



LINKED UP
NORTH
CHURCH



PRAYER + FASTING

HOLY SPIRIT : OUR HELPER



PROMISE OF COMMITMENT

DURING CONNECT 21, I _____ COMMIT TO:
(Print Your Name)

Select all that apply.

- ATTEND EVERY SUNDAY SERVICE | IN PERSON OR ONLINE**
 - Our Sunday morning service starts at 10:00 AM ET.
- ATTEND EVERY SATURDAY PRAYER | IN PERSON OR ONLINE**
 - Every Saturday at 9:00 AM ET on the campus of The Way Woodstock (110 Mill Street, Woodstock GA. 30188)
- PRAY EVERY DAY**
 - Spend time with God in prayer. We've provided prayer models and strategies in this journal to help you grow your prayer life.
- READ THE DAILY DEVOTIONAL**
 - We hope this daily resource makes your prayer life more natural, effective, and enjoyable.
- BECOME A NEW MEMBER OF LINKED UP NORTH CHURCH**
 - Not a member yet? Complete your Next Steps classes to become a member and join our church family. Classes are in-person on 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays or Thursdays via Zoom. See website for Zoom login.
- JOIN A CONNECT GROUP**
 - A whole community is waiting for you. Find a group in the Linked UP app and join the one that's best for you.
- JOIN A DREAM TEAM (MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED)**
 - If you're a member of Linked UP North and feel called to make a difference, join a Dream Team and unleash your unique gifts and passions.
- ENROLL IN PRAYER SCHOOL**
 - In this immersive workshop you'll learn tools and strategies to strengthen your prayer life. Mark your calendars to attend each session on January 8, January 15, and January 22, 2025.
- GET WATER BAPTIZED (REGISTRATION REQUIRED)**
 - Water baptism is a public declaration of your new life in Christ. Register via website.

I dedicate the start of this new year to God. This commitment reflects my desire to prioritize God in every aspect of my life, trusting in His plan and purposes. Following the scripture, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33), I purpose to keep God's Kingdom at the forefront of my life this year, beginning with this season of prayer and fasting.

SIGN HERE

A Letter from the Pastors of Linked UP North Church

Dear Reader,

We are so glad you've decided to join us for a life-changing season of prayer and fasting.

Since our church began, prayer has been at the heart of everything we do, and our guiding principle has been "Pray First." In every situation, we should turn to God before we act, and we encourage you to make prayer your first response, not your last resort.

Beginning Monday, January 6, 2025, our church family and friends will dedicate twenty-one days to seeking God and placing our hope in Him. We call this Connect 21. These three weeks provide an opportunity to gain clarity in hearing God's voice and making His wisdom our guiding light throughout the coming year. By fasting, we subdue the desires of our flesh and redirect the time spent on meals to prayer and glorifying God. This spiritual discipline deepens our relationship with God and allows us to witness His transformative power.

The foundation of positive outcomes begins with prayer. When combined with fasting, we obtain the faith to achieve God's results. This Connect 21 book includes prayer techniques, topical prayers, and wisdom to help you set your mind on things above, grow in your connection with God, and improve your conversations with Him. Read with an open heart, absorb its wisdom, and use it to enrich your spiritual journey. As you delight in the Lord during this season of prayer and fasting, He will give you your heart's desires.

Making Your Commitments

Start Connect 21 by making commitments, such as praying daily, joining us in person or online for Saturday Prayer at 9:00 – 10:00 AM ET, getting water baptized, or attending church services in person or online.

Use the form on the first page of this book to record your commitments. You may also write down your prayer targets in the back section of the book and reflect on the moments when God showed up and answered your prayers.

Please join us in prayer for the vision of Linked UP North Church: connecting people to God, family, purpose, and community. Reaching others for Christ is one of our greatest responsibilities. Our weekend services, whether attended in person or through online platforms, aim to reach individuals wherever they are spiritually, introduce them to Christ, and help them grow in a vibrant personal relationship with God.

Connect 21 Prayer Points for the Vision of Linked UP North Church

- **Connecting people to God, family, purpose, and community.** We pray for God to guide us as we help individuals deepen their relationship with God and foster meaningful connections and purpose in every area of life.
- **Volunteers and small group leaders who serve others.** We pray for our Dream Team to have a greater impact as they create welcoming environments. We ask for God's blessings on our Connect Groups to multiply, raising up leaders from within and inspiring others to start new groups so more people are reached, disciplined, and connected.
- **Partnership with local officials.** We ask for favor with city officials in Woodstock, county officials in Cherokee County, and government officials. We pray for strong partnerships with local leaders to collaborate on projects and events that serve and bless the community.
- **Creative approaches to outreach.** We seek God's wisdom and inspiration for innovative ways to serve and evangelize our community, trusting that His thoughts are higher than ours and His ways are better (Isaiah 55:8-9).
- **Resources to grow and expand.** We pray for resources to acquire facilities needed to carry out God's work and fulfill the vision.
- **Impactful Connect 40 spiritual concentration.** We pray for God's blessing on our Connect 40 campaign, starting July 27, 2025. May this transformative forty-day journey foster spiritual growth, build community, and inspire participants to grow together in faith and purpose.

This year holds the promise of supernatural blessings for you, your loved ones, and God's church. Connect 21 is designed to help you experience the fullness of these blessings by deepening your understanding of the Holy Spirit's power and discovering His role as your faithful Helper in every season.

Thank you for joining us on this transformative journey of prayer and fasting. Your participation and commitment add a unique and valuable supply to the body of Christ. We are excited to see all that God will do in your life.

In Christ,

Pastors George and Carol Houston

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----- PRAYER AS A LIFESTYLE -----

Prayer is most effective when it is a lifestyle we cultivate, not just something we occasionally do. Jesus provided the perfect example of a prayer lifestyle during His time on earth.

Mark 1:35 reveals three things Jesus did for His time in prayer.

In the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

A CERTAIN TIME

Jesus got up very early in the morning to spend time with His heavenly Father. Make a daily appointment with God and keep it.

A CERTAIN PLACE

Jesus prayed in a solitary place. Prayer is best done in an undistracted environment where you can pray aloud, perhaps with worship music playing in the background, and listen for God's still, small voice.

A CERTAIN PLAN

When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them a prayer outline. The prayer models described later in this book can help you practice different ways to pray, which can help you find a deeper purpose and connect to God through your prayer time. Select a prayer model or topic, and as you pray, focus on the process the model reveals, giving yourself time to pray intentionally. The goal is for prayer to become more natural, effective, and enjoyable.

While prayer requires commitment and discipline to develop into a daily habit, we want to always remember that it is a privilege to come to God in prayer, not simply a regular routine.

----- WHY FAST? -----

We encourage you to consider fasting for twenty-one days during this season of high-intensity prayer. You may also fast at other times throughout the year for further spiritual development.

Fasting typically involves refraining from a single meal, not eating for a whole day, or limiting food intake for three days or longer. The timing of your fast and what you choose to fast from is not as important as your focus on God as you fast.

The purpose of fasting is to draw closer to God. Biblical fasting always involves eliminating distractions, such as eating, for a greater spiritual purpose. It causes us to shift our focus from outside in to inside out. It also enables us to celebrate the goodness and mercy of God and prepares our hearts for all the good things God desires to bring into our lives.

Your fast should challenge you to turn your attention to God in moments of hunger, but you must be mindful of your body and its physical limitations. Fasting is to seek God in prayer and follow the Holy Spirit as He leads you, not just to go without food.

PARTIAL FAST

Sometimes called the “Jewish Fast,” this involves abstaining from eating any type of food during specific periods of the day.

COMPLETE FAST

In this fast, you drink only liquids, typically water and some light juices.

CONNECT 21 FAST

At Linked UP North, we encourage a combination of the **Partial** and **Complete** fasts by abstaining from food for at least six hours each day for twenty-one days during Connect 21. During those six hours, only liquids such as water and light juices.

FAST SAFELY

Prudence and caution are vital. If you have medical conditions, consult your doctor before you begin your fast. If you are taking prescription medications, especially if they must be taken with food, talk to your doctor before changing your regimen.

Suggested six-hour periods for fasting:

- 6:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM
- 6:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- 12:00 AM – 6:00 AM*

**For night shift workers*

ACTS Prayer Model

Prayer is simply talking to God, and He is more concerned with the sincerity of our hearts when we pray rather than how eloquently we can quote Scripture. However, the ACTS prayer model is an effective tool for focusing our hearts on who God is and what He has done for us as we turn our hearts toward Him. Use this acronym to enrich your conversations with God.

Adoration	Focus on God, honoring Him for who He is in your life.
Confidence	Discover God's will for your life and pray confidently, trusting in His forgiveness and all His promises.
Thanksgiving	Thank God for His many blessings in your life, and thank Him in advance for what you believed Him for in prayer.
Supplication	Pray for the specific needs of others and yourself.

Scriptures associated with each letter in the acronym are listed below. Let these verses inspire your thoughts to become like His thoughts (Isaiah 55:8–11). Praying Scripture allows us to use God's Word to gain more confidence and enjoyment in our prayer time.

A **DORATION**
Praise God for who He is. Ponder His names, His character, His roles.
Worship God with your heart, mind, and voice.

David blessed the Lord before all the assembly; and David said: "Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You, and You reign over all.

In Your hand is power and might; in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.”

1 Chronicles 29:10–13

*O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen—even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! **Psalm 8:1–9***

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

Psalm 19:1–11, 14

O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh

*longs for You In a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. **Psalm 63:1–4***

*Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations. **Psalm 100:1–5***

*Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty firmament! Praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the lute and harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord! **Psalm 150:1–6***

CONFIDENCE

You should always pray confidently. All of us who live for Jesus Christ have the Holy Spirit living inside of us. If we believe this, then how could we not be confident about coming boldly before the Lord? God's Word instructs us to do so in the following scriptures.

