fingers that mold it, saying, "Why did you shape me like this?" Isn't it obvious that a potter has a perfect right to shape one lump of clay into a vase for holding flowers and another into a pot for cooking beans? If God needs one style of pottery especially designed to show his angry displeasure and another style carefully crafted to show his glorious goodness, isn't that all right?

There are many times where it seems God simply does not make sense. Perhaps His reasoning is a little off, He does not understand the whole story, or He is not answering our prayers in a logical way. If only God understood what we are going through!

Remembering who God is helps us to move our understanding to the back burner and keep who He is in proper focus. God is the first and last. He has always been and will always be. God creates all people one by one, each with deliberate attention and purpose. God does everything with the purpose of bringing as many as possible into His kingdom. In a nutshell, God is sovereign.

No one can grade God's homework or perform a quality assurance check on His work. God set the standard; God wrote the curriculum.

God's sovereignty deserves only one response: acknowledge who He is! Then we can allow Him to be the God of our earthly lives and beyond. He is beyond our comprehension. He is worthy of our praise. He is deserving of all we have and all we are. Remembering who God is helps us to keep Him on the throne of our lives where only He belongs.

FOR THE KIDS:

Grab your Play-Doh, Legos or a page to color on. Let's build something! Talk about how God has a plan and a purpose for you. You are his masterpiece.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"Father, sometimes what I see and feel tells me you are not in touch with what I am experiencing. Through your word and your Holy Spirit help me keep your sovereignty in focus."

"Lord, forgive me for placing myself on the throne of my life where only You deserve to reign and moving my focus from Your sovereignty to my circumstance."

"I choose to acknowledge you as the BOSS of my life. You are completely in charge!"

DAY 7 // JAN 15

ASEITY – WE ARE BECAUSE GOD IS

ACTS 17:24-25 NIV

The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord...He is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything. Rather, He Himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

Everything in the universe is caused. Pins are knocked over 'be-cause' the bowling ball strikes them. You're here 'be-cause' of your parents' relationship. The universe is here 'be-cause' of some First Cause that started it. Everything is an effect of some 'cause' that came before it.

EXCEPT GOD.

God is not an effect of anything. He is the First Cause; the Beginning and the End. We call this attribute of God 'aseity'. It simply means: ***"from Himself"***.

*"When I see that word, I get chills up my spine because in that one little word is captured all of the glory of the perfection of God's being. What makes God different from you, and me, and the stars, and any created thing, is that God, and **God ALONE** exists by His own power.*
-- R.C. Sproul

God always has and always will exist beyond the expanse of eternity purely by the **power of HIMSELF**. Everything **is** because **He is** the great "I AM". What an awe-inspiring, world-exploding power! How incredible that this I AM chose to express His creativity through the beauty of an incomprehensibly complex and enormous universe, and yet chooses to reveal Himself to us, who are created in His image?

How **RIGHT**, how **FITTING**, that our lives, our little 'be-causes', would be spent in devotion to the First Cause. Let's respond with a heart of reflection and worship as we try to wrap our head around the power and majesty of a God who **IS**, and by Whom all else **is 'be-cause'**.

FOR THE KIDS:

Come up with a list of five or more things that you are super thankful for to have in your life! Then thank God for those things.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"Awesome God, I worship you for being the great I AM who exists by His own power!"

"Lord, I am filled with gratitude that you would graciously reveal yourself and desire relationship with me."

"Jesus, please guide me in living my life of 'be-cause' for the glory of you, the First Cause."

DAY 8 // JAN 16
AT YOUR FEET

LUKE 7:37-38 NKJV

And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with fragrant oil.

Many of my favorite stories in the Bible include instances of people finding themselves at the feet of Jesus. Some have a need that only He can meet, others are responding to a great kindness He has shown, and some simply recognize His unmatched authority, but ultimately, they place themselves before Him because there is really no other response in coming face to face with His awesomeness.

There is a desperation that accompanies worship when it brings us to our knees. Maybe this woman knew Jesus would not reject her. She may have heard stories and believed in His kindness, love, and compassion. She knew, though, that there was something about Him that was worthy of worship. When we posture ourselves on our knees, we declare that He deserves our honor.

