

MONTHLY



PRAAYER DEVOTIONS

Miraculous Fulfillment

“Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” (**Isaiah 7:14**)

The birth of Christ was prophesied hundreds of years before He was born, by Isaiah the prophet. Bible prophecy leaves us with the truth, the Bible is the infallible word of God. The miraculous fulfillment of the prophecy was announced to Mary. An angel appeared to Mary and proclaimed to her, “you will conceive and give birth to a Son, and you are to call Him Jesus. (**Luke 1:31 NIV**) Mary was stunned. “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. (**Luke 1:34-35 NIV**) Jesus, the sinless Son of God was born to a virgin just as it was foretold. He was born to save mankind from their sins. The Son of God was born without any royal pomp and circumstance. His birth was announced to the shepherds nearby who were tending their sheep. Just as the birth of Christ was foretold, so also, we are told Christ will return again. The next time He comes, it will be different. What will be different? “Look He is coming with the clouds, “and “every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of Him.” So shall it be! Amen. (**Revelation 1:7**) Why will people mourn?

1 John 3:5; Matthew 1:21; Luke 2:8-20

Prayer: Lord, Your word is true. Help me to live my life as though You were coming today. Amen.

Pray Continuously

We need God. We need Him every second of every day. He is the very breath in our lungs. We need His guidance and wisdom, His mercy and grace, His forgiveness and love.

There will never be a time that we don't need Him. In fact, it would be impossible to exist without Him. And to keep the connection to our Heavenly Father open, we need to be in continuous communication with Him.

Prayer is how we engage in a loving relationship with our Creator. But how do we pray continually when we have so many daily responsibilities? How can we possibly pray without ceasing?

When Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to pray continually, he wasn't referring to kneeling all day with heads bowed and eyes closed. He was talking about a constant "prayerful" state where we are aware that God is with us and that He's actively involved in our daily lives.

One way to accomplish this is to make it a habit of praying brief prayers all throughout the day. They can be simple requests for help, confessions, or words of gratitude and praise.

Yes, we also need to make time to talk to God privately as Jesus instructed. During this quiet time with God, He wants us to express our hearts to Him because He's more interested in the content of our hearts than anything else.

Make prayer your life and your life a prayer while living in a world that desperately needs God.

1 Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:18; Matthew 6:6

Prayer Points:

1. Ask God to help you form a habit of praying continuously throughout every day.
2. Pray longer, more in-depth prayers every day in private just like Jesus did.
3. Thank God for the privilege and blessing of being able to approach Him any time of day or night.

Alive With Christ

“But because of His great love for us, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions ---- it is by grace you have been saved.” (**Ephesians 2:4-6 NIV**)

It is Christ who made us alive from a life chained to sin, living in darkness without hope. What a dark picture of life without Christ. Sadly, there are those people who have been deceived into thinking because they are a “good person” they are going to go to heaven. So, what does the Bible say, “But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are like filthy rags...” (**Isaiah 64:6a.**) That really stings our pride. What, our good deeds won't get us to heaven? No! By God's love, God's mercy, and God's grace we are saved and “made alive with Christ.” (**Ephesians 2:5**) Our salvation is because Jesus willingly shed His blood on the cross to pay the debt, we all owed for sin. By asking Jesus to come into our heart and be our Lord and Savior, our sins are forgiven. This is why we are alive with Christ. His sacrificial death brought us life everlasting. We are no longer bound by sin. He has made us alive to tell the story of His love and mercy. Have you been made alive with Christ?

Romans 5:8; John 3:16; Isaiah 53:5; Hebrews 10:12; Colossians 2:13

Prayer:

Father, help me understand just how alive I am in Your Son Jesus Christ that I may be a sound expression (image) of Christ in me. Father, give me the boldness to share Your love story, so others may be made “alive with Christ.”. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Going Through the Motions

True worship is more than performing religious