*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. **1 John 5:14-15***

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the

*throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **Hebrews 4:14-16***

*Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. **Hebrews 10:23***

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

Every time you pray, you should be confident that God will listen and answer your prayers according to His good Will, which is His Word. If He gave you eternal life through His Son, you know He will answer your prayers.

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving is a time for prayers of gratitude for what God has done. Thank Him for salvation, the many blessings in your life, protection, provision, open doors, opportunities, and anything else He has done for you.

*Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. **1 Chronicles 16:34***

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18***

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:6-7***

SUPPLICATION

Supplication is a specific prayer request for ourselves or for others. This is the time to ask God for His divine help to meet needs, solve problems, work in your or another believer's life, etc.

*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. **Ephesians 6:18***

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. **Philippians 4:6***

*Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. **1 Timothy 2:1-4***

As God blesses you and answers your prayers, He may lead you to share your time, resources, or testimony with others.

*The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. **Acts 4:32***

*Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. **1 Timothy 6:17-19***

*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. **Revelation 12:11***

The Apostle Paul's Prayer Model

The Word of God is one of the most valuable tools for building a dynamic prayer life. Scripture brings power, truth, and encouragement to our prayer time. We can make a difference when we spend time praying for those with whom we interact and connect. In 1 Timothy 2:1–2, the apostle Paul encourages us toward the following prayer points. Specific ways you could pray for Linked UP North are included in the examples.

Pray for those in authority

I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 1 Timothy 2:1–2

Pray for those in spiritual authority

- **Church Overseers**
 - Pastor Joel & Pastor Trish (Linked UP Church – Powder Springs)
- **Pastors**
 - Linked UP North's Pastors George and Carol Houston
- **Church Ministerial Staff**
 - Linked UP North's Dream Team and Connect Groups
- Wisdom and discernment for leaders of God's people

Pray for other believers

- Manifestation of breakthroughs and miracles
- Blessings for God's people
- Spiritual growth and development
- Strong marriages and families
- Successful and satisfied singles
- Thriving jobs, careers, and businesses
- Obedience with finances as it relates to tithes and offerings

- Spiritual growth for individuals in Linked UP North's Next Steps classes

Pray for those in our country's governmental authority

- United States President & Vice President
- Members of Senate
- Members of Congress
- Members of the Supreme Court
- Other Government Departments
- Presidential Advisors
- All Military Branches
- Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- State Senators
- State Courts
- State and County Board of Education
- State Elected Officials
- Mayors
- City Council Members
- County and Municipal Courts
- Leaders in Other Countries

Intercede for the Lost

- Win souls for the kingdom
*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise. **Proverbs 11:30***
- Clear soul-winning strategy
*Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law. **Proverbs 29:18***
- More laborers
*He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” **Matthew 9:37–38***
- Reach the lost
*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. **2 Peter 3:9***

Pray for the Gifts and Offices in the Body of Christ

*God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracle, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. **1 Corinthians 12:28***

Pray for Linked UP North’s Dream Team of volunteers and Connect Groups

- God will send the right people with the right hearts to fill all Dream Team positions
- The Holy Spirit will empower every Dream Team leader and member to love God, love people, pursue excellence, and choose joy
- God will raise up new Connect Group leaders each semester to unite people through shared interests
- God will raise up new Community Group leaders to gather friends and family for meaningful discussions around the weekly sermon guides.
- God will expand the reach of Connect Group leaders and Community Group hosts within their neighborhoods and communities

- Volunteers, group leaders, and their families will be richly blessed for their dedication to ministry and expanding the kingdom.
- Those who committed to serving as Dream Team volunteers, Connect Group leaders, or Community Group hosts during Connect 21 will do so with urgency and faithfulness.

Additional Prayer Strategies

Prayer is not only communion with God but also a confrontation with the enemy. The following prayers can strengthen you and help you triumph in your battles.

THE ARMOR OF GOD

Ephesians 6:11–18

Knowing that we are in a spiritual battle, God provides spiritual armor and equips us to take a stand when conflict arises.

*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. **Ephesians 6:11–18***

Acknowledge that you are in a spiritual battle. Claim the protection God has given you by praying through the different pieces of armor described in Ephesians 6.

PRAYER

Thank You, Lord, for my salvation. I declare that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ and the place I have in Your kingdom. I wear Your righteousness today against all condemnation and corruption.

Cover me with Your holiness and purity, and defend me from all assaults against my heart. I choose a lifestyle of honesty and integrity. Expose the lies I have believed. Reveal to me where You are working and lead me to it. Give me strength to walk daily with You. I know that You are powerful against every lie and assault of the

enemy. I believe You have good in store for me. Nothing is coming that can overcome me, because You are with me. Holy Spirit, show me the truths of the Word of God that I need to escape the traps of the enemy. Bring those Scriptures to mind. Holy Spirit, I agree to walk in step with You in everything as my spirit communes with You in prayer throughout the day.

THE WEAPONS OF WARFARE

2 Corinthians 10:4–5

We can actively pray through spiritual warfare when we are aware of it. God has given us victory and power through the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

*The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down 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. **2 Corinthians 10:4–5***

You can take authority over anything that comes against the truth of the Word of God and command it to bow in the name of Jesus. Take a bold stand, praying specifically and confidently by God's power and His Spirit.

PRAYER

Father, Your Word says that no weapon formed against me shall prosper (Isaiah 54:17). Your Word also says that trouble will not arise a second time (Nahum 1:9). Therefore, I declare that Satan cannot make problems for me in the same manner as he did in the past. These promises will be accomplished as I trust in You through faith and expectation, in the name of Jesus.

I stand on Your Word. The enemy is driven out from before me, above me, around me, and below me; from my home, workplace, church and its ministries, children, and loved ones; from my labors, my land, and my presence. He is not able to succeed in his plans against me, and his works are taken captive and destroyed, for the Spirit of the Lord shall raise a standard against them. Jesus, my Lord, I give You thanksgiving, praise, glory, honor, and worship for Your righteousness and holiness given to me by Your sacrifice on the cross.

PROTECTION PRAYERS

Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 10:3–5; Romans 12:1–2

When we are concerned about our safety and protection, we can go to God in prayer, pour out our hearts to Him, cast down anything contrary to the knowledge of God, and bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Share your thoughts and worries with God. Ask Him for His supernatural protection. He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways (Psalm 91:11). Claim this promise and lay everything down before Him, trusting His good plans and His power to protect you and those you love.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I bow in worship and praise before You. I cover myself with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as my protection. I surrender myself to You completely and unreservedly in every area of my life. I submit myself to the true and living God and refuse any involvement of the enemy in my life. I choose to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. I pull down every thought that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ. I thank You for a sound mind, the mind of Christ.

Today and every day, I ask for protection over my spouse, children, immediate family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances, and myself. I ask for Your provision over our finances, possessions, travels, health, safety, and welfare. I put all these things under the covering of Jesus's precious blood and declare that Satan cannot touch them on this day or any day to come.

PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

2 Corinthians 7:10; Romans 2:4; 12:1–2

When we are born again, God forgives us and cleanses us from all sin and unrighteousness. After salvation, when we miss the mark, God desires our repentance. Repentance means to think differently and change our behavior. This process involves discovering what God's Word says about the area where we need growth, renewing of the mind, and obedience to the Word of God.

Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 2 Corinthians 7:10

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God. You are the Messiah, who came in the flesh to destroy the works of the devil. You died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead on the third day. Because I have faith in Your finished work of victory over death, I receive Your forgiveness and thank You for cleansing me of all sin. Sin no longer has dominion over me. Thank You for redeeming me, cleansing me, justifying me, and sanctifying me in Your blood.

RECONCILIATION PRAYER

Matthew 6:14–15; Leviticus 19:18

Forgiveness and reconciliation can be challenging, but God makes it clear in the Bible that He freely forgives us, and we are expected to do the same for others.

*If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. **Matthew 6:14–15***

Come before the Lord with humility, honesty, and sincerity. Share with Him the areas in your life where you need to forgive others. Even if you cannot settle a situation with certain people, you can settle it with the Lord by forgiving them. As you choose to forgive those who have hurt or offended you, you can also praise and thank God for forgiving you when you did not deserve it.

PRAYER

Lord, I confess that I have resented some people and have unforgiveness in my heart. I call upon You, Lord, to help me forgive them. I forgive [name the individuals]. I also forgive and accept myself in the name of Jesus Christ.

PRIDE PRAYER

1 Peter 5:5–7; Proverbs 11:2; 16:18; 26:12

The Bible tells us that pride comes before a fall. But we have the power to overcome it through Jesus.

When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 11:2

Acknowledge your pride to God. Submit it to Him, asking Him to help you walk in humility, free of self-absorption. If you feel pride is an issue that continues to surface in your life, humble yourself before God and make Him the authority over your actions and attitude.

PRAYER

Father, I come to You in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I know pride is an abomination to You. I renounce anything that would cause me to feel arrogant in dealing with others. I renounce these thoughts and turn away from them. I humble myself before You and come to You as a little child.

HEALING PRAYER

1 Peter 2:24; Psalm 103:2–5; Luke 1:37

Our God is a God of miracles. We read about many in the Bible, and we still see Him perform miracles today. He is our healer, and we can confidently approach Him, asking for healing for ourselves or someone we know.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. **Psalm 103:2–5***

In faith, proclaim God's power and goodness, believing and trusting Him to care for you and those you pray for to be healed.

PRAYER

Father, in the name of Jesus, I come before You on behalf of [yourself or someone else]. My hope is in You as our healer. I believe You can do this. Your name is Jehovah Rapha, the God who heals. You forgive our sins and cure our diseases, and I praise You for this. Thank You that the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us. I stand in faith, believing that nothing is impossible for You, God! Give us peace and direction as You work in our lives. In Jesus's name, amen.

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Ephesians 5:25–30

God created marriage, and His design for it is good. In marriage, as in any human relationship, we must strive to love well. We cannot do this successfully in our own power. We need God, who is love Himself, to give us His Holy Spirit and to guide us.