His greatness moves us to submission.
His mercy inspires humility.
His goodness elicits praise.

FOR THE KIDS:

In the same way people bow before kings and queens, we can bow before God to honor His authority. Find a posture of humility today either on your knees, bowed down, or lying face down on the floor and pray one prayer from the prompts below out loud to Him.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"God, you are great! You are awesome! You are unmatched in glory! I worship you with all my heart."

"Lord, help me understand what bowing my heart to you looks like today. I pray I would be filled with an awareness of how great you are."

"I submit to your authority and am available for your purposes."

DAY 9 // JAN 17

UNCOMMON

LEVITICUS 22:32 TLB

You must not treat me as common and ordinary. Revere me and hallow me, for I, the Lord, made you holy to myself and rescued you from Egypt to be my own people! I am Jehovah!

What's your favorite genre of music? Movies? Food? If you're like me, you tend to favor certain categories a lot more than others and those preferences likely dictate a lot of your choices. When I think of God, I know that He's important so I should probably put Him in my *really important* category along with family, faith, and ice cream. There's one big problem: God won't fit!

God is not intended to fit into any of our categories. He won't fit into our *church* category, our *religious, moral, or good* category. He is altogether uncommon and unlike anything else. He commanded the Israelites (after He had rescued them from slavery) to never approach Him as common or ordinary. He is not the like the gods they had known in Egypt or those that the neighboring countries were known to worship. He is not just a better version of our lofty ideas of a divine being. He is in a completely different category, all His own.

When we embrace this magnificent reality, it frees us up from the need to try and force Him into one of our categories. God is beyond us. Get used to it!

FOR THE KIDS:

Through the Bible, God shows us He is uncommon by what He does. Can you think of some examples from the Old Testament of when God did something uncommon? How about from the New Testament?

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Lord God, there is nothing that I can compare you to. You cannot be measured, counted or contained.”

“Father, forgive me for the times when I have treated you as though you are ordinary.”

“Enlarge my understanding to greater recognize and appreciate how extraordinary you are.”

DAY 10 // JAN 18
WHICH WAY IS UP?

EXODUS 34:6-7 CSB

The Lord passed in front of (Moses) and proclaimed: The Lord—the Lord is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth, maintaining faithful love to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin. But he will not leave the guilty unpunished, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generation.

Sometimes our lives seem to be filled with so much injustice. Wrongs go unpunished while others are punished for doing right. Knowing what is right and what is wrong in our individual lives seems impossible. Add in the nightly news and social media and finding any truth, much less justice, seems a hopeless cause. Where can we find justice?

Exodus 34 tells an amazing story where God describes Himself to Moses. What was the first thing God wanted Moses to know? God wanted Moses to know about His justice. God is compassionate and gracious; He is faithful in love and truth. Out of His compassion for us, God loved us first and sent His son to pay the penalty for our sins.

God also wanted Moses to know that His justice could not just include forgiveness and faithfulness. His justice must also include consequences for the guilty: those who reject God and His offer of salvation. The guilty receive the punishment that is a natural consequence of rejecting God. God honors their choice and grants them life apart from Him. As sure as honoring God leads to eternal life, rejecting God leads to separation from God and all the consequences that go with that choice.

Whether out of joy for His compassion or fear of His justice, our response should be a determination to honor God with our lives, our days, and our moments.

FOR THE KIDS:

Did you know a Lord is a ruler or the person in charge? Investigate a word from Exodus 34:6-7 or from the list below to learn more about the Lord's Kingdom; it lasts forever!

Lord, King, Defender, Dominion...

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Lord, I acknowledge you are just. There is no unfairness in you.”

“Heavenly Father, help me to choose you above all else. Help me to know your faithful love and truth and help me to realize the severity of punishment I deserve apart from your compassionate provision of salvation.

“Jesus, change my heart to reflect your character. Let your kingdom come, your will be done.”

DAY 11 // JAN 19

LOOK AGAIN

PSALM 106:1

Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!

There were many years that I struggled to admit that God was good. I couldn't see it or believe it. It wasn't until a moment in worship where God corrected my perspective and brought me to my knees.

