



*If my people pray...*

40 DAYS

A JOURNEY IN PRAYER

**“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”**

## INTRODUCTION

40 DAYS, A JOURNEY IN PRAYER, is a devotional guide. It is hoped that those who take the journey will draw closer to the Lord. The Journey is designed to be devotional in its approach and content.

It is our prayer that daily the Holy Spirit will speak with you. We hope your prayer life will be enriched and God will work in you and through you in new and marvelous ways.

The journey is divided into three sections with a short introduction describing each section.

The Valley  
The Bridge  
The Highlands

**“Call unto me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Jeremiah 33:3**

**You are commanded to pray  
God promises to answer  
You are to receive in faith**

**Charles H. Spurgeon**

The devotional thoughts are to be read daily. They are short and it will only take a few moments to read. But do not consider the reading a task to be completed and off you go. Linger and listen, He wants to spend time with you.

## **The Valley**

Your journey begins on the path as it winds along the valley floor. Along this path you will walk with the Lord; you will worship Him and grow to love Him more, or renew a love that may have grown cold. On the path there will be hard places, even struggles, as He works His loving work within your spirit. The Valley path is basic, foundational, and all must need to walk along this path. Listen as He speaks and agree with Him.

The path will lead to the renewal and refreshing of your spirit.

Day 1

Oh how He loves you!

**John 3:16** “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

**Romans 5:8** “But God demonstrated His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

God loves you. He loves with the perfect love that comes from His perfect Spirit. Nothing you can do will make Him love you more. Nothing you have done will cause Him to love you less. He loves you just the way you are. But He loves so much He doesn't want you to stay the way you are. His great plan for you is that you will grow in His love and in the knowledge of His grace.

**Psalms 143:8** “Cause me to hear Your loving kindness in the morning; for in You do I trust: Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto you.”

Motivated by His great love, God beckons you to walk with Him, to know Him, to become intimate with Him. Think about the wonder of God's love. It is a love He has demonstrated in countless ways, a love God has literally poured out on you, His dear child.

## Day 2

## Oh how He loves you!

**1 Corinthians 13:13** “And now abide faith, hope, love these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

**1 John 3:1a** “Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God”

Yes behold! It is a marvelous thing. God, the creator of everything, this God who made the stars and knows them all by name, this God who made the parts of the smallest cell in your body, this God who causes everything that exists to work in harmony and with purpose; this God loves you. This great, sovereign, almighty God loves you. He knows you in every way, He knows your every act and every motive, and He loves you.

Think of the kind of love He has for you; it is the love of a Father. Jesus told the disciples; “When you pray say, “Our Father”. He could have chosen any name to relate God’s place of authority over men and women. He could have said, “pray to Almighty God”, or “pray to The Great One”, or any other name. He chose to identify Himself with you in the most intimate and powerful and secure manner possible; He chose to be called Father.

Consider the magnitude of the Father’s love that He bestows on you and calls you His child. He even gives you His name; Christian.

Walk today in the light of His love for you.

**Day 3**

**Oh how He loves you!**

**Jer. 31:3        “The Lord of old has appeared. The Lord has appeared of old unto me saying Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn you.”**

Today as you read these words, consider this; God loves you. And because He loves you, He has drawn you to Himself. Think of the many circumstances of life; the good times, the hard times, the places you have been, the things you have done. Today, this day, the Sovereign God, the Almighty God, the God we know as Jesus, has brought you to this place for one purpose; so that you will think about His love for you. His love is without end, everlasting. His love is unconditional, you can do nothing to qualify for His love or to cause Him to stop loving you. Through all the events of your life, day by day, moment by moment, His loving kindness, His mercy, and His grace, have been drawing you to Himself. Drawing you, with one motive, that He may lavish His love on you.

There are many things in life that are important. You may have very important plans scheduled for today. But consider this before you move on. There is nothing more important than knowing with absolute rock solid assurance that God loves you. Every event or issue of life will ultimately fall away and you have only one event left, death. At that moment knowing the love of God will mean literally everything. Ponder the great love this wonderful God has for you.

You are blessed because God loves you.

**Day 4                    He is Holy, you are not.**

**Isaiah 6:1-3        “ In the year King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim...And one cried unto another, and said Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.”**

Scripture teaches that man is made in the image of God. Consider the many ways we see this similarity between God and man. Man can create and invent, man can appreciate beauty, think and plan, man can laugh and cry. Man can love and show mercy and compassion. In many ways man demonstrates the evidence of this kinship with God and His image. Yet it is very apparent that man and God do not share an identical image.

There are many attributes that describe God, but one stands above all the others: God is Holy.

Of all the attributes that describe man, surely there is one also that stands alone: man is desperately wicked.

You are familiar with these verses from the Bible, verses you do not think about too often.

**Jeremiah 17:9    “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it.”**

**Romans 3:10     “...there is none righteous, no not one.”**

Today, think about the holiness of God. Holy, holy, holy is God.

Think also about how holy He is and consider how unholy you are.

**Day 5                      He is Holy, you are not.**

**Psalms 145:17    “The Lord is Righteous in all His ways, and Holy in all His works.”**

The holiness and righteousness of God is both wonderful and overwhelming. Wonderful in that it is a great comfort to know that your world is under the care of a God who loves you, and is holy and righteous in every way. It is overwhelming because as you consider Him, you are bound to then consider yourself. You see a great gap between who He is and who you are.

Awareness of this difference, He is Holy, you are not, is the first step toward bridging the gap. Listen to what He says;

**2 Corinthians 6:18 and 7:1                      “I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”**

You began by thinking about the love of God. The Bible even says God is love. Many today think about God being a loving God and do not consider His holiness. They think because He is a God of love that He will overlook rebellion and sin against Him. However, of all the wonderful attributes you could name, holiness must be at the top of the list. But through Christ you can enter into His holy place.

Today, as you consider His Holiness, rejoice that He is Holy and He wants to receive you as a son or daughter.



**Day 6**

**He is Holy, you are not.**

**Zephaniah 3:12 “I will leave in your midst a meek and humble people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall do no unrighteousness and speak no lies, nor shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth. “**

He is Holy, and you are not holy. But, you are not without hope. Recognizing that you are not holy and turning to God with an attitude of meekness and humility, is the first step on His holy pathway. This requires turning away from self sufficiency, and self promotion. This step, in some ways, is the most important step on the journey.

You know He loves you. You know He is holy. You know He is ever drawing you to Himself, but you must choose to follow Him. Sadly, not all will go on this holy pathway. It says a remnant, a few, will go. Those who follow the path must come by way of meekness and humility seeking the door of the Cross. Christ Jesus is the way. He said learn of Me, I am meek and humble. The meek He will guide, the meek will inherit the earth.

Those who trust Him will see His glory and do exploits in His name.