Marriage is a picture of Jesus Christ and His bride, the church. As Christian husbands and wives, we have the honor of representing Christ's love and commitment to the church through our love and commitment to each other.

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So, husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. **Ephesians 5:25–30***

Thank God for your marriage. Ask Him to help you be the best spouse you can be. Ask Him to help you love well and to see your spouse as He sees him or her.

Pray for your marriage, asking God to use it to impact the world for Him. Pray for unity in your marriage and wisdom from Him about how to live your lives as one. Bring to Him anything in your marriage that concerns you, and trust Him to work on your behalf.

PRAYER

Thank You, God, for creating marriage to illustrate Your love for us here on earth. Help me, God, to love my spouse [call him or her by name] the way You love me. Help me to listen to my spouse, give honor, and put my spouse before myself. Protect us physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. We ask You to build greater unity between us, and make us stronger as a couple, more devoted to each other and to You. Use us, God, to exemplify how godly marriage looks. Let us do

more together than we could ever do apart. I ask for greater influence and impact on the people around us. I invite You to work through us in the lives of our friends, family, and those far away. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit and move through us to bring those far from You closer so they can encounter the living God, who seeks and saves the lost, sets us free, and gives us purpose.

As a couple, Lord, we choose to love You first, God. We each put our relationship with You before anything and everything else. We confess our need for You. Thank You for bringing us together. We choose to love each other today and every day. We ask You to bless our marriage, build it, and be present in it always.

RACIAL RECONCILIATION PRAYER

Ephesians 4:3–6; Mark 12:28–31; Psalm 139:23–24

God created every human being in His image intentionally and for a purpose. We are all unique and have value in the eyes of God. As Christians, we love everyone God loves and seek to serve others. Therefore, we see each person's value to the world. We need to do our part to foster reconciliation, advocate for equality, and work to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and honor.

As followers of Jesus, we are commanded to do all we can to promote peace. We are all one in Christ, called to serve Him and one another with a spirit of unity.

*... endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. **Ephesians 4:3–6***

Bring the presence of racism in our world today before God. Thank Him for creating every person in His image for a purpose. Ask Him to help you embrace your unique design and the specialness of others. Pray for eyes to see how inequality is at work in the world around you, and pray for boldness to uphold peace, love, and unity in the face of injustice. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you recall any ways you have not promoted equality and unity or people toward whom you have not shown the love of Christ. Ask for forgiveness, trust God to help you grow, and become an advocate for reconciliation.

PRAYER

Father, I recognize that You created every human being in Your image and have a great purpose for each of us. I ask You to help me see all people as You see them. Help me to love others with the unconditional love of Jesus. Forgive me for the times that I have not valued others or spoken up for what is right. Give me the boldness to confront inequity when I see it and to honor others in my thoughts, words, and actions. Help me to love my neighbor as myself and to be an ambassador for reconciliation, as You have called me to be. I ask You to break the spirit of racism and division off of our nation, in Jesus's name. Thank You for making us one by the blood of Jesus and the power of Your Spirit.

DEVOTIONALS



WEEK 1

PRAY FIRST

Day 1 | Monday, January 6, 2025

Be Still

Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world.

Psalm 46:10 NLT

As we enter twenty-one days of prayer and fasting, we must set our hearts on hearing from God. Often, as we approach a new year, we already have a plan of what we want to see God do in our lives or in the lives of others. We often envision outcomes or timelines for how we think God will fulfill His promises. There is nothing wrong with having a vision. Still, it is more important to clear the canvas and desire to connect with God just because of who He is and our need to deepen our fellowship with Him—not simply because He will supply all our needs accordingly to His glorious riches (Philippians 4:19). When we come to God with an agenda, we risk focusing more on what we want from Him rather than experiencing the beauty of simply knowing Him. The quiet time we spend with Him is full of glory when we let go of our plans.

Despite the busyness of our lives and the sometimes chaotic situations of society, we must take advantage of these precious moments when we can spend quiet time with our God. We don't merely *find* time for what is important; we *make* time for whatever or whoever is important to us.

Quiet time with God is more than physical silence. It involves calming our minds and souls so we can concentrate on Him. It's sitting in the silence and listening to hear God speak to us. We bask in the presence of God as we abandon our agenda, worries, doubts, fears, plans, concerns, anxieties, frustrations, and distractions so we may find comfort in His love and power. As we surrender our control and listen to the Holy Spirit, our Helper (John 14:26), He can work within us, guide us to trust, speak to our hearts, lead us into deeper understanding by revealing God's wisdom, and give us clarity.

When we prioritize spending quiet time with God, the Holy Spirit helps us recognize God's voice among the many distractions of life. In these moments, as He speaks to us in this silence, our fears and anxieties fade, and our faith and

peace grow.

God wants us to know Him personally. We cannot garner strength or confidence from how someone else knows God. This is an individual journey, and no one can do it for us. God is our defender against all enemies, and He will fight for us. All we must do is be still. He is our refuge from the storms of life. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we grow in intimacy with God and experience the full depth of His love and guidance.

Reflection: Pause to evaluate how you have approached your quiet time with God. If you have felt rushed or distracted, try a different method. The Holy Spirit can strengthen your prayer life and guide you to experience God's presence in a more profound way.

Prayer: Father, I ask You to help me to be still in Your presence and to cease from all my striving. Reveal Your ways and Your character to me so that I may know You more deeply and trust more fully in your faithfulness and love. In Jesus's name, amen.

Day 2 | Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Pay Attention

My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body.

Proverbs 4:20–23 NLT

If we are going to reap the benefits of twenty-one days of prayer and fasting, we must be prepared to pay attention. In the proverb quoted above, King Solomon advises his son. Isn't this something all parents want—for their children to listen and pay attention to what they say? It is much easier for children to follow the right path when they have a good example lived out before them in words and actions.

As we meditate on this passage of Scripture, imagine hearing these words from God Himself. Can you picture entering your quiet place with your pen, paper, electronic device, worship music, and whatever else you like? The most important thing we can take into our quiet time is the right attitude and a heart that wants to hear from God and wants to obey what He says.

When God says, "Pay attention to what I say," He is commanding us to shut down the competing voices in our heads. He wants us to give His voice priority over everything else we may think or hear. He admonishes us through the wisdom Solomon spoke to his son to pay attention and listen carefully. To do anything carefully means to do it with extreme caution. To not lose sight of His Word, we must allow it to be written on the tablets of our hearts.

God's Word penetrates our hearts when we spend time reading it, praying it, speaking it, and meditating on it, so when the need arises, we can refer to that verse or passage to remind ourselves of the promises He has made. In Mark 11:23, Jesus taught us that we shall have what we ask for when we ask in line with His will. The mouth is a portal into the heart. So when we keep our spiritual ears and eyes attuned to the Word of God, we are building good treasures in our hearts. The Word brings life and healing to every situation we could ever encounter.

During this sacred time, we must pay attention to what we read as we study the

Word of God and what we hear from the voice of God as we seek Him and allow His word to penetrate our hearts. God has already provided his *logos*, or written Word, and sometimes He will give us a *rhema*, or spoken word, through the Holy Spirit as we pay attention to His Word.

Reflection: In what areas of your life do you need to hear from God or receive His wisdom? Write them down without telling God what to do. Commit to paying close attention to how God may speak into those areas.

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, I need to hear from you regarding _____ [identify the situation]. I am asking for Your wisdom and direction in this area. I choose to meditate on the truth of Your Word about this. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus's name, amen.

Day 3 | Wednesday, January 8, 2025

Who Is the Holy Spirit?

When the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengtheners, Standby) comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of Truth who comes from the Father, He will testify and bear witness about Me.

John 15:26 AMP

In John 15:1, Jesus tells His disciples to proclaim the gospel everywhere, regardless of the challenges they may face, such as being persecuted and facing hatred. He promises that the Holy Spirit will always be present with them as a source of strength, guidance, comfort, intercession, and advocacy. Also, the Holy Spirit would serve as a reminder of what Jesus taught them.

The commission Jesus gave (Matthew 28:16–20) has not changed. All believers must understand the Holy Spirit's many functions and know how to receive the support He provides.

Roles of the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit is our **Comforter**. When we experience difficulties, He provides moments of peace that surpass our natural understanding. During times of distress and tribulation, He reminds us that we are never alone.
- He is our **Advocate**. He defends us and fights for what the Father has in store for us, which is always in our best interest according to His divine plan.
- He is our wise **Counselor**, who guides us into all truth and gives us wisdom in our decision-making process.
- He is our **Strengtheners** and empowers us to overcome and prevail over the weaknesses of our flesh so we can live victoriously.
- He is our **Standby**, ready to assist us whenever we need His aid.

As we purpose in our hearts to be still in the presence of God and to pay attention to His Word, we must rely on the Holy Spirit to be everything Jesus said He is so

we can live lives of victory. We are not fighting for victory—we already have it.

Reflection: What role of the Holy Spirit have you relied upon the least? What steps can you take to allow Him more freedom to operate in this season?

Prayer: Father, help me to embrace and understand the role of the Holy Spirit in every area of my life. Thank You for sending me a Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor, Counselor, Strengthener, and Standby through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Day 4 | Thursday, January 9, 2025

Stay in Close Fellowship with the Holy Spirit

I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthener, Standby) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him (the Holy Spirit) to you [to be in close fellowship with you].

John 16:7 AMP

The disciples thought Jesus would establish his promised kingdom on earth, but He told them He would be leaving, and His departure would be for their good. Can you imagine how bewildered they must have been at the news of His departure?

The Bible tells us about the miraculous events of Pentecost and how the Holy Spirit came to empower, encourage, instruct, and lead the disciples into all truth. And yet, the disciples still had fears and doubts. It's easy for us to judge, convinced that we would have behaved or thought differently. But how often do we let our worries overtake us when our prayers are not answered in the manner or timeframe we had envisioned?