My perspective of God's goodness was skewed because my expectations of how God should act led to disappointment. No matter what we think or define of Him, God IS good. He exists beyond us and our concept of Him. It is not our limited understanding that confines Him or establishes His character. There are many things we cannot or will not understand about what He is doing, but we can trust that He is always near and that He is good.

Over the last few years, I am grateful God has challenged me to see who He truly is: a good, faithful, and loving God. In order to have less of our perspective, we need to spend more time with Him learning who He is through His written Word and in times of prayer. In the moments of disappointment and frustration, I can still acknowledge the truth of what God has for me because it's not on my terms or definitions, but HIS.

FOR THE KIDS:

Find Psalms 106:2 in your Bible and then list all the miracles you know about throughout the history of the world. Listing every miracle God has performed is impossible but looking at this list can help you see that God is always good.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"God, I don't ever want to lose sight of your goodness. Your ways are right and your thoughts are perfect."

"Lord, renew my perspective of your goodness and help me see the areas where I've questioned your motives."

"You are good and worthy of every praise. I will worship you as I recall all of your benefits."

DAY 12 // JAN 20
THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND...

JOHN 18:37-38 NIV

“I [Jesus] have come into the world – to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”

In this season of prayer, let's set our hearts and minds on the attributes of God (attributes only our Creator could have) that set Him apart from everything He has created. One problem we face is that we tend to take His words, His actions, and His promises and jam them into our narrow, temporary, and human framework. An example of this is our natural perception of the word and concept of “truth”. As flawed humans, all of us have lied, failed to keep our end of a promise, gone backward on an agreement, or buckled under the pressure of society or circumstance in order to be liked, admired, accepted, or loved. This leaves us with a “sliding scale” view of personal attributes and we have a tendency to apply the same scale to the attributes, words and promises of God. But scripture says it isn't so...

In all four gospels, Jesus says on numerous occasions “I tell you the truth....” In today's society, when someone begins a statement or an explanation with a profession of individual integrity, we have a tendency to hear the remainder of the statement with suspicion. This natural suspicion is only mitigated when the speaker has a track record of proven truthfulness (which Jesus obviously did) and moreover, generally a history of backing up their words with actions (which Jesus also obviously did). In John 14:6, after years of speaking truth and showing it, Jesus makes a different statement, He says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life...”

You see, in this statement, Jesus wasn't just saying (again) that He's telling the truth; He's telling us that He *is* truth. Being truth is far different from telling the truth because if you *are* truth, then it's impossible for you to lie. Interestingly, the writer of Hebrews says it this way in Heb. 6:18: “God did this so that, by two *unchangeable* things in which it is *impossible* for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged”.

When we struggle with the pressures of this world, lack of hope, short-sightedness, or feelings of being overwhelmed and overcome, remember that God, who is truth, has given us His promises. And He isn't just truthful, it's impossible for Him to lie.

FOR THE KIDS:

While you read through this, take a piece of paper and a crayon or marker and color the whole page leaving no spot white. Talk about that. God is 100% truthful.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Lord, you are Truth and everything you say is truth.”

“God, forgive me for searching for other versions of truth when I don't want to see your truth.”

“Heavenly Father, help me to recognize truth and have the strength to choose it.”

DAY 13 // JAN 21
IN EVERY SEASON

1 KINGS 19:11-12 NKJV

Then He said, “Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord.” And behold, the Lord, passed by, and a great and strong wind tore in the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.”

Sometimes I rely on my past experiences with God to indicate what He may currently be doing in my life. I have known Him as a faithful friend. I have experienced His comfort in times of loss. I have seen His strength in times of weakness. I often expect Him to show up like He has before because I know He never changes. What I tend to forget, though, is that there are endless facets to His nature.

My understanding of God should grow and change. He desires to do a new thing in me. I could miss who He is showing Himself to be right now if I do not recognize that new seasons reveal new sides of His character.

I don't want the limitations that I place on Him to keep me from seeing what I have not yet come to know. He will always be faithful, loving, and strong, but maybe He also wants me to see that He is merciful, just, and compassionate...or any of the countless other traits He exhibits.

FOR THE KIDS:

Write down 10 characteristics you know to be true of God. Circle any characteristic of God you saw over the last year. Keep this list as a reminder that your understanding of God should grow and change.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Heavenly Father, you are exactly who I need in every season.”