**Day 7                    Holy Father, let's get real.**

**Psalms 139:23-24                    "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."**

God has given you a wonderful gift, the gift of prayer. He has given the believer His spirit. By His Spirit and through the atoning work of Christ, He invites you to come into His very presence, into the Holy place.

It is a wonder; this sinful man can come before this Holy God guided by His Spirit. How often though you come to pray and quickly offer up your needs, your desires, then pass lightly over His Word and you are done. Now you are off to address the issues of the day. Then you wonder if God heard your prayers. Why do my prayers seem so weak? Why do I not have the confidence God will answer my prayers?

It's time to get real. Can you really call those few words casually thrown up to God a prayer? Did those thoughts come from deep within your heart? Did you allow God an opportunity to speak to you? It's time to get real in your prayers if you are sincere about going on with God.

Today, be quiet before the Lord. Let Him speak, you listen for a change. Remember He loves you, but He really needs to talk with you.

Allow Him to search your heart, listen to what He says.

**Day 8                    Holy Father, let's get real.**

**Jeremiah 17:10** “I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins (motives), even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”

**Jeremiah 23:24** “Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord.”

Day in, day out, life moves along. You find your pace, your routine, you develop a way to get along. But slowly, many times without realizing it, you have drifted into a way of life that is far removed from the path you should walk. Little indulgences have become habits, sin has come into your life and settled down. Old issues that were not resolved have been boarded over, covered up, and set aside never to be addressed.

Then He comes into your house, He looks in every room. You have kept your house pretty well, things are in order and nicely cleaned. But He wants to go to that room upstairs; oh no Lord, no one goes to ‘that’ room. That room is not open, it’s a private room. But He insists.

So, little by little you have created pockets, rooms of sins that stay with you. For some, listening to God speak as He searches your heart is a very difficult thing. Consequently you never truly open your heart to the Lord, because you know you have hidden things there. A choice must be made: Will you open your heart to His Spirit and allow Him to work in you? Or, will you stop the journey here?

Remember: O how He loves you! He loves you with the love of a Father. Remember: He is holy. He wants to help you, and He will not harm you. But you must be real, you must be honest before Him.

You can only go as far as your obedience will take you.

**Day 9                      Holy Father, let's get real**

**Ephesians 4:23 "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind."**

**24 "And that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."**

**27 "Neither give place to the devil"**

**30 "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption."**

It is the will of God that the Christian, that person who is sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, should have a new mind, and that he will walk in righteousness and holiness.

In this context, walk means your lifestyle, the things you do day in and day out. A Christian who does not walk or maintain a lifestyle in righteousness and holiness will fail to live up to the potential God has for him. He wonders, why? Secret sins may be the answer. God has promised to forgive your sins and cleanse you when you confess your sins. But these secret sins present a problem.

Imagine you purchased a tract of land and obtained a deed to your property. But you were careless in the legal search of the title. You have discovered a small tract in the middle of your property is owned by someone else. He has legal title to this tract, and he is determined to stay. The wonderful plans you had are now in disarray because of this intruder on your property.

In a similar way, when you live with unconfessed sin, a habit, or an unresolved issue from the past, you have given the devil a legal foothold in your life. Then you present yourself to your family and friends as a Christian with all the positive attributes associated with that name. There are two problems; the hidden sin, and living a lie. You have "given place" to the devil. You grieve the Holy Spirit. Consequently you do not live in the power of God's Spirit, but you are defeated by your enemy and you wonder why.

Bring this before your Holy Father. Confess it and give it to Him. He knows about it. He will not turn you away. He will, yes He will, show you the path for deliverance, renewal, and holiness.

**Day 10                      Holy Father, let's get real**

**2 Corinthians 7:10                      “For godly sorrow works repentance...”**

**John 16:8                      “And when He is come, He will convict the world of sin...”**

Convicted. Guilty. These words bear weight and cause pain in your heart. You agree with the prophet as he cried, “Woe is me! I am undone.” And yet the very conviction of your sin is truly a blessing. First know this; when God’s Spirit convicts, He will surely place His finger on the very specific fact, the particular deed of your sin. His conviction is not some vague concept, not a general sense of wrong.

He says, ‘this sin’ must be addressed. It does not matter that it seems very small, ‘of no consequence, so why bother’; or, that it seems very great ‘how can that ever be forgiven’. Small or great does not concern your Holy Father, but His concern it that you will agree with Him and call it what it is, ‘sin’. David said, “against Thee and Thee only, have I sinned”. Whether small or great, that ‘sin’ cost Jesus everything at The Cross. God provides redemption through Calvary. Redemption means that what was lost has been restored, the price has been paid.

The conviction of your sin is a blessing because it is the Spirit of God telling you that you are distant from Him. Your Holy Father is calling you, wooing you, back to Himself. Godly sorrow works repentance.

Say to Him today,  
“Father, I was wrong.                      I am sorry.                      Forgive me.”

**Day 11**

**Holy Father, I really want to know you**

**Psalms 103:7** “He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel.”

**Exodus 33:11** “And the Lord spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaks unto his friend.”

Scripture records the journey of the people of God, as Moses lead the nation of Israel from Egypt through the desert into the Promised Land. To use a New Testament term, they were Christians. But the record shows something very interesting, a difference in Moses and the people. Moses knew the ways of God. The people saw the acts of God. The record tells us in Exodus 20 that the people told Moses, “**You speak with us, and we will hear; but let God not speak with us, lest we die.**” And it says, “**the people stood afar off**”. But the Bible says, “**the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as unto a friend**”.

You have now been on this journey for several days. It began by thinking about the love of God for you. You considered His holiness and your sinfulness. You have drawn close to Him and He has dealt with your sin in loving kindness.

It is in the heart of God to be close to you, to speak to you as a friend, a dearly beloved one. Those in the desert chose to cling to their pride. God said they were stiff necked and remained distant from the Holy Father. They made a choice in the desert to remain distant from the Holy Father. They made it to heaven, but they did not live in the Promised Land. Their life on earth was empty and they never achieved the glory God wanted them to know.

Today, choose to come close and know Him as a friend. He is near.

**Day 12**

**Holy Father, I really want to know you.**

**James 4:8** “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”

**Hebrews 10:22** “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.”

**Romans 10:8** “The Word is near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.”

Does God love some more than others? I think not. But it is clear that God is more intimate with some than others. Is God intimate with you? Are you intimate with God? If not, who is at fault?

Scripture is clear. God desires to be very close to you, intimate. He beckons you to come to Him. He even assures you that as you come in faith He will receive you.

Romance, romantic love, is a wonderful thing. Remember how it was? You made up reasons to be together, you talked for hours about nothing. When apart, your heart yearned to be together. Throughout the day, your thoughts were never far from the object of your love.

God could have chosen countless ways to describe His relationship with a man or woman who has chosen to turn to Him in repentance and faith. He chose to call you His bride. There is no relationship more intimate, more loving, or more personal, than that of marriage.