The departure of Jesus was advantageous for the disciples and continues to be advantageous for us today. When Jesus left this earth, God sent the Holy Spirit to be our constant companion, confidant, and helper. In those moments when it feels like we've been abandoned or that things have fallen apart in our lives, we need to stop being swayed by the negatives, whether it's the current state of our bank accounts, the pain in our bodies, our prodigal sons or daughters, or other cares of the world.

It is important to shift our attention away from the present moment and focus on the broader perspective. If we stay in close fellowship with the Holy Spirit, He can remind us of the truth of God's Word and help us have faith in God's overarching plan. When we trust in God to guide our path, we can have confidence that He will orchestrate everything for the benefit of those who love Him and follow His purpose.

Reflection: What are you worrying about today? What is causing you concern? Spend some time allowing the Holy Spirit to remind you of God’s word about your situation. Meditate and reflect upon what the Holy Spirit shares with you.

Prayer: Lord, I bring my worries and concerns to You. Holy Spirit, remind me of God’s promises about my situation. Help me trust, reflect, and rest in Your peace. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Day 5 | Friday, January 10, 2025

The Triune Essence of the Godhead

The grace (favor and spiritual blessing) of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the presence and fellowship (the communion and sharing together, and participation) in the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen (so be it).

2 Corinthians 13:14 AMPC

The first chapters of both Genesis and John reference God's triune nature. In the above passage of Scripture, Paul gives a benediction to the church of Corinth, highlighting the role of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit while revealing how God interacts with His creation.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Because God loved us so much, He sent His Son to earth to take the punishment for our sins (Isaiah 53:5). In doing so, He washed us in His righteousness and gave us eternal life. This selfless love of God inspires our gratitude and trust.

The grace of God is a striking illustration of His boundless compassion. Redemption is ours by virtue of Jesus's sacrifice, and there is nothing humanity did to deserve it. Christ lowered Himself from His throne to dwell among us, taking our sins and making atonement for them (Ephesians 2:8–9).

After Jesus's death and resurrection, God sent the Holy Spirit to commune with us. The Spirit prompts us in our worship and empowers us in our witness. He enables us to carry out the good works God has prepared us to do (Ephesians 2:10), and He graciously bestows on us spiritual gifts used for God's glory. The Holy Spirit also helps to stabilize our faith in God and decreases our dependence on self.

The love of God, the grace of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit work together to sustain, empower, and guide every believer on their journey. These divine attributes are the holy realities that sustain, empower, and guide us. Christians are called into a deeper understanding and appreciation of the comprehensive care and commitment of the triune Godhead—God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Reflection: How can you more fully experience and recognize the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit in your daily life?

Prayer: Father, thank You for Your incredible gift of love, Your Son, Jesus, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Open my eyes to see Your hand at work in all things. Teach me to rely on Your strength and to rest in Your love. In Jesus’s name, amen.

Day 6 | Saturday, January 11, 2025

Depart to Pray

Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.

Mark 6:45–46

When thinking about all the issues the world is facing right now, many believers may feel anxious, distressed, and uneasy. Psalm 55:22 says, “Entrust your worries to the Lord, and He will support you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.” Concentrating on the Lord’s presence is the secret to lasting calm.

Furthermore, people with busy schedules may find it challenging to carve out specific time for prayer, reflection, and communion with God. Employment, school, family, and entertainment can make it difficult to make time for a spiritual connection with God. But Jesus Christ set aside time each day to pray, and so should we.

Just before Mark 6:45–46, Jesus had fed five thousand people as he held one of the largest meetings of His mission. His followers were filled with amazement at the miracle they had witnessed. Everyone raved about the wonders of making so much food out of so little.

Many of us have had moments like this. When you performed well at a big conference, closed a multimillion-dollar deal, aced your exams, gained one million Instagram followers, landed that dream job, or accomplished some other big goal, it’s easy to get excited. But look at what Jesus did right after that big miracle. Rather than rest in the glory of the victory, He told his students to get on a ship and sail away. He instructed the crowds to disperse. Then, He climbed up into the mountains to pray in solitude. He went to a quiet place where He could be alone with the Father.

After doing something major, it’s human nature to want to keep going, whether that’s pressing on to the next item on your to-do list or checking to see whether you’ve gained any new social media followers. However, setbacks are part of

stories that ultimately end in success. At this very moment, some people are facing life's inevitable challenges, like struggling to make ends meet. The only way to deal with life's highs and lows is to stay in communion with the Father through prayer and meditation on His Word.

Establishing regular, uninterrupted time for prayer should be a top priority for all of us, not just during our commute to work or while brushing our teeth at bedtime. God deserves our undivided attention. Neither busyness nor success kept Jesus from spending focused time alone in the presence of His Father.

Reflection: When you consider spending time with God, what other things cry out for your attention? Do you recall all the tasks you need to complete or the work you've left undone? When you get to your quiet place for prayer, your mind will often fight, asking, *How long will this take?* But if you linger in His presence, joy and serenity await you. This is where you will receive power and solutions.

Prayer: Father, I don't want to let today pass without spending time with You, no matter how busy I am. Every day I try to serve you by myself, I regret it. Unfortunately, I've sometimes let my crucial connection with You slip, and even though I was busy, my work was not very productive. I need Your wisdom and insight, and I long for them with all my heart. Holy Spirit, show me how to set the priorities in my life so I can serve the Lord first. I need Your strength, and I ask You to replenish me with Your joy and power. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

Ruled lines for writing.

Day 7 | Sunday, January 12, 2025

What Does the Holy Spirit Do?

He, when He comes, will convict the world about [the guilt of] sin [and the need for a Savior], and about righteousness, and about judgment.

John 16:8 AMP

In the gospel of John, John the apostle spends much effort detailing the divine nature of Jesus and His mission. In his farewell discourse, Jesus reiterates His pending departure while also assuring the disciples of the help they will receive from the Paraclete, or Holy Spirit.

In this passage, Jesus outlines the role of the Holy Spirit to “convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.” The Greek word translated “convict” here is *elegchó*, which means “to expose, convict, or reprove.”¹ It implies that exposure is done to shed light on a fault so that correction can be made.

The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers of their sinful nature that separates them from God. This starts with a sense of guilt that goes beyond acknowledging wrongdoing to realizing the need for repentance. The Holy Spirit exposes those who do not believe in Jesus as the Savior who alone can take away the sins of the world.

Although the Holy Spirit convicts, He never condemns. The whole point of making people aware of their sin is to point them to the saving grace of Christ. Only through Jesus can we receive forgiveness for our sins. We cannot make ourselves righteous. Paul writes in Galatians 2:26 that only through faith in Jesus Christ is a sinner considered righteous in the sight of God.

The Holy Spirit also convicts individuals of the sin of self-righteousness when people base their worth on their good deeds. And when believers feel worthless because of the wrongs we’ve done, wondering how God could love us after all the bad things we’ve done, the Holy Spirit reminds us of our right standing with God and assures us that all our sins have been forgiven through the finished work of

¹ Strong's Greek Concordance: 1651.

the cross.

The Holy Spirit also convicts the world of judgment, warning unbelievers of the consequences of rejecting Jesus. Those who align themselves with Satan and his works of darkness will spend eternity separated from God. This part of God's redemptive plan should lead believers to spread the good news and share the promise of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Reflection: Are you struggling to pray because you haven't forgiven yourself for something you've done wrong? Have you lost confidence that God will hear and answer your prayers? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you who you are in Christ and His great plan for your life.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be fully convinced that I am only made righteous through my faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Holy Spirit, please work within me to reveal and firmly plant the truth of God's Word so I can live a life filled with joy and victory. In Jesus's name, I pray.

DEVOTIONALS



WEEK 2

PRAY FIRST

Day 8 | Monday, January 13, 2025
The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

The fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, [23] Gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law [that can bring a charge].

Galatians 5:22–23 AMPC

Believers who are obedient to the Holy Spirit's leading bear the fruit of the Spirit, which is an inward gift that makes their lives a beautiful mirror of Christ's godly nature and character. People can only bear the heavenly fruit described in Galatians 5 if they are continually washed clean from sin and are walking in friendship with the Father. We act in our own power when we let ourselves be swept up in our own political beliefs, socially acceptable ideals, and personal goals.

No amount of human labor will ever bear spiritual fruit. Despite their inherent goodness and praiseworthiness, works performed for God do not constitute the fruit of the Spirit. A believer's character and nature should reflect that of the living Christ, and a child of God exemplifies Christlikeness by being in constant fellowship with Him. Every one of the nine traits that make up the fruit of the Spirit paints a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." A Christian can't exhibit one of the character traits that make up the fruit of the Spirit while missing the others. There are not nine distinct *fruits* of the Spirit, which believers may or may not experience, but one indivisible fruit. Although these nine distinct attributes can be identified and described independently, they are each part of a whole. Some believers excel in gentleness but lack self-control or excel in joy but are remiss in patience. If we lack in one area, we lack in all. For the fruit of the Spirit to be shown in a believer's life, that individual must be fully dedicated to God and receptive to the Spirit.

Reflection: How does your life demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit? With the help of

the Holy Spirit, determine that you will develop in all the fruit of the Spirit.

Prayer: Dear Father, I want to be like the Lord Jesus and show the fruit of His Spirit in my life. If there are parts of me that are stopping spiritual fruit from growing, please cut them out. May I grow in grace and only do things that please You, for Your praise and glory.

Day 9 | Tuesday, January 14, 2025
The Fruit Starts with Love

The fruit of the Spirit is love.
Galatians 5:22

The nine attributes mentioned in Galatians 5:22–23 as the fruit of the Spirit originate from God’s sacrificial love. When a Christian exhibits love toward others, this leads people to Christ.

Patience, kindness, goodness, and gentleness are primarily exhibited in gracious behavior toward others. In contrast, joy, peace, faithfulness, and self-control are concealed aspects only God can perceive. Growing spiritually in these traits causes transformation as believers grow in grace and strive to be more like Christ. The Holy Spirit, who lives within them, helps them in this journey.