“Lord, help me to see you in unexpected ways. Please reveal a new aspect of Your character for me to experience.”

“God, I look forward to discovering more of who you are as I trust you in this season.”

DAY 14 // JAN 22
WHAT'S ON DISPLAY?

JOHN 1:14 NLT

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen His glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

Coming out of the Christmas season, it can be easy to overlook the importance and implications of the incarnation. For weeks (and for some of us, months), we celebrate Jesus coming to earth as a baby, becoming like you and I. We make fancy dinners, put up decorations, exchange gifts, and put our love for one another on display like no other season.

What if we looked back right now in this moment and thought about what God displayed. A lot of people know the first part of the verse above. Maybe you know it like this:

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us..."

This is something that Jesus did, but if we look one sentence further we can see what is actually on display is who God is... not just what He has done. It's the unfailing love and faithfulness of a God that has made covenants with his people for thousands of years.

Where else have we settled for seeing the things that God does, but not digging deeper into who He is?

FOR THE KIDS:

Jesus is the exact representation of God's nature. (Hebrews 1:3) Does anyone in your family have similar mannerisms; maybe the same laugh or physical features? Take a moment have a staring contest or try to make each other laugh. I bet you will notice some similarities.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"Heavenly Father, show me where I've settled seeing the things you do and not being reminded of who you are."

"Lord, I invite you in to every area of my life, every closet, every secret. You are welcome here."

"Thank you, God, for showing yourself to me as I seek you."

DAY 15 // JAN 23
ON MY TEAM?

JOSHUA 5:13-14 CEV

One day, Joshua was near Jericho when he saw a man standing some distance in front of him. The man was holding a sword, so Joshua walked up to him and asked, “Are you on our side or on our enemies' side?” “Neither,” he answered. “I am here because I am the commander of the LORD's army.” Joshua fell to his knees and bowed down to the ground. “I am your servant,” he said. “Tell me what to do.”

It can be tempting to think of God as our ‘sidekick’ or as ‘being on our team.’ The idea of having God in our corner can bring a measure of comfort and security to our lives, but the truth is, God’s allegiance is to Himself: His character, His identity, His attributes and His purpose. On the surface, that can sound very selfish and rigid of God, but when we dig a little deeper, it’s actually us being selfish and foolish when we try to reorient how God operates.

In reality, when we redefine God, we actually diminish His magnitude to conform to our understanding. Believe me when I tell you, you don’t want a version of God that fits into your box and is limited to your bidding. He’s much greater than anything we can comprehend and that means He’s more capable than my comprehension.

Ultimately, what we need to understand is that God doesn’t join us in our lives for our plans. We join Him! That is so much better. We join in His purposes, in His provision, in His eternity, in His power. So, to be absolutely clear, God is not on our side but we can be on His side! Thank goodness!!!

FOR THE KIDS:

Write down or draw ways that you can join with God to be part of His team. Example: prayer, worship, time in the Bible, and demonstrating the fruits of the Spirit to others. Talk about ways you can bring these things into your daily routine.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Lord, you are beyond my understanding and that’s perfectly okay with me.”

“Lord, forgive me for getting an attitude when you don’t bend your will to my wishes.”

“Help me to keep the bigger picture in mind. I exist to bring you pleasure!”

DAY 16 // JAN 24
I'LL BE THERE

EXODUS 3:14-15 NIV

God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: “I AM has sent me to you.” God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘THE LORD, the God of your fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob – has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.”

God reveals His name definitively when Moses asks for it in Exodus 3. When translated from the original Hebrew, God’s reply to Moses when asked His name is “I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE.” What kind of name is that? Not a traditional English one, that’s for sure. Then in the next verse, it seems like God changes His name. What gives? This seeming change in name is God simplifying His name. God shortens the Hebrew expression for His name to what we term, in contemporary English, as *Yahweh* (The LORD). A transliteration of *Yahweh* is one that may be more familiar to modern ears: *Jehovah*.

God is greater than any specific name that our human comprehension could understand, but it’s likely that this declaration of a certain name is God’s way of making known that He is the eternal Creator who is unchangeable and therefore completely trustworthy. He has always been, is present now, and always will be. In that revelation of His name, we can know that the God who *is* and forever *will be* has said “I’ll be there.”