This type of intimacy is a picture of what God wants with you. Do you chase after God the way you did your lover? Do you think of Him the way you thought of that special one? God is near, He is ever waiting for you to love Him.

He is the lover of your soul. Draw near to God today and He will draw near to you.

**Day 13**

**Holy Father, I really want to know you!**

**John 15:17** “Henceforth I do not call you servants; for the servant does not know what his Lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”

The context of this statement is important. This was Jesus speaking to His eleven disciples in the upper room. The betrayer was now gone and only the true followers remained. In a few hours He would be taken away by the Jewish leaders. Look at the word henceforth. This means from this point into the future, He said, “ I will call you friends”.

Scripture teaches that a person without Christ is an enemy of God. When you come to Jesus, and accept His atoning work and turn to Him in faith, your position changes. You are adopted into His family. God then becomes your Father, and you are no longer enemies. This is a blood relationship that, once sealed, can never be undone.

Jesus’ last words to His disciples were, “come close to me and be My friend.” This is not some sentimental statement, not a feel good moment. Not in any way. Jesus wanted these men to know He loved them, but He also wanted them to know Him. It is not enough to know of Him or even to know about Him. He wants you to know Him in the same way He knew the Father, a knowing that comes from prayer. He was speaking to the Father, listening to the Father, He was praying. In order to be the person He wants you to be you must be near Him and listen to Him.

Jesus was like the Father, in one sense, because He was always near His Father in prayer. In the same way, if you want to be like Jesus, you must walk and live in a way that you are always near Him and near His Spirit.

If you will come near to Him, He will be your friend.



**Day 14**

**Holy Father, I really want to know you!**

**Psalms 32:8** “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you shall go: I will guide you with mine eye.”

**9.** “Do not be like the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, or they will not come to you.”

The amount of pressure the instructor must apply to achieve the desired result tells a lot about the attitude of the one being instructed.

Remember when you were a child. Maybe you were at church and you and a friend were talking or passing notes. Your Dad could see you and catch your attention with his eye. With a very simple look, he could communicate great volumes of instruction and potential consequences. He could literally “guide you with his eye”.

Maybe later in life, you were no longer willing to be guided by his eye. Stronger measures had to be used. In a sense, when you became mule headed, it took steel and lash to control you.

The Holy Father wants you to know Him so well that His look will guide you. How did you know ‘that’ look from your Dad? He was your Dad, you knew him, you spent time with him. You knew his ways, what pleased him or displeased him. You had an intimate relationship with him.

In the same way you come to know your Holy Father. You spend time with Him, in His Word, in prayer. You learn His ways. You come to know Him so well, so intimately, so closely, that He can guide gently, even with a look.

And He will guide you in ways you never dreamed possible.

**Day 15                      Forgiveness, for myself and for others**

**Ephesians 1:7    “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.”**

Does God forgive your sins? Oh yes! Be assured that God does forgive your sins. The Psalmist says, **“He has removed our transgressions from us, as far as the East is from the West.”** In Isaiah 43 He says, **“I blot out your transgressions for mine own sake.”**

God does forgive your sins. And many make the assumption that God forgives sins because He is a God of love. No. A thousand times no !

There is only one basis for God’s forgiveness: the Cross. This is a hard saying, but it must be understood. God loves you, and God does forgive your sins. But you must realize that the forgiveness is available only because of the great price paid by Jesus at Calvary. God’s forgiveness of sin cost the life of His Son, Jesus.

When your sins have been confessed before your Holy Father, He says He does forgive. The Word says, **“He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”** But His forgiveness is based on the payment of a debt that was due, the atoning work of Christ who paid that debt. This forgiveness cost Jesus His life.

See the riches of God’s grace poured out as He grants forgiveness and cleansing to you. Receive His forgiveness and cleansing, and walk in the light of His grace.

Forgiven! Forgiven!

**Day 16                      Forgiveness, for myself and for others.**

**Luke 11:4                      “And forgive us our sins: for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us.”**

Yesterday, you considered the basis on which God forgives your sin. The forgiveness God offers you is always available because the Word says He is faithful. His forgiveness can always be appropriated, or received, as a legal transaction. He is justified to grant you forgiveness.

You walk in the light of His forgiveness, knowing you are cleansed. The burden of guilt is taken away. This is one of the greatest treasures of our redemption, forgiveness with no more guilt. Remember the price paid for your forgiveness was Jesus death on the Cross.

You are forgiven, but there is another step you must take on your journey. For some, this step may be the most difficult on your path with God.

Jesus said, “(God) forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.” (NI) This is a crucial point that must be acknowledged. If you are to embrace the forgiveness extended to you by Christ, you must also extend forgiveness to those that offend you. It is the flip side of the same coin. Please think about this, dear one.

Just as Christ died to pay your debt, in a sense, when you forgive someone, you will also lay down your life. Not in a literal sense, but you give up your rights. Yes, they harmed you and they were wrong. But as you forgive and release them, you give up your right in that circumstance. This is forgiveness. But you also appropriate God’s grace to give you power to forgive. Allow your Holy Father to work in your heart if you have difficulty here. He will show you the way.

Accepting God’s forgiveness for your sins, and allowing Him to take away your guilt is very important to your walk with Christ.

Granting forgiveness to others for their sins against you and those you love, is a very crucial place on the journey.

## **The Bridge**

The Bridge is a crossing from one side to another. As you leave the Valley you are preparing for a new path. The only way to the new path is by way of the Bridge. The Bridge represents leaving a place of self interest and self control, to cross over to a new way. Across the Bridge you will find the path that leads to the special reaches of God's Kingdom work.

The Bridge is the key to the pathway. The Bridge represents the crossing you must make to leave the 'self life', to walk in the Spirit and to be led by the Spirit.

Only those willing to be led by His Spirit will cross over to go to greater heights.

**Day 17                      Let's walk together on a new path.**

**Luke 11:13            “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”**

**Ephesians 5:18b “...but be filled with the Spirit”**

**Galatians 5:25 “If (since) we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”**

In the instant you were born again, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13), the Holy Spirit at that moment gave you ‘eternal life’ which cannot be lost or undone. ‘Eternal life’ is a quality of life, or a new life that you experience from the moment you were sealed by His Spirit. The term is far more than expressing a life that will not end or a life that will only begin at death.

For the Christian, the Holy Spirit never leaves, that is a fact. However, many Christians never grow to learn to live that ‘eternal life’ the Holy Spirit provides. Sadly, that too is a fact.

Look at the scriptures for today. They say you are to “ask the Father to give you the Holy Spirit”, and “you are to be filled with the Spirit”, and “you are to walk in the Spirit.”

Keep in mind that for the Christian the Holy Spirit is ever present. But is He always in control? Today, what fills your heart? Your heart today may be filled with only those things that interest you, with thoughts focused on you and yours. Are you more thoughtful of the cares of the world than for God? The flesh, self will, and self effort will always war against the Spirit.