Love is the foundation of the fruit of the Spirit. We may enjoy the affection of our parents, children, spouses, and friends. Still, there is much more pleasure derived from the selfless love of God, which can only be demonstrated via the Spirit Himself. Sacrificial love is the act of selflessly giving up our own desires and needs for the benefit of others and to honor God.

Spiritual joy comes from the Lord and provides strength and happiness during challenging and distressing situations. Spiritual peace is the inner state of tranquility and serenity that is devoid of anxiety, achieved by confidence in God’s Word. When faced with aggravation, patience exhibits a serene composure. In contrast, kindness displays genuine thoughtfulness toward others, reflecting the compassion of the Lord.

A Christian who does good for others and puts others’ needs first is showing God’s goodness. Steadfastness is observed in the righteous individual who displays unwavering dependability. The saint who exhibits gentleness demonstrates selfless concern for another without being timid or feeble. Christians who possess self-control are not easily angered, as they renounce their own wishes and indulgences for the sake of Christ.

Some individuals may excel at cultivating specific aspects of spiritual fruit on their own. However, the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit can only truly occur in an individual who is filled with the Spirit. To demonstrate these qualities, we must grow in grace, mature spiritually, and keep our sinful tendencies in check.

Our lives will only bear the fruit of God’s Holy Spirit if we live, walk, and pray sincerely and truthfully. When we do this, we can confidently declare, like Paul, that it is not us living on our own strength but rather Christ who lives within us.

Reflection: Spend time reflecting on the thought that love is the foundation of the fruit of the Spirit and that it transforms our interactions and relationships with others. Determined to hear from the Holy Spirit and be committed to making adjustments in your love walk as He directs.

Prayer: Father, I want to be a vessel of Your grace in all my relationships. Help me to love others as You have loved me—without conditions or discrimination. Let me be an example of Your life and love. In Jesus’s name, I pray, amen.

Day 10 | Wednesday, January 15, 2025

The Spirit of Truth

When He, the Spirit of Truth (the Truth-giving Spirit) comes, He will guide you into all the Truth (the whole, full Truth). For He will not speak His own message [on His own authority]; but He will tell whatever He hears [from the Father; He will give the message that has been given to Him], and He will announce and declare to you the things that are to come [that will happen in the future]. He will honor and glorify Me, because He will take of (receive, draw upon) what is Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you. Everything that the Father has is Mine. That is what I meant when I said that He [the Spirit] will take the things that are Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you.

John 16:13-15 AMPC

The unity of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is demonstrated in the above Scripture passage. In the same way that Christ was one with the Father and only acted on what He heard from above, the Holy Spirit is also a manifestation of the Godhead. Although neither Christ nor the Spirit are beneath the Father, they frequently exhibit a submissive disposition that is pleasing to God.

It is our responsibility to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us. When we are obedient to the promptings of the Spirit who dwells within us, we will be led into the truth of the wonderful gospel of Christ and given godly wisdom and discernment in every facet of our lives.

The Holy Spirit is our divine advisor. He instructs, exhorts, encourages, comforts, protects, seals, and secures each believer. When we place our faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit identifies us as his own, guaranteeing that we will be saved on the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30). This seal of the Spirit assures us of God's protection and promise throughout our lives. On the day of redemption, when our faith becomes sight, the fullness of this promise will be realized, and we will be with the Lord forever.

Reflection: If we want wisdom and direction for our lives, we need to rely on the Holy Spirit, who will instruct us and keep us in the will of God. If you have decisions you need to make, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you rather than leaning on your

own understanding.

Prayer: Father, sometimes I rush to get an answer or try to figure things out alone. I repent of that. I ask for help following Your will for my life, and the best way to do that is to get my wisdom and instruction from Your Word and the Holy Spirit. Thank You for the privilege of having the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’s name, I pray.

Day 11 | Thursday, January 16, 2025

The Holy Spirit Is Our Teacher

The Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthenener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name [in My place, to represent Me and act on My behalf], He will teach you all things. And He will cause you to recall (will remind you of, bring to your remembrance) everything I have told you.

John 14:26 AMPC

With everything going on in modern life, many people are looking for direction and wisdom. For Christians, this search ends with the promise found in today's passage, which not only reassures Christians about the Holy Spirit's many roles but also emphasizes how important it is that He is our divine guide.

The Holy Spirit makes the Word of God clear so we can apply it to our lives. He also helps believers remember Jesus's teachings. We never have to worry about going through the trials of life without adequate support. We may rely on our strength and efforts first, but there is incredible power and peace in turning to the Holy Spirit for guidance. Doors are opened to wisdom and clarity when we respond to His direction.

The Holy Spirit guides believers as we spend time reading and studying the Bible, praying for insight, and navigating the countless experiences of daily life. If we listen carefully, remain sensitive to God's voice, and follow His leading, we can recognize the Holy Spirit instructing us. Our role is to listen, follow, and apply the principles He teaches us. Relying on the Holy Spirit for understanding and internalizing His guidance will foster a deeper relationship with God and transform our lives. Over time, our thoughts, actions, and attitudes will increasingly reflect Christ's example.

The promise Jesus made in John 14:26 is a source of deep comfort and empowerment. We are not left to navigate life's complexities on our own. We have been gifted a divine instructor who teaches, enlightens, illuminates, reminds, and directs us into the truth. When we follow the Holy Spirit's guidance, we experience a transformation and are equipped with the necessary tools and authority to carry out our faith with clarity and purpose.

Make it a habit to seek the direction of the Holy Spirit, trusting in His unfailing instruction to guide you into a more profound understanding and affection for your Savior.

Reflection: Have you experienced the leading of Holy Spirit in your life? What did that look like for you, and what happened as a result?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I have relied on my own understanding too often and for too long. Your precious gift of the Holy Spirit dwells inside me, teaching me the truth of Your Word and directing my steps. Thank You that my body has become a temple where He resides eternally. Open my mind to the immeasurable riches of Your grace and help me remember that Your Holy Spirit is always available to me. Thank You, God. In the name of Jesus, I pray.

Day 12 | Friday, January 17, 2025

Allow the Holy Spirit to Guide Your Speech

When they bring you before the synagogues and the magistrates and the authorities, do not be worried about how you are to defend yourselves or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.

Luke 12:11–12 AMP

Today's passage offers peace and reassurance in moments of uncertainty. Have you ever been in a situation where the odds seemed stacked against you—a serious health challenge, a social conflict, a legal hearing, or a family dispute? The weight of such pressure can feel overwhelming or even paralyzing. The disciples find themselves in such a situation. Yet they found confidence and calm in Jesus's reminder that they need not be worried because the Holy Spirit would guide them.

To fully understand the weight of Jesus's promise, consider the circumstances in which He spoke those words. Jesus knew His followers would face persecution and hardships because of their faith, so He prepared them for what lay ahead. It must have been terrifying to follow Jesus back then, knowing that it might mean imprisonment or even death. Jesus told them not to fret over how to respond or what to say when confronted but to rely on Holy Spirit. This promise was not limited to His first disciples. It extends to all who follow Him, as we have the same divine guidance and support in every challenge we face.

As our Advocate, the Holy Spirit stands by us, offering wisdom and protection. We can count on Him to provide the right words at the right time, whether we are defending our faith, trying to clear up a misunderstanding, or speaking life into our health, family, jobs, etc. There is no need to rely on a script for our responses. We simply need to be open to the Spirit's guidance and prepared to speak the Word over our circumstances.

Anxiety may creep in when we're in a tough spot, making it hard to respond wisely. Yet Jesus's words remind us to release our worries and trust the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Not only does the Holy Spirit teach us what to say, He also shows us when to remain silent. Have you ever wanted to offer advice, address a misunderstanding, or respond out of frustration, but the prompting of Holy Spirit directed you to remain silent? Obeying that nudge allows you to pause and trust God’s timing, often opening the door for a better outcome. Sometimes, instead of speaking directly to someone, the Holy Spirit may lead you to pray for them instead. In those moments, trusting the Spirit’s guidance can bring peace and clarity while allowing God to work in ways beyond what we could imagine.

Worry often comes from fear of the unknown or fear of losing control. Jesus’s words, “Do not be worried,” remind us to let go of that burden. Worry adds nothing to our lives. It only drains our energy and causes distractions—a tool the enemy uses to shift our focus from God’s presence. By trusting the Holy Spirit, we surrender control and gain peace as the Spirit equips us for what lies ahead. Philippians 4:6–7 also reminds us: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Reflection: Consider a moment when you felt at a loss for words. Maybe it was during a difficult conversation with a loved one or a challenging question about your faith. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your speech. He is faithful and will always provide the wisdom you need.

Prayer: Father, help me to remember that the Holy Spirit will teach me what to say, when to say it, and when I should keep quiet. I choose to operate in the fruit of the Spirit and override the acts of my flesh so I can be a better witness of Your love and light. In the name of Jesus, I pray, amen.

Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

Day 13 | Saturday, January 18, 2025

Living a Spirit-Led Life

The natural, nonspiritual man does not accept or welcome or admit into his heart the gifts and teachings and revelations of the Spirit of God, for they are folly (meaningless nonsense) to him; and he is incapable of knowing them [of progressively recognizing, understanding, and becoming better acquainted with them] because they are spiritually discerned and estimated and appreciated.

1 Corinthians 2:14 AMPC

Paul describes two kinds of people here: those who live spiritually and those who live carnally. The spiritual person is led by the Holy Spirit, surrendering their life to God and growing in faith. In contrast, the carnal person is ruled by the flesh, focused on worldly desires and stuck in spiritual immaturity. While both may be saved, only the spiritual person receives eternal rewards for works done in obedience to the Spirit.