“I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE,” God says. It’s like He’s saying, “No matter where you are or no matter what you’re experiencing, no matter what others say of me or of you, I’ll be there – and I am the LORD, so fear not.”

FOR THE KIDS: Abraham was born over 700 years before Moses. We can’t even look at pictures of 700 years ago because cameras were only invented 200 years ago. Look up a few pictures from the 1800’s and imagine how much different your life would be if you lived then. Contrast that with how God has never changed.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Thank you, God, for revealing yourself through a name I can comprehend.”

“Lord, forgive me for forgetting or neglecting who you really are.”

“Heavenly Father, help me to notice where I’ve settled for trusting anything other than you and lead me back to you.”

DAY 17 // JAN 25
PAY IT FORWARD

PSALM 116:5 NIV

The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

PSALM 86:15 NIV

But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

JOHN 1:17 NIV

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Grace: possibly the most popular of God's attributes. When it comes to receiving God's grace, maybe you, like I am, are a frequent flier, a lifetime member of the club. What can compare to God's grace? Not our sin, not our pride, not our humanness.

It's as though our Heavenly Father saw the choices we would make and thought "What can be done for these poor creatures? They are too stubborn to admit wrong and too ignorant to recognize their own pitiful plight." Then, He turned to His Son and said, "Maybe they would respond to an overwhelming act of grace! Something so unthinkably compassionate and costly, they could not ignore."

Jesus knew the Father's plan. Jesus also knew the humiliation, suffering, and pain the plan would require. HIS humiliation, HIS suffering, HIS pain. Jesus knew providing grace for all people would cost Him much. Out of love for the Father and His creation, Jesus was willing to pay the price no matter the cost.

How should we respond to God's provision of amazing grace? Realize salvation comes only through His provision, not any service or good we can perform. Throw ourselves at His feet in praise for saving us. Rejoice over His provision of salvation through grace.

FOR THE KIDS:

Read through the three verses and pick some of the attributes of God to either illustrate or to look up their definitions and then write them out. All these things come through our heavenly Father and his son Jesus Christ.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"Father, your grace is amazing! Your salvation is complete, lacking nothing. Change our hearts to worship and serve You from a position of gratitude."

"Forgive me for displacing your grace with my works."

"Savior, we rejoice at your provision of grace. You alone can save. You alone are worthy of our praise."

DAY 18 // JAN 26
ALWAYS THERE

EXODUS 29:45-46 NIV

I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their GOD, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.

The book of Exodus is rich with the theme of *deliverance*, not only in the spiritual sense, but also in the physical sense. This book is about the journey of the Israelites from captivity in Egypt and their arduous path (with a lot of unexpected setbacks) to the Promised Land.

As you follow their journey, it's obvious from the reader's perspective that God is in control. The writer of Exodus, Moses, helps us see what God is doing behind the scenes. However, when you place yourself in the sandals of the Israelites, every circumstance they faced seemed impossible to overcome. And they definitely didn't have the whole picture like we do! Would they really escape the brutal slavery they had endured for years? How would they survive the wilderness attacks from other nations with little defense? How would they obtain food and water in a climate that was barren?

The Lord met them in every single need they encountered. Not only did the Lord provide a miraculous deliverance from the hand of Pharaoh, but as they wandered in the desert, the Lord met their daily needs of food and water, guided them through the desert with fire and clouds, protected them from wars and attacks, and eventually gave them a new land with *abundance*. It wasn't always the deliverance they wanted or the path they were looking for, but the Lord was (and still is) always faithful to provide for HIS people.

FOR THE KIDS:

Imagine you were going on a trip through the desert. What would you need to take? The Israelites left their home and were in the desert for 40 years. What did God provide them with during this time?

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"Jesus, you are my way, my truth and my life. All I need is found in you."

"Lord, I recognize your faithfulness through every trial. No weapon formed against me shall prosper, just as your Word promises. "

"Help me to trust you more."