Some will say God can do anything. Not true. God cannot fill a heart that is already filled with self.

Your journey is crossing onto a new path. This path can only be found by those who allow the Spirit to lead them. It is time to lay aside the old man and his ways, and to seek to be led by the Spirit of your Holy Father.

The Big Question: Who is in control of this body, mind, and spirit called by your name? You or God. A lot depends on your answer.

**Day 18                      Let's walk together on a new path.**

**Galatians 2:20    "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."**

**Galatians 5:24    "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."**

You have been born again, you have eternal life. This is too wonderful for words.

However, there is one problem. Your old self, your old nature, continues to live. There are now two natures alive in your body; the old nature of sin and death, and the new nature of righteousness and life. Speaking of this, Paul said in Romans 7, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

This is a critical point in your journey. Look very closely at today's Scripture.

It is very common in our culture to say, "I have committed my life to Jesus." You understand the statement, but there is a seed of error in it. Consider this example. You have a financial need and someone agrees to loan you money. You commit to repay the loan. Your commitment and their acceptance indicate that you have the potential, prospects, or ability to repay the loan. A commitment is made from strength, "I will do this."

This is the seed of error in the walk of many Christians. Your very best commitment is not adequate to enable you to live the life Christ calls you to live. You do not have the ability, power, or strength to make good your commitment. There is an even greater problem with this commitment. The very fact that you "committed" has in its essence, pride. This pride can be so subtle you do not see it, yet pride is there saying "I can do this". Did you commit to Christ?

The only way to walk the path with Christ is by surrender. It is a complete, total, giving up of yourself, your rights, and your plans. Surrender. This word is difficult to say, and surely difficult to do. But to go on the journey and walk in the Spirit is a life of daily surrender to Christ. Have you surrendered?

"I am crucified with Christ." A dead man has no rights.

**Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”**

Today, there are many Christians who do not experience the power and grace promised by God's Word. They have faith that has given them eternal life, but they do not have faith to walk in the Spirit and work the works of God.

Consider the context of this verse. It is found within a list of men and women who lived devoted to God. This eleventh chapter of Hebrews is called “The Hall of Fame of Faith”; these are the heroes of faith.

As you read each of their stories, you quickly discover they lived in a manner that was beyond your normal experience. They were all sinners, the Bible clearly showed their sins. But they all followed hard after God. And God worked through them to accomplish His purpose.

God wants to work in and through every believer. He has plans for every believer to take part in building His Kingdom here and now. If you are to take your place in God's great plan you must be willing to work within the method and manner He requires; that is “by faith”.

Everyone listed in chapter eleven had these characteristics: They had “saving” faith” to take them to Heaven when they died. But they also had faith to do the work of God in their life on earth. Consequently God used them in great ways for His glory. The walk of faith cannot be explained in this small space. But every believer should be daily seeking to learn to walk with God in faith.

**Colossians 2:6-7 “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so you walk in Him: Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith.”**

You receive Christ by faith and you also walk by faith. You walk by faith, not by sight.

What are you trusting God for today?

**Day 20                      Let's walk together on a new path.**

**Psalms 27:14        "Wait on the Lord be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say on the Lord."**

**John 15:4            Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me."**

Wait... Abide...

In the current day these two words are not welcome, they simply do not fit. You multi-task, you have fast food, and your tools of communication and entertainment are always at hand. You stay up late, you rise early, you schedule, you plan, you are always in motion.

Wait... Abide...

But you say these words were written 3,000, 2,000 years ago. You nod in a knowing and understanding way. Yes, back in those days the pace of life was different, but today...

Wait...                      Abide...

"For I am the Lord, I change not."

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever."

These last days your journey has been focused on being led by God's Spirit. Scripture says you are to walk in the Spirit. God knows the pace and conditions of your life. But today, most Christians settle for "just a little bit of God, please." They are satisfied with just good enough. They never consider, or desire, that "perfect" will of God.

God longs to lead you by His Spirit. He will work in your heart as you seek His leading. Your old nature dies as He lives through you. He will begin to manifest Himself within You. You will begin to hear Him speaking into your Spirit words and thoughts that will require you to respond in faith. To walk with God requires faith. But to walk with God by faith you must also walk at His pace. You cannot walk with God while constantly looking at the schedule or the clock. God will accomplish His work in His way and in His time.

Wait...                      Abide...

Allow God to be near. **"Be still and know that I am God."**



**Day 21                      Let's walk together on a new path.**

**Galatians 5:16,18,22      "Walk in the Spirit"    "Be led by the Spirit"    "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."**

The Holy Father calls you to walk with Him on this new path led by His Spirit.

From the moment you answered the call of God on your life, His Spirit has been drawing you to walk with Him. However, the reality is that often you walk on a path of your own choosing and do not seek or accept His guidance. But He continues to call you because He is your Father who loves you.

He wants to change you to be like Him, so you will follow Him into places and experiences you could not otherwise do. Having the fruit of the Spirit is to be changed to be like Him. You have an old human nature and He says, "I will give you My nature."

Think of it as character traits. Everyone has certain characteristics that shape who they are as a person. These make up your character, or personhood. For most, your character includes aspects that are good and others not so good. God desires to change your nature so you will be like Him. The fruit of the Spirit is the character, or nature, of God being lived out in you. It is God's plan that the new nature, new character, will come to you naturally, like fruit growing naturally.

This character or fruit will only grow under the right conditions; walking in the Spirit, and being led by the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit speaks of a long term relationship with His Spirit. This will not happen overnight. Proper growth takes time. To be led by the Spirit speaks of a willingness to obey and agree with His Spirit. God will not force Himself into your life; you must choose to agree with Him as He directs you. As you maintain your relationship in a nourishing and healthy way, and obey His leading, fruit will grow naturally. Your character will become like His character.

Look at the list called the fruit of the spirit. Begin to pray for each of these characteristics to be manifested in your life. Ask God to change you and build these into you. Pray for them individually, pray specifically and allow God, over time, to develop each of these in you.

Ask God to grow His fruit in you.

## **The Highlands**

The very name speaks of going up, going to a better place, a place where you see vistas unseen before. The goal of your journey is to be found along the path to the Highlands. The Highlands: that place where you see your Lord as never before and where you will experience His relationship in a fuller way, that place where He will work in you and through you to accomplish His Kingdom purpose: “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

The Highlands path, the path of prayer as intercessor, is the real Kingdom building work.

**Day 22            The path of the Intercessor**

**John 17:9            “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.”**

**John 17:20          “I do not pray for those alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.”**

John 17 is sometimes called the High Priestly Prayer. Jesus prayed these words for His disciples during their last moments together in the upper room.

Jesus knew He would shortly be taken, placed under arrest, and that death would come soon. But in these last hours He prayed for His friends. His focus was on their well being. He prayed specifically for them. Read the account in John 17. He prayed these things not only for the disciples, but for those to come who would believe in Christ through their word.