Paul also writes about the natural man, referring to the individual who is not saved and has not repented of their sins or placed their faith in Christ for redemption. Such a person is spiritually dead, unable to comprehend the truths of God because they are discerned through the Holy Spirit. The natural man may rely on their own abilities, knowledge, education, skills, ideologies, and wisdom. However, these worldly talents are meaningless in God's eyes. The wisdom of the world is flawed, rooted in pride and self-sufficiency, and incapable of grasping the profound truth and power of the cross.

Paul writes that a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, because they are foolishness to him. God's ways are higher than man's, and His wisdom and strength surpass even the greatest human intellect. A man who is not saved cannot understand God's knowledge because it can only be comprehended through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Only those who are born again can receive the things of God. No matter how intelligent, educated, accomplished, or successful a person is, spiritual truths are beyond human reasoning. Without this transformation, they remain unable to grasp divine wisdom. The Holy Spirit opens our hearts and minds, empowering us

to grow in the knowledge of God.

Reflection: Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal any carnal ways you may have. Cooperate with Him so He can do the internal work that will grow you into the likeness of Christ.

Prayer: Father, thank You for convicting me of sin and unrighteousness. Help me to live a life of forward progress so I do not return to carnal pleasures and worldly ways. May I continue to grow in spiritual knowledge and discernment. In Jesus's name, I pray, amen.

Day 14 | Sunday, January 19, 2025

The Holy Spirit Gives Us Specific Instructions

In the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

Acts 13:1–3

The Holy Spirit provides us with specific wisdom when we need it. In Acts 13:3, we see a clear example of this as the Antioch church set aside Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for God's mission.

This text shows that fasting and praying are good ways to seek God's will and power. In the Bible, fasting is often linked to humility and sincerely seeking God's presence. Prayer is the only way for Christians to stay in touch with God, helping them make decisions and strengthening their faith (see Philippians 4:6–7). The early Christians understood that the purpose of the church was beyond human ability and required the Holy Spirit's leading and empowerment.

The commissioning of Barnabas and Saul could not have happened without the presence and direction of the Holy Spirit. Mission and ministry work best when they are deeply rooted in divine direction and power. The early church was able to carry out the Great Commission because they relied on the Holy Spirit. The same principle applies today. Successful ministry is not the result of human effort or ingenuity but of divine empowerment.

Acts 13:3 reminds us of the importance of fasting and prayer as we seek the Holy Spirit's guidance in everything we do. Successful ministry and mission work are not based on human skill or cleverness but on God's power and direction. As believers, we are called to follow the example of the early church by remaining attentive to the Holy Spirit and acknowledging that it is through His existence and influence that we are prepared to carry out the work God has given us.

Reflection: Connect Groups and Dream Teams are examples of how the pastors of Linked UP North sought the Holy Spirit to give them wisdom in executing the

Great Commission. If you are sitting on the sidelines, consider how you might get in the game by serving.

Prayer: Father, I pray for all those serving in Connect Groups and Dream Teams at Linked UP North. I pray that You will continue to guide each volunteer and leader on how to love, serve, and disciple others. In Jesus’s name, I pray, amen.

Series of horizontal lines for writing or reflection.

DEVOTIONALS



WEEK 3

PRAY FIRST

Day 15 | Monday, January 20, 2025

The Holy Spirit Knows What to Pray

In the same way the Spirit [comes to us and] helps us in our weakness. We do not know what prayer to offer or how to offer it as we should, but the Spirit Himself [knows our need and at the right time] intercedes on our behalf with sighs and groanings too deep for words. And He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because the Spirit intercedes [before God] on behalf of God's people in accordance with God's will.

Romans 8:26–27 AMP

Have you ever found yourself in a challenging situation where you felt unsure about what to pray for or how to word your prayers? Have you had a moment where tears overflowed, leaving you speechless? Have you been in a painful situation that left you feeling lost and unsure how to express yourself to a higher power?

Today's Scripture passage serves as a powerful reminder of the unwavering support we receive in our moments of vulnerability, encompassing every aspect of our being—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Regardless of our shortcomings, we do not need to confront them in isolation. The Holy Spirit is there in every situation, ready to assist us. Humans are fragile, but prayer gives us a “superpower” because it connects us with the strength of God.

In the Bible, the term translated *help* is only mentioned in today's Scripture passage and in Luke 10:40, when Jesus visits Mary and Martha and Mary humbly sits at Jesus's feet while Martha busies herself with her preparations. “Lord,” Martha exclaims, “do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.”

This story illustrates the active role we play in prayer. Rather than attributing all actions required to the Holy Spirit, we need to persist in prayer and diligently carry out the teachings of the Bible that apply to our circumstances. When we pray, the Spirit reminds us to let go and allow divine assistance to do some work. The Spirit wants to help us by carrying our burdens and presenting them before the Father.

When unsure what to pray for, the Spirit has you covered. The Spirit graciously intercedes on our behalf. What a remarkable source of inspiration!

It's normal to feel unsure about where to begin in challenging situations. Sometimes, we don't even know what to pray for or how to say it. Our understanding of what is happening around us is limited, and there are essential details our five senses might overlook. When we invite the Holy Spirit in, it becomes easier to see the complete picture. We may not have the knowledge necessary to navigate every aspect of a situation, but the Holy Spirit knows exactly what we need. So even when we don't have the words, He does.

“The Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings that are too deep for words.” A groan is a cry from deep within or a sign of anguish or suffering. When groans are guided by the divine presence, we know God's purpose is at work in our lives. The Holy Spirit, who knows everything and is always present, speaks on our behalf, even in situations beyond our understanding. The Father listens closely and responds to the petitions of the Holy Spirit.

Reflection: Have you yielded to the Holy Spirit in your heart so He can help you in your prayer life? Do you know what it means to pray in the Spirit? If not, contact us at info@linkedupnorth.com to assist you with this.

Prayer: Dear Father, the Holy Spirit comprehends Your perfect blueprint for all the purposes You have for me better than I ever could. Because of His profound understanding, He knows my most intimate thoughts and emotions. When I pray for my life and future, I ask the Holy Spirit to reveal precise insights to me. In the name of Jesus, I pray, amen.

Day 16 | Tuesday, January 21, 2025

The Holy Spirit Prays the Will of God

In the same way the Spirit [comes to us and] helps us in our weakness. We do not know what prayer to offer or how to offer it as we should, but the Spirit Himself [knows our need and at the right time] intercedes on our behalf with sighs and groanings too deep for words. And He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because the Spirit intercedes [before God] on behalf of God's people in accordance with God's will.

Romans 8:26–27 AMP

If God the Father hears our prayers, why do we ask Holy Spirit to help us? It's because we don't know how to pray "as we ought" (verse 26). Do you know the deepest needs of your soul? There are probably desires inside you that you are not even conscious of. That's where the Holy Spirit steps in. He thoroughly investigates our minds and souls to gather the information He needs to intercede on our behalf in prayer. He looks for clues we would not know to ask for and therefore would be unable to find on our own. And the Holy Spirit "knows what the mind of the Spirit is" (verse 27).

The Greek term translated "thought" in this passage refers to how a person thinks. Because the Holy Spirit is always searching your mind, He is fully aware of the thoughts that pass through it. He looks for where God's will is within your thoughts and desires. The Holy Spirit wants to fulfill whatever dreams or purposes God has placed in your heart. When He finds them, He prays about them per God's desires, which were mapped out in advance for you.

Even if you have some knowledge of your prayer target, it's impossible to know every part of God's plan. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, explores your mind and intervenes on your behalf based on what He discovers there. He prays for you, perfectly in line with God's will, even when your prayers might miss the mark.

When our prayers don't align with God's will, the Holy Spirit steps in. Praying for things not in line with the Bible is a sin. You don't have to consult God on matters like whether or not to steal, have sexual relations outside of marriage, or marry an unbeliever.

But in matters not clearly spelled out in Scripture, how can we know if our prayers follow God's will? Let's take a look at some examples from the Bible.

Both of Samson's parents advised him against wedlock with a Philistine. Samson's enemies were unaware that God planned to exploit his sinful motivations to punish the Philistines (Judges 14:1–4). Jeremiah was on the right track in asking God to protect His people from the Babylonians so long as they praised God's name. However, it was God's will to punish them (Jeremiah 14:19–15:2).

Satan asked Jesus to sift or crush Peter like wheat. I would have prayed that Peter would be protected from sin. But Jesus, who had perfect knowledge of God's will, did not pray that Peter would not transgress. Instead, he prayed that his faith would not completely falter and that, once it was restored, he would strengthen his brethren (Luke 22:31–32).

We should make every effort to pray in accordance with God's will. But suppose our petitions do not match God's predetermined plan. In that case, the Holy Spirit will adjust our supplications to conform to God's ultimate purpose. So, even if it appears like God is not listening to us, we can rest assured that whatever we are praying for will be granted in His perfect way and timing.

Reflection: You may not know how to pray as you should, but God has established prayer as a method for us to collaborate with Him in carrying out His sovereign will. He comforts us with the knowledge that the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us, compassionately receives our petitions and guides them in accordance with God's desires.

Prayer: Father, I repent of all the times I chose not to pray because I didn't have the right words or didn't know what to pray for. Thank You for reminding me that the Holy Spirit helps me to pray in agreement with Your desires. I will persevere in prayer so that Your will can be carried out in my life and the lives of others. In Jesus's name, I pray.

Lined writing area consisting of multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

Day 17 | Wednesday, January 22, 2025

Jesus Saves

He is able also to save forever (completely, perfectly, for eternity) those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede and intervene on their behalf [with God].

Hebrews 7:25 AMP

The more we get into God's Word and understand His nature, actions, and plans for those who love Him, the more we see His incredible grace poured out daily upon all His children. Jesus is our Redeemer who saved us from our sins, seated us in heavenly places, and made us joint heirs with Him. As Jesus sits at the Father's right hand, He intercedes for us and defends us against the enemy's accusations.