DAY 19 // JAN 27
SETTLE THE MATTER

ISAIAH 1:16-18 NIV

Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong. Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow. “Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

The beginning of Isaiah is a testament of God’s judgement of Israel. Judgment of persistent rebellion, meaningless offerings, and a culture of lukewarm belief. I imagine God’s anger - just anger - seeing His people haphazardly living day to day with no rooted purpose. Yet somehow, through His anger, God was able to have grace with the people of Israel. He said, “Come now, let us settle the matter. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”: a promise of Jesus and salvation.

I wonder how God managed to control His anger toward His people. Perhaps He took a few deep breaths, looked in their eyes, and saw them for who He created them to be. His words “Come now, let us settle the matter” speak of resolution, finality, and grace; all things in His character.

God’s character is above our understanding, but the beautiful glimpses we do get to see are enough to change everything. “Come now, let us settle the matter.” His words are final. His actions are final. His character is unchanging and final. His grace is final. God was angry at the Israelite’s evil deeds yet gave them hope of transformation - an attribute of justice and hope. A brilliant balance. Perhaps the language of this verse emphasizes the finality of God’s character rather than the flux of human character. God’s finality will one day make every knee bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

FOR THE KIDS:

Grab a scarlet (red) crayon and scribble all over this page. Israel made a big mess with their sin like you made a big mess with the crayon on this page. Talk about how God handles their sin and His final word on the matter.

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“Lord, you are incorruptible and holy. I settle the matter right now.”

“Jesus, thank you for cleansing me with your precious blood and making me white as snow. I am so grateful for your perfect provision.”

“God, help me to keep you in focus no matter what the situation and to always give you the final word. Your words are life.”

DAY 20 // JAN 28

BECAUSE IT'S RIGHT

ACTS 16:25 NKJV

But at midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God...

Things were not looking so good for Paul and Silas. When others might have turned to despair, these two became an example for us by turning to God. I don't think they were expecting God to do a miracle. They chose to worship because they recognized His supremacy in all things, even the bad. They prayed and sang because God was good and they knew He could be trusted.

Sometimes the darkest of circumstances bring about the truest moments of worship. I can think of many "midnight" situations in my life, times when hopelessness seemed overwhelming. In each of these moments I had the choice in how to respond. Choosing prayer and praise is one way we align our hearts with His.

Regardless of what our circumstances tell us, we can say, "I will worship because you are worthy; because you are good. I will surrender my plan to yours because you can be trusted. I will remember that you are faithful even when my situation wants to convince me that you are not."

When we know whom we worship, the outcome of our situation does not matter.

FOR THE KIDS:

Listen to your favorite worship song and write down what you hear about the character of God. Listen a second time, but this time focus on the words you wrote down and praising God for who He is!

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

"Lord you are faithful, even in the midnight hour. You have never forsaken me."

"Heavenly Father, I repent for choosing criticism instead of praise, complaining instead of prayer."

"When my strength grows weak and my faith is tested, I will choose to worship you."

DAY 21 // JAN 29

ALL TOGETHER NOW

HEBREWS 12:1-2 NIV

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Can you imagine a crowd made up of every believer throughout history? A crowd cheering you on in your walk with God? Longing to see you fully embrace a life of worship? Hebrews 12 paints that picture for us as an encouragement to continue to “fix our eyes on Jesus.”

The Bible never tries to convince us that a life devoted to God will be easy but it consistently reminds us that we will never have to walk it out alone. Our worship of God joins in the chorus of eternity, accompanied by Abraham, Moses, Ruth, David, Esther, Daniel and on and on and on. You may pray, worship and walk with God as an individual but you are never alone in this journey.

As you look beyond these 21 days of prayer and consider what this year may have in store for you, never forget that you are a part of the greatest symphony in human history. Let us raise our voices, our hands and our hearts in adoration of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

FOR THE KIDS:

Talk about what you've learned over the past 3 weeks with your family. What new things have you learned about God? Is there anything that surprised you? How can you remember to focus on Jesus after the 21 days of prayer is over?

POSSIBLE PRAYER PROMPTS FOR TODAY:

“God, today I choose to lift you up. Nothing else will ever compare to you.”

“Lord, thank you for reminding me of the incredible testimony of many generations of your faithful followers. I am not alone.”

“Help me to clearly see the people that you have surrounded me with, those who have encouraged my faith. Also, show me how I can better encourage those around me.”