Jesus showed by His example the path of the intercessor. His prayer was for others. His thoughts were focused on their needs, their well being. He was aware of the problems, heartache, and difficulties they were to face. The full record of the prayer shows Jesus’ relationship and understanding of the difficulties His friends would endure. To use the language of today, “He feels their pain!”

This is the prayer of the intercessor. It is a prayer that comes from deep within your soul; it is a prayer that is fervent, not lightly offered to God. Be assured dear Christian, God listens to prayers offered as intercession for others. The life of Christ was lived as an offering for others. His death was the ultimate sacrifice for others.

The prayer of intercession is for others. In this prayer you assume a greater kinship with your Lord than at any other place. There are many righteous acts; giving, Bible study, kind deeds, teaching, and even preaching. All that is good, but the prayer of intercession, seen only by God with no benefit for self, yet carrying the weight of others’ pain, this prayer is very close to the heart of God.

You are close to Christ when you intercede for others. Are others on your heart today?

**Day 23                      The path of the Intercessor**

**Roman 8:26      “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”**

Jesus told His disciples that it was good that He was going away because He was sending the Comforter (Holy Spirit). John 16:7. This is the name of the Holy Spirit, the One who comes along side to help and direct you.

To your dismay, even as a follower of Jesus, you may be far more familiar with another responsibility of the Holy Spirit; that of His duty to convict of sin. (John 16:8) As a follower of Jesus it must be your desire to walk in righteousness. When your walk with Christ is not as it should be, you only know the presence of the Holy Spirit as He convicts of sin. You therefore miss the mark and do not know Him as Comforter.

One of the great duties of your Holy Comforter is to intercede for you in prayer. Often you come to pray and you are weak and drawn away by all manner of distractions. You come to pray and you do not know what to pray or how to pray.

But God, who is all wise, and knows your frame, has made a wonderful provision for you. The Spirit Himself makes intercession for you. He knows those deep longings of your heart, which you cannot express. He is ever with you, and is aware of every joy, every pain, every doubt, every issue of life that touches you. The Comforter speaks on your behalf.

Do you see the pattern? Jesus prayed for His friends, the disciples. The Holy Spirit prays for you, His followers.

Will you follow the pattern? Who will you pray for?

**Day 24            The path of the Intercessor**

**Romans 8:34    “It is Christ that died, yes rather, that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”**

**Hebrews 7:24    “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.”**

The Spirit, the Intercessor within you; the Son, the Intercessor above you.

Christ ever lives to make unceasing intercession for you. He is asking , He is receiving from the Father above. The Spirit within you is asking and receiving from the Son those things of the Father.

The Holy Spirit is making intercession, Jesus is making intercession: what then ought you to do?

Yes, you are to intercede for others. As you intercede you must be careful. If you are not correctly in touch with God, the burden and the pressure of those you see will come upon you and produce hardness toward God and despair in you own soul.

You must first find that place of worship before God, knowing He is a God of love, holiness, and grace and in control of all life’s circumstances. Without finding that place of worship, when you see the needs your response will be hard and heartless. “Oh God, protect me from hard and heartless Christians. What a dishonor they bring on the name of Christ.”

“Lord, bring me to the place of worship before You that I can see the needs and hurts around me and bring them to your throne of grace to find mercy and grace to help in time of need.”

Keep your heart soft to God and to those around you.

**Day 25                      The path of the Intercessor**

**Romans 8:28    “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.”**

This is one of the most familiar verses in the Bible. It has brought comfort and encouragement to Christians throughout the ages. Yes, for those that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose, you know that all things are working together for good.

You always seem to apply this verse to your personal set of problems or issues. “I love God, this is my problem, and I know God will work it for my good.” And that is true.

But there is much, much more involved. Look where verse 28 is found; immediately before in verse 26, the Spirit is making intercession for you; immediately after in verse 34, Christ is making intercession for you. Between the Spirit’s intercession and Christ’s intercession, you will find yourself and your circumstances.

It is true this verse applies to your condition personally. But there is more. Your circumstances inevitably bring you in contact with other people.

The verse says ‘all things’; that means everything. The circumstances of your life are in the hand of God. He is aware of everyone you see, and the issues that caused you to see them or hear about them. The places you go, the people you meet in day to day living are there by God’s design. A phrase in the Gospel speaks of Jesus being ‘in the way’. It simply means as He was going about His daily activities.

Today, people will come by you while you are ‘in the way’. You encounter people every day who have no one to intercede for them. Can you imagine the despair, the fear, of those who know not your Holy Father? And worse, is there no one to intercede for them?

Your circumstances and those you encounter are not mine, and my encounters are not yours. But God places circumstances and people before you that you might call their name to your Holy Father.

You, as a Christian, may be many things, but one thing you must be; an intercessor, calling to God the names of those who need Him.

**Day 26                      The path of the Intercessor**

**Job 42:10                      “And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends.”**

Job experienced great loss of family and possessions. He came to the place he was at a loss about what to say to God. He had no more arguments to present. He came before God repentant and empty handed. He had nothing to give to God, only an awareness of how great God was. He came to the place where he simply worshipped God.

In worship before God he then prayed for his friends. He could do nothing, from a human viewpoint, for them. These friends had spoken hard things, wrong things to Job, yet he held nothing against them. He did the one thing he could do; he prayed for them.

Scripture says the Lord turned his captivity and gave Job twice as much when he prayed for his friends. Here is a very fine point that can easily be missed. A casual reading might indicate God rewarded Job because he prayed for his friends. This logic would seem to say, if you are in trouble you can pray for others and God will reward you because you prayed for someone. This is not correct.

Look carefully to find the place of the intercessor. You will see it in the first few verses of Job 42. Job came to the end of himself. He no longer thought so much of his own cares and needs. Job also saw God for who He was; the Almighty, the Holy Father, and the One before whom he must worship.

With no regard for his needs, bowing in worship before his Sovereign God, Job could then see with new eyes the needs of his friends. He prayed for them, he interceded for them before his Sovereign God, as he worshipped.

This is intercession. This is critical if you will be used of God. Learn the lesson of Job.

**Deuteronomy 6:7** “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

**Deuteronomy 5:29** “Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever.”

You now come before the Lord to pray for others. Begin with those closest to your heart, your family. Parents want the best for their children, children cherish their parents. In God’s wonderful plan the home is the first place, the primary place, that we learn to nurture and care for others.

Sadly, many homes today have been broken and torn apart. You must know that the Father see these homes, also, and they are ever near His heart. God takes special care of homes broken by divorce or the loss of a loved one.

Parents, consider your home and the priorities your children see in you. Not what you say, but what your children see in your daily life. What do you care about? What are you willing to die for? Are your core values centered on God or the world? What legacy will you leave your children when you are gone?