The saving power of Jesus is eternal and complete. Because of His redemptive labor on the brutal cross of Calvary and His magnificent resurrection, He has been given all authority to save those who put their faith in Him. He rescues us from sin's penalty and promises to transform every part of our being—physical, mental, and spiritual. Through the Holy Spirit, He continually shapes us to reflect His character and likeness.

His saving grace is not only for the present, but it will be carried through to its completion in the ages yet to come. Jesus promises never to abandon those who place their trust in Him. His intercession knows no limits of time or place. His promise that He will never leave us nor forsake us reaches us wherever we are.

As we grow in our knowledge of the Word of God and the wonderful covenant relationship He has with His people, we come to understand who God is, what He is doing, and everything He has planned for those who love Him. The more we acknowledge the abundant privileges He rains down upon our heads, the more we realize that He is showering us with blessings. When we witness revelations of His glory, we become aware of the grace that continues to be bestowed upon all who have been purchased with Jesus's blood. How can we not adore the one who has saved us to the fullest extent possible—forever?

Reflection: Do you believe that your salvation is not merely to have the assurance

of going to heaven someday but also to live a victorious life while you're on earth?
 Ask the Holy Spirit to deepen your understanding of Christ's finished work on the
 cross and the grace He freely gives.

Prayer: Father, thank You for saving and sanctifying me. Thank You for Jesus, who
 daily intercedes for me. Help me to live my life in a way that brings glory to Him.
 Amen.

Day 18 | Thursday, January 23, 2025

Pray for the Body

... that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.

Ephesians 3:16

In the above verse, Paul prays a powerful and courageous prayer on behalf of the Christian community that reflects the strength and greatness of our heavenly Father. He asks God, in accordance with His abundant glory, to strengthen His followers with His Spirit. In the next verse, Paul asks that Christ would reside in their hearts through faith. Then he asks for them to be “rooted and grounded in love,” enabling them to fully comprehend the vast dimensions of Christ’s love, which surpasses human understanding and fills believers with the complete abundance of God. This prayer applies to believers today as well.

Paul concludes his prayer by praising the one who can “do exceedingly abundantly above” anything we could ever request or imagine. This is made possible through the power that operates within us. Let all honor be attributed to Him, both in the church and in Christ Jesus, for all generations, now and forever.

Paul’s prayer focuses not on outward displays of miracles or material blessings but on spiritual strength, which provides stability, assurance, and unwavering trust in God’s promises. He prioritizes the pursuit of God’s kingdom above everything else and the transformation of our inner being over worldly desires.

We can learn from Paul’s example and his impactful prayer as we humble ourselves before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Just as he prayed for the believers in Ephesus, we can pray on behalf of our fellow Christians, asking God to strengthen them from within and to bless them with His abundance and love. These prayers help us align our hearts with God’s will, abandon our selfish desires, and live fully for Christ. Let us commit to praying for the body of Christ so that every member would experience God’s strength, love, and favor in their lives. By doing so, we build up the church, grow in our faith, and walk in God’s purpose.

Reflection: How often do you pray for your church, its pastors, ministers, vision,

and mission? This week, dedicate time to praying for Linked UP North or your church, asking God to guide and strengthen them as they carry out the Great Commission.

Prayer: Father, I pray for every member of my local church and the global church. I pray that members would be strengthened in their inner being by the power of the Holy Spirit according to the abundant riches of Your glory. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Day 19 | Friday, January 24, 2025

Work It Out

So then, my dear ones, just as you have always obeyed [my instructions with enthusiasm], not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation [that is, cultivate it, bring it to full effect, actively pursue spiritual maturity] with awe-inspired fear and trembling [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ]. For it is [not your strength, but it is] God who is effectively at work in you, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to fulfill your purpose] for His good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12–13 AMP

Christ's death on the cross paid the total price for our salvation. It met all of God's standards and made a way for us to be saved, redeemed, and made right with Him. Salvation is complete. So, let's consider why Paul says, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling."

Paul is not telling us to work to be saved, because we cannot save or sanctify ourselves. Salvation is God's job. God is working in us, and He promised to finish the good work He began in us when we first trusted Christ as our Savior. In the above passage, Paul is calling believers to grow spiritually.

Spiritual growth means living more and more in a way that honors God by relying on the Holy Spirit's strength. It involves trusting God's Word and relying on His grace to overcome sin and the temptations of the world. We are called to let go of sinful behaviors and desires. When we encounter the challenges and obstacles of life, we should resolve them by relying on the strength of the Spirit, focusing on Jesus, and approaching each life situation with prayer, praise, and gratitude. Our responsibility is to "achieve our salvation" by dedicating our lives to serving the Lord.

To "work out our salvation" means to live for the glory of God rather than for our own. It is achieved by focusing on spiritual matters, submitting to His will, and pursuing His calling on our lives with reverence and fear of the Lord. The ability to do this is granted to us by God when we refrain from being influenced by the

enticements of the flesh or an unbiblical worldview. Living this way, we experience the peace and joy of walking closely with God.

Suppose we choose not to grow spiritually and instead give in to worldly desires. In that case, we miss the fullness of joy, peace, and the heavenly rewards God has promised. Spiritual maturity requires dedication, but God's strength working in us makes it possible.

Reflection: In what areas of your life do you need to develop spiritual maturity? What actions and attitudes do you have to release so the grace of God can set you free?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the finished work of the cross that secures my salvation. Help me to trust You in every challenge and situation, and guide me as I grow in spiritual maturity. Strengthen me to work out my salvation with reverence and faithfulness. In Jesus's name, amen.

Day 20 | Saturday, January 25, 2025

God Is Working in You

So then, my dear ones, just as you have always obeyed [my instructions with enthusiasm], not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation [that is, cultivate it, bring it to full effect, actively pursue spiritual maturity] with awe-inspired fear and trembling [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ]. For it is [not your strength, but it is] God who is effectively at work in you, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to fulfill your purpose] for His good pleasure.

Philippians 2:12–13 AMP

God has predetermined good works for all His children to accomplish in our lives. When we carry them out according to His desires, they are more valuable in His eyes than gold, silver, and precious stones. These works, however, are not about what we accomplish on our own but about allowing God to work through us.

Jesus showed us the perfect example of how to carry out the good deeds of God in a manner that pleases Him. Though He was fully God, Jesus set aside His divine privileges and lived as a human being. He experienced life just as we do and relied entirely on faith. Jesus fully submitted to the Holy Spirit by aligning His thoughts, words, and actions with God's will. Everything He said and did was directed by the Father, demonstrating complete trust and reliance on God's guidance. His life of humility and obedience provides a clear example of how we can depend on God for strength and direction.

Only those with faith in Christ, who possess the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, can carry out the righteous works that God has planned for them. When we stay close to Christ, trust His teachings, and live according to His guidance, we display our belief and trust in Him. Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

By surrendering ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit daily, we naturally engage in the righteous works God predestined for us. This happens because God is actively at work within us, inspiring and enabling us to do His will. It is not through our own efforts but through the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit

that we accomplish these righteous deeds. This is the transformative power of Christ's life within us, driving us to live out God's purpose.

Reflection: Who gets credit for your good deeds? If you find yourself taking pride in your efforts, redirect that focus to God. Remember what you are. He made you. Everything you are and everything you have comes from Him, and every good work is a result of His Spirit working through you.

Prayer: Father, I desire to be submitted to the Holy Spirit to carry out the good works You have prepared for me in a way that pleases You. Help me to rely on Your strength and guidance in all I do so others may see You in me. In the name of Jesus, amen.

Day 21 | Sunday, January 26, 2025

He Is All That

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengtheners, Standby), to be with you forever.

John 14:16 AMP

As Jesus prepared to leave the earth, He reassured His disciples that the Father would send the Holy Spirit in His name to provide the help they needed. Just as the disciples lived in a challenging and darkening world, so do believers today. Yet we are called to have hope because Jesus has overcome the world. He said in John 16:33, “In Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” A world that may be going away from God in certain areas is no reason to bury our heads in the sand or ignore the ills of the world. Instead, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to face these challenges with faith and courage.

Believers are equipped with the Holy Spirit to support, guide, and teach us daily. In a world overflowing with false information and competing voices, it can become difficult to discern the truth. The Holy Spirit, however, illuminates the Word of God and guides us toward His will for our lives. Over these twenty-one days of prayer and fasting, we’ve been reminded that the Holy Spirit operates in partnership with God, and we must do the same.

The Holy Spirit will not force us to obey or demand our involvement. It is up to us to actively participate in His work in our lives. This means committing to prayer and study of the Word, keeping our hearts open to receive instruction, correction, and wisdom, and aligning our attitudes and behaviors with Him.

When the busyness of life causes us to forget the promises of God, the Holy Spirit steps in, reminding us of Jesus’s teachings, bringing Scriptures to our minds, and comforting us in times of sorrow or loneliness. Even when we think we are alone, the Holy Spirit is always with us, providing strength and peace.

Jesus knew we would face hardships and need help growing in God, so He sent the Holy Spirit. To live a life pleasing to God, we must cultivate a lifestyle of

reliance upon and trust in the Holy Spirit. Even when we are challenged to move out of our comfort zones, we must be willing to obey. By allowing the Holy Spirit to be all that Jesus said He would, we can maintain our peace and live a life of purpose that is pleasing to God.

Reflection: Take some time to write down what you have learned during these twenty-one days about the Holy Spirit and His role in your life. Include how you will continue to strengthen your relationship with Him and your dependence on His guidance.

Prayer: Father, thank You for the incredible gift of the Holy Spirit. I am grateful for His teaching, comforting, advocating, and reminding presence in my life. Help me to rely on Him more each day and to seek His guidance in all I do. In Jesus's name, I pray, amen.

----- PRAYER TARGETS -----

God has put us on earth at this specific time in history for a reason. Acts 17:26 says that He determined when and where we would live. Knowing this, we can look at those around us right now and take personal responsibility to pray for them.

*I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. **1 Timothy 2:1-4***

Pray for those in authority and those under your authority. Extend your prayers to cover family members and those within your circle of influence.