Dr. Charles Stanley, a very well known pastor, lost his father when he was very young. He tells of the difficult economic times being raised by his mother alone. Their home had extreme pressure from the world and Charles could have become wayward. His Mom could have given up. But Dr. Stanley recalls that every day of his life, even through high school and while in college, his Mother prayed over him. He says every night she would come to his room, kneel by his bed and pray out loud over him. Only God knows the impact her prayers had on that home and the life of Dr. Stanley.

Parents, you must be devoted to God, and your children must know of that genuine devotion if you want God’s protection and blessing on your family.



**Day 28**

**Pray for your family**

**Deuteronomy 6:6** “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

Please read the verse again, carefully. God is speaking, and He is addressing parents. He is commanding parents to put His Word into your children’s hearts. Who is responsible for teaching your children? Can there be any doubt? Parents, you shall teach them, and teach them diligently. How shall you teach them? You teach them from the overflow of what God is doing within your heart.

All through the day opportunities abound to take circumstances of life and use them as teaching moments. But this is only half the job before you.

Ask God specifically to give you insight into the character and heart of your child. As He provides insight, you will see how to pray for that child. The verse makes it clear that God expects parents to be intimately involved in the lives of their children.

Pray that your children will open their heart to God at an early age.

Pray that you will see their character develop and God will show you how to help shape them.

Pray they will have Godly friends.

Pray they will be protected from people and circumstances that would lead them astray.

Pray that God will give you insight and warn you when danger is near.

Pray that you will not provoke your children.

Pray that you will set a Godly example every day for your children.

For single parents, pray God will bring Godly people into the lives of your children to help you teach them.

**Hebrews 10:24-25** “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as in the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

A day is coming when your life on earth will be over, and as the song says, “only what’s done for Christ will last”. The writer of Hebrews provides a word of warning as the Day approaches; a command for followers of Christ to stay together.

For many, church is simply a place you go, or meetings you attend, or a time to enjoy the company of friends. Maybe it is a place you go to keep your moral compass grounded, or maybe just a duty to check off your list. This familiar phrase may apply; “I’ll go to church because the kids need to hear about God.” If you identify with any of these descriptions of church, you have missed the mark presented by this passage.

You may say, “I can worship without going to church.” This may be true, but it also misses the mark. The Christian life is not about “you”, it is about “others”.

The command is to consider one another and exhort one another. Consider, that is to look after or be aware of, others in the body. Exhort, encourage, lift up and be a help, to those in the body. When these attitudes are right, the result will be love for others and good deeds will follow.

The Christian life is not meant to be lived alone, but touching, feeling, embracing others within the body. Someone used this analogy to compare two types of churches: one was like a bowl filled with marbles, the other like a bowl filled with grapes. When the bowls were shaken the marbles just crashed around and made a lot of noise, but the grapes were crushed and the fruit of the grapes came out.

What kind of church do you have here?

What kind of Christian are you?

Ask the Father to help you be willing to be broken for others within your body. Ask the Father to help you consider the needs of others in your church fellowship.

**Ephesians 4:1-4 “I urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit...”**

**10-12 “It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”**

Jesus told you to pray this way, “Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven”. God’s kingdom on earth comes as the King takes His place in the heart of each believer. That believer is then the ‘child’ of the King. The King has great plans for His Kingdom.

As children of the King you are the church, the bride of Christ, the body of Christ.

See the plan: you, as an individual, are to walk the path in a manner worthy of the call you received from the King. The King called you, He has also called others, and He says to come together. You are to be one body because you have the same King. All the individuals are different in countless ways, but have the same King, so become one body. This body now has abilities far beyond the ability of any one individual.

The King’s plan is spelled out, “ to prepare God’s people for works of service so the body of Christ will be built up.”

Your life, your walk, is to be lived within this body, the church. It requires a humble and gentle spirit to come together in love and unity. You may choose to remain distant and withdrawn from those within the body, but you will miss a part of God’s best for His Kingdom and for your life. If you choose to draw close, you will see the needs, hear the cries, share the joys of others in the body, and you will be enriched and know the fullness of God and His kingdom will benefit.

Come near the body.

Pray for your Pastor and other staff and leaders in your church. Pray God’s anointing on them in a special way. Pray God will protect them from spiritual attacks. Pray God will give them wisdom and discernment to lead.

Pray God will allow you to meet the heart cry of someone in the body today.

**Ezekiel 22:30** “So I sought for a man among them who would make up a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.”

God presents history so that you might read it and learn from it. God also presents His principles, or laws, that cannot be broken. History shows that the nation of Israel was blessed when they followed God and suffered when they turned away from Him.

One of God’s principles is the law of the harvest. This principle says you will reap what you sow. That is, if you sow good things you will reap good things; if you sow bad things you will reap bad things.

Read the record given in Ezekiel 22. It reads like today’s newspapers. Sin, wickedness, greed, disdain for righteousness, dishonest gain, lies, and vanity or empty activities were seen throughout the land. Because of their wickedness God said He would pour out His indignation on the land and destroy it.

Listen to what God says: “I sought a man to stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land.” Then and now: The walls of righteousness have fallen and sin runs rampant over the people. God seeks a man, woman, or young person, to stand before Him on behalf of the land that He should not destroy it. God is longsuffering and slow to anger.

Ask God to cause righteousness to rise up and wickedness to fall. God will surely punish wickedness, but He holds back His hand for a time. God seeks His righteous people to stand in the gap and protect the land from the onslaught of sin.

It is bad enough that sinner’s sin. But it would seem to be a far greater disappointment to God that those who know Him and have appropriated His grace and mercy, and are called by His name do not take the proper place of standing in the gap before Him.

Pray for our nation. Ask God to be merciful toward our sins. Ask God to raise up Christians to pray for our nation.

Will you stand in the gap before Him?

**Proverbs 14:34** “Righteousness exalts a nation; but sin is a reproach (disgrace) to any people.”

**Isaiah 3:8:** “Jerusalem staggers, Judah is falling: their words and deeds are against the Lord, defying His glorious presence.”

**Malachi 3:6** “I am the Lord, I change not.”

The pages of history are very clear. God chose a people, He brought them out of bondage, He guided them in the wilderness, He gave them a land, He protected them, He blessed them, and He watched them prosper and grow. God chose a people to bring glory to His name.

But His people lost their way. Their words and their deeds were against the Lord, and they defiled His presence. They staggered, they fell. Others came to take their riches, the abundance they had accumulated while under the blessing of God. The nation was fallen, gone, another notation in the pages of history.

Look. See what God has done in history with His chosen people. There is no question Israel was chosen of God. Look. See how He cared for them, but also how He must judge them.

Look. See our nation today. Look at our history. Do you not see the same path? Awake! Look! Read our history and rejoice as you recall the way God guided, protected, blessed and prospered our land. Oh, but see, and cry out to God. Have we not also turned away from His presence, are we not now staggered, are we not now falling?

Yes, God has blessed America! But our God changes not. Must He not also judge us as He judged His chosen people?

The nation of Israel rose up and became a great and mighty nation. God was glorified in their greatness.

Then the nation of Israel turned from God, He lifted His hand from them and they fell. But God was also glorified in the fall because He is a righteous God and cannot bless sin.

God will be glorified, whether in blessing or in judgment.

Pray for the nation. Pray that those who take seats of authority will fear God, and will know Jesus as Lord.

Pray that His people will cry out to Him and ask for mercy and turn from their wicked ways.

**Matthew 9:36, 34-38** “But when He saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion on them...then He said unto His disciples, “the harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few; you pray therefore the Lord of the harvest will send out laborers into His harvest.”

As you have prayed earnestly for these many days and weeks, has God changed your heart? Maybe you see with a new awareness, and hear with a new sensitivity.

The journey began in The Valley as God worked to revive and renew your relationship with Him. You crossed The Bridge being led by the Spirit. You have traveled the path into The Highlands, the place of serving God by serving and caring for others. This is all wonderful. And the journey continues to the summit.

There is heaven to gain, hell to avoid. Look around, see them, they are everywhere; those who do not know the path to eternal life. What will you do?

Jesus saw them and was moved with compassion for them. But there were so many, how could they be reached? God had a plan. He put Jesus' Holy Spirit into the disciples, then in the course of time, into you. When His Spirit begins to grow strong within you, and your old nature becomes weak, you will see what Jesus sees, hear what Jesus hears and say what Jesus would say.

Jesus notes that the harvest of lost souls is great, but the laborers are few. You have been on this prayer journey for many days. Each day you have chosen to walk the path. You have willingly placed yourself before the Lord. Now you are numbered among the few; the few that will go with the Lord of the harvest to reap a heavenly reward for the Master.

**John 4:36** “And he that reaps received wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal; that both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together.”

Pray He will let you see with His eyes and hear with His ears and move you to speak His name to them.

**Romans 10:13** “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

**2 Peter 3:9** “The Lord..., not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

God sends out His great call, He speaks to whosoever, any, and all. The most familiar verse in scripture says, “God so loved the world”, meaning all the people of the world.

God’s call to repentance, God’s call of love, God’s call of salvation is sent out to every man, woman, boy and girl who draws a breath. Why are you so selective in whom you speak to of God’s great love? Why are you so timid and fearful to speak His name to others?

Two men were traveling, a spiritual mentor and his disciple. The mentor was to meet a great man, a powerful leader of a nation. After the meeting, the disciple was eager to know about the encounter. He brashly asked his mentor, “Did you share the Gospel? Did you win him to Jesus?” The mentor replied wisely, “It is not my task to ‘win’ anyone to Jesus; that is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is my task in every encounter to bring that one closer to the cross, whether he be lost or saved.”

It is God’s will that all would come to saving faith in Jesus. You will recall the day you learned of the Holy Spirit’s intercession. On that day you also saw how your every step is seen by the Lord. Every day you encounter people who are lost. Could it be that God is directing your path so you might speak to them of Jesus and God’s love? Remember the words from that devotion; “Your encounters are not mine and my encounters are not yours”.

Today, who will you guide closer to the cross? Do you have a list of those that you bring before the throne of grace?

You have freely received the gift of God’s love and grace. Freely you must give it away to others.

Today speak the name of Jesus to someone who is lost, bring them closer to the cross because they were near you.

**Day 35                      Strongholds around you**

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5      “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds. Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”**

Are you comfortable? Is your coffee hot? Did you rest well? Are you ready for your morning devotional moment?

Do you not know there is a war going on? Are you aware that spiritual forces you cannot imagine are at work this very instant to destroy everything you hold dear: your family, your good name, your church, your friends, your nation?

Are you engaged in this fight? Some might say things are working fairly well, and this talk of Satan and warfare is unpleasant and not needed. To that one I reply, “Maybe you don’t see the battle because the enemy sees no danger to his kingdom from you”.

To you who bear the scars of battle and see the danger, take heart! The battle is not yours, but the Lord’s, and yes my brother and sister, there is warfare. A warfare between Satan and God. If you have been faithful to this point in the prayer journey, then you are one who will campaign with the Lord to win victories and tear down enemy strongholds.

There are enemy strongholds everywhere around you; racial prejudices, demonic philosophies of education and science, false religion, systems of power and influence, greed and economic oppression, yet these strongholds will not stand. How do you overcome these strongholds in the culture?

Here are a few practical thoughts.

**Be careful not to become entangled with the affairs of life; keep your life above reproach in word and action. II Timothy 2:4**

**Study to show yourself approved, know the scriptures, and be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within you. II Timothy 2:15**

See the example Jesus gave to you as He stood before Pilate. **“For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice”. John 18:37**

At their core, the enemy strongholds stand on false ideas. False ideas will not fall based on power or who shouts the loudest. False ideas will only fall under the weight of the truth. The truth will stand against the lie.

Know Jesus, know the truth. The truth will set you free!



## Day 36                      Strongholds within you

**Romans 12:1-2** “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your rational service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Strongholds, fortresses, bastions; these are words that speak of war, battle, and yes, death. Yesterday your thoughts were focused on the strongholds the enemy has taken in the culture around you. The strongholds without are formidable, but there are strongholds within that are more dangerous.

Every born again follower of Christ has been fully, and eternally forgiven of every sin: past, present, and future. This is the promise of God and it stands. You are redeemed, sanctified, born again, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. Nothing will separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord.

Yet, for many Christians, there are old sins, old habits, that were deeply embedded before Christ made you free. There may be addictions, dependencies, life styles, and attitudes that formed enemy strongholds within you. Some areas of sin simply went away when the Holy Spirit took His place in your heart. But there remains a terrible drawing, or attraction, to some things that seem never to go away. Dear believer, take heart and allow God to help you in the battle for victory over these enemy strongholds.

Two steps are shown in the passage:

- “Present yourself a living sacrifice” is the first step. Becoming a living sacrifice is dying to your desires and will. Dying to your desires and will is repentance. Real repentance is more than confession. First you confess the sin, but then repentance must follow. Repentance is a change of heart and a change of mind.
- “Prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” is the second step. With your renewed mind, you seek God’s good, acceptable, and perfect will. Said plainly, you see a view, or vision, of God’s great plans for you. Live daily focused on proving or accomplishing those things that God is working in and through you; reaching for the higher goal and leaving those things of the past..

Two steps must be taken: You must become a living sacrifice, dead to self, and live in view of God’s high purpose for your life. Then strongholds will fall.

Note: In today’s culture of drugs and chemical addictions, medical help may be needed that is not addressed in the context of these comments.

**Matthew 18:20** “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Prayer is a strange thing. Consider how odd it must seem in our fast paced, technological, push button world; someone actually talks to himself or more remarkable thinks he is talking to God!