Write down the names of certain people and offer heartfelt prayers for each one. List the things you are believing for or the requests you are making in faith on their behalf.

MY GOVERNMENT

President

National Leaders _____

State Leaders _____

City Leaders _____

First Responders _____

MY FAMILY

Spouse _____

Children _____

Parents _____

Extended Family _____

MY CHURCH

Pastors _____

Overseers* _____

Dream Team Captain _____

Connect Group Leaders _____

Connect Group Members _____

**See page 12 for the names of our overseers.*

MY LIFE

Employer _____

Colleagues _____

Employees _____

Teachers/Professors _____

THOSE I INFLUENCE

Close friends _____

THOSE WHO NEED GOD

God desires everyone to know Him. He says in His Word that He would leave the ninety-nine who have relationships with Him to go after the one who does not (Luke 15:4). As followers of Christ, we are called to partner with Him, praying for those who have not met Him to come to faith in Him.

1. PRAY THE FATHER WOULD DRAW THEM TO JESUS

We cannot make people come to Jesus through our efforts. We must be faithful in praying that the Father would draw those He's placed on our hearts to Him.

*No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. **John 6:44***

Think about the people you know who are far from God. Let your heart be open to anyone He may bring to your mind. Write their names in the space above as you pray for them.

PRAYER

Father, I pray for the people around me (list specific names) that You would supernaturally draw their hearts to Your Son. Send Your Holy Spirit to them and give them the desire to give their lives to You. Help them to recognize their longing for more in life as a spiritual thirst only You can quench. Open their ears to hear Your voice.

2. PRAY GOD WILL FREE THEIR MINDS FROM BONDAGE

The truth can be right in front of some people, but they can't see it because something is blocking their view of God.

... whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

2 Corinthians 4:4

Pray against whatever is in the way of them seeing the light of God. Pray that they will know the truth without any obstacles or distractions interfering.

PRAYER

Father, in the name of Jesus, I pray that all unbelievers would be able to see clearly, recognize who You are, and give their hearts to You. Remove all hindrances the enemy would use to distract them from Your truth. Open their eyes, Lord, that they might see Jesus.

3. PRAY THEY WILL COME TO HAVE A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Many people think Christianity is just another religion. They see God only through the lens of the institution of the church. They may even feel frustrated, angry, or betrayed by people in churches they have encountered or by religious legalists and their hypocrisy. But God did not come to build an organization. He came to have a relationship with each of His children.

*You did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." **Romans 8:15***

God wants His beloved sons and daughters to come home. Pray for people to have personal encounters with the living God.

PRAYER

Father, I pray that people will understand how much You love them. Loose the Spirit of adoption for the people around me so they come into a meaningful relationship with You. Stir in their hearts a longing to come home, to hear Your voice, and to see You welcoming them with open arms. Let them know You are running to meet them and hold them close.

4. PRAY OTHER BELIEVERS WILL CROSS THEIR PATHS AND ENTER INTO POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM

Pray for Christians to positively influence the people around them and look for opportunities to influence others positively. God's plan to reach people is accomplished through those who already know and love Him. Jesus asked us to pray for people to go into the world to be salt and light. He came to bring the good news of the gospel to all people, and He desires that everyone would know and love Him.

*Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. **Matthew 9:38***

As His "spiritual farmers," we should be attuned to opportunities to plant spiritual seeds in the lives of the people we encounter daily. We may have no idea who has already been praying for them, and the culminating impact our kind word, compassionate act, or loving attitude can draw someone closer to Christ.

PRAYER

Father, I pray for the lost around me to meet believers who will positively influence them. Lord, let my life shine so people want to know the God I serve. Let others see my genuine love and concern for them in everything I say and do. Let me be Your hands and feet to bless them and show them how much You love them.

5. PRAY THEY RECEIVE THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION TO KNOW GOD BETTER

People need to see their sins, acknowledge what Jesus did on the cross, and receive the hope that results from giving their lives to God. When this kind of revelation is received, the spiritual lights come on and they have that crucial “aha” moment that changes their lives forever.

*... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. **Ephesians 1:17***

People need wisdom, not just knowledge. Pray for supernatural revelations and insights into how spiritual realities directly impact them, which comes only from God.

PRAYER

Father, I pray for the people around me to experience the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. I pray they genuinely understand their spiritual condition and see all that Jesus did for them through His death, burial, and resurrection. Help them to have the experiences needed to come to You so they can understand all You have for them.

MY NEEDS

Write down the needs you want to focus on during Connect 21.

Request Prayer

The prayer team at Linked UP North would love to pray for you. We have intercessors who can connect their faith with yours, and we believe that God answers every prayer.



You can request prayer online by completing a prayer request form, emailing wecare@linkedupnorth.com, or filling out a prayer card at any of our services.

Prayer Services

- Saturday Prayer Service 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM ET
- Sunday Corporate Prayer 10:00 AM ET

Worship Services

- Sunday Worship Experiences 10:00 AM ET

----- **PRAYER JOURNAL** -----

---- PRAYER JOURNAL -----

---- THANK YOU -----

Thank you for your participation in Connect 21. Our prayer for you during these twenty-one days was that God would overwhelm you with His goodness as you sought His presence, power, and provision. God is forever faithful! We can count on Him more than we can rely on our efforts. When we set aside time to pray and dedicate extra focus on Him, we can expect to experience His faithfulness.

Do you have a testimony?

As we transition from this focused period of prayer and fasting, take a moment to reflect on your personal journey. Have you experienced a transformation, a breakthrough, or a renewed sense of purpose? Your testimony is a powerful reminder of God's work in the lives of others, and your story may be the encouragement someone needs to press on in their journey of faith. If you email your testimony to info@linkedupnorth.com, we can celebrate together the goodness of our God.

Remember, our twenty-one days of prayer and fasting were not meant to be an end but a launching pad for a deeper relationship with God. The journey continues, and as you move forward, be intentional about maintaining the momentum you've built.

Keep praying, keep seeking, and keep developing your prayer life. The God we serve is good, and He delights in every moment we spend in His presence.

----- WHAT'S NEXT? -----

We trust the commitments you made leading into Connect 21 are already in progress. If you haven't seen your prayer targets manifested during the Connect 21 spiritual concentration, continue to stand firm in faith and trust that His timing is always perfect.

The spiritual momentum you've gained during these twenty-one days doesn't have to stop here. Think of this season as a foundation to build upon not than a finish line. As you carry forward the life-giving habits of prayer and fasting, you'll find chances to deepen your relationship with God and walk in His purpose for your life.

Use what you've learned to aim for new prayer targets and take bold steps in your spiritual journey. Here are some next steps you can take to stay connected and grow:

- **Attend Services Regularly:** Make Sunday worship a priority—in person or online. Each service is an opportunity to recharge your faith and strengthen your connection to God.
- **Attend Saturday Prayer:** Whether you join us in person or online at 9:00 AM ET, these gatherings create space to intercede for your needs, your family, and the vision of the church.
- **Continue Daily Devotionals:** Let daily time in God's Word and prayer become second nature. Use the YouVersion bible app to find a devotional.
- **Join the Family:** If you're not already a member of Linked UP North, take your Next Steps classes and become part of our vibrant church family. These classes are available both in person and via zoom.
- **Fellowship with Like-Minded Believers:** Join a Connect Group to find a supportive community. There's a group waiting for you, ready to walk this journey alongside you.
- **Serve with Purpose:** If you're a member, consider joining a Dream Team to serve others and make a lasting impact. There's a place for your unique gifts and passions to shine.
- **Declare Your Faith Publicly:** If you haven't been water baptized, consider taking this step to publicly declare your faith in Christ. Visit our website for more details and to register.

Each step represents an opportunity to move closer to God, fulfill your purpose, and

stay connected to a community that encourages and supports you.

Finally, remember that this journey is not meant to be taken alone. As part of the Linked UP North Church family, you have access to a community that believes in you, prays for you, and walks alongside you in faith. Take advantage of the many ways to get involved and watch as God continues to do exceedingly abundantly above all you can ask or imagine.

BECOME A MEMBER



If you believe God is leading you to become a member of Linked UP Church, we invite you to take our Next Steps classes to become a part of our family.

Next Steps is a series of three classes that focus on your relationship with God and learning about your God-given gifts. Upon completing all classes, you become a member of Linked UP Church. Classes are offered in person on the first, second, and third Sundays of every month or on demand.

Step One: Connect to God

This class is designed to help you grow your relationship with God. You will discover the habits necessary to live a life for Christ.

Step Two: Connect to Our Family

This class is designed to help you discover membership. You will learn the values of Linked UP North, how we serve our members and member expectations.

Step Two: Connect to Purpose

Learn more about the details of your personality, discover your gifts, and start the journey of living out God's purpose for your life.

Step Three: Connect to Community

Now that you know who you are in Christ and your purpose, it's time to discover what it means to make a difference by serving others using your God-given gifts.

JOIN A CONNECT GROUP

Open to Members and Non-Members



Life is better in a group. Here at Linked UP North, we believe you were created to “do life” in a community with other believers.

Interest groups have trained leaders who facilitate groups around their passions and interests, such as fishing, gardening, and bike riding. Are you interested in curriculum-based learning? We have you covered! We offer amazing curriculum-based groups such as Connect to Freedom for men and women. If you desire to lead an Interest Group, there’s a specific level of responsibility reserved for qualified members. See the website for upcoming Connect Group Leader trainings.

Winter/Spring Semester	<i>starts Sunday, February 2</i>
Summer Semester	<i>starts Sunday, June 1</i>
Fall Semester	<i>starts Sunday, September 7</i>



Discover your gifts and passions and join the Linked UP Dream Team. These are groups of people who love God, love people, pursue excellence, choose joy, and make an eternal difference by building the body of Christ.

Before applying to join the Dream Team, you must have completed all Next Steps membership classes.



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