Yet remember what Jesus said; “Men ought always to pray.” Jesus would not command you to pray if He did not want to hear and respond to your prayer.

Of all the things a Christian can do, or all the attitudes a Christian may have, the act of prayer and the attitude of prayer stand at the top of Satan’s list of things he must stop. Conversely, prayer is at the top of Jesus’ list of what a Christian must be diligent to do.

Dear believer, you have prayed often and earnestly these past days. God surely has spoken to you and you sense change in your spirit. As you come near the summit of the Highland path, listen for special encouragement from His Spirit.

It is a special privilege to learn the secrets of prayer and to become effective for God’s great Kingdom through your prayers. God desires to show you greater things and use you in greater ways. The journey will, in fact, become more difficult the higher you go. Jesus tells you that His grace is sufficient. As you become less, He will become greater in you and accomplish His will.

Be careful though, you must not go by yourself. A great truth is stated here that can easily be overlooked. The passage says, “where two or more are gathered in My name there I am in their midst.” Many worship in churches with a wonderful fellowship of believers, and enjoy the support of prayers offered through the body. However, there may be times when your prayers are too deep for words and the concerns too difficult to share with a group. In these times two or three alongside can lift you before the throne of grace in ways others cannot.

Ask God to bring into your life one or two that know how to touch heaven when they pray and will come along beside you in prayer.

**“Two shall withstand him, and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:12**

**Proverbs 27:17** “As iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friends.”

Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, Ruth and Naomi, Paul and Silas, Jesus and Peter, James and John. Throughout scripture you see a pattern of God’s people walking with one or two alongside. Today, do you have anyone with whom you can share the deepest issues of your soul?

The Lord on an occasion sent seventy disciples out two by two. They returned with a remarkable report of what they had seen God do. Jesus commented to them that; **”many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them.” Luke 10:24**

In your heart is a desire to be used of God and to see His glory. And you may. But one of the requirements will be to become one who is very dedicated to prayer; prayer is the work.

The title for these two devotionals is interesting; covenant prayer. What does it mean?

A covenant is a special agreement spoken of throughout scripture. In this context, it is a spiritual agreement between you and those with whom you pray. The covenant is between you and a few select prayer partners. The covenant is also about a specific issue. Many times prayers are ineffective because they are carelessly presented to the Lord and the thoughts are too broad or vague. God desires to answer your prayers. He also desires your prayer be specific so that you can see when He answers. Answered prayer will strengthen your walk and cause you to give Him glory.

You see, too, it was common in the lives of saints to be in prayer throughout the day. The Psalmist prayed three times a day, and in another place scripture says pray without ceasing—that is stay in an attitude of prayer.

How does this covenant prayer look in practice? A man had a specific issue regarding his family. He spoke of it in a prayer meeting with two Christian brothers. They agreed to enter into covenant for a period of seven days, praying three times a day for specific help, and praying appropriate scriptures for the situation. This is covenant prayer.

These were believers joining for specific prayer, for a specific period, using specific scripture, and seeking specific answers from the Father. Be on guard, this is not a magic formula. This is fervent prayer offered by righteous men expecting God to hear and answer.

**“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16**

**John 14:1 “You believe in God, believe also in Me.”**

Jesus spoke those words that night in the upper room. He was with the disciples He loved. The Passover meal was finished, he had washed their feet, and the betrayer had left. Now He and those He loved, and those that loved Him, were together. Come into this intimate moment.

“You believe in God”. Those men from birth were steeped in the traditional Jewish faith. Most assuredly they believed in God. They were so in awe of God they would not speak His name because He was Holy, and surely they were not holy. They knew this Holy God to be a God of judgment, did He not slay the wicked? They knew of His power, did He not part the sea and cause fire to fall from Heaven? They knew of His righteousness, did He not send the Commandments that no man can keep. They knew a little of His grace, did He not make a way of atonement through the Passover sacrifice? Oh yes, they believed in God.

But God is distant; God is so far from me and where I am. He is Holy, I am not. He is pure, I am not.

He is there in His perfect place. I am here in the midst of a fallen and broken world. He has all power. I am weak and undone. He has all knowledge. I cannot see the way and live in doubt and fear.

But Jesus. This man who is by me here and now. This man I know as I know other men. I have walked with Him, we have shared bread, we have labored together, we have laughed, He lifted my head when troubles came, He knows my innermost thoughts. Yes, this man Jesus is my friend. I know Him.

Now the light of great revelation begins to dawn on those disciples that night. Beloved one, let the light now rise in your heart that you may see also.

Believe in God? Yes you do. But God in all His wonder is no longer there, God is no longer distant or unapproachable. God is Jesus. Jesus is God. Jesus is here, He understands every issue you have because He is a man.

He comes to you and you know Him. He lays His hand on your shoulder, a simple touch; yet in that touch is the realization that He is here, and He knows you, He knows where you are, and He cares for you.

“You believe in God. Believe also in Jesus.”

He is here. Now rise up and go into the day in the power of His presence.

**Luke 24:32** “Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way...”

The context of this verse: two followers of Jesus, those who had been with Him and knew Him intimately, were walking on the road to Emmaus on Sunday, three days after Calvary. Their hearts were deeply troubled by all that had happened. Their conversation expressed fear, discouragement and doubt. Then Jesus joined them, but they did not recognize Him, yet. While they walked the path, He began to explain all the events, beginning with Moses’ writings, through the prophets up to that very day. As they neared their destination, He made as if to leave, but they begged Him to stay that they might continue this sweet, divine fellowship. They sat together for a meal, and as He prayed a blessing for them, their eyes were opened and they knew Him. He left, and immediately they returned to Jerusalem to tell the others they had seen Jesus.

This forty day journey is coming to an end. Yet it is not the end, but a beginning. In the Valley you spent days allowing the Holy Father to look into your spirit. These were hard days as you got real in your prayers and allowed Him to search your heart. The searching, the cleansing complete, you then sought after Him, to know Him and allow Him to know you in new and more intimate ways.

You crossed the Bridge, led by His Spirit, agreed that you were no longer in control and yielded to His direction.

Then the path rose into the Highlands. You began to see that you have been called to a life lived for others. You have taken your place as an intercessor.

These last days on the Highland path, you have found that He is God. But, oh the wonder, a God not far, but God so near, He is here. He said, “I will never leave you.” It is true.

Two very simple, but profound, truths are needed as you continue your Highland path.

**Isaiah 40:8** “The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand forever.

**John 14:16** “And I pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever.”

God’s Word in your hand before you, God’s Spirit in your heart within you.

Dearly beloved, you may continue the Highland path knowing He has provided everything you need. Know that His Word and His Spirit are always with you to guide you, to protect you, to comfort you, and lead you Home.

And yes, your heart does burn within you as He walks with you along the way.

“I am here, I will walk with you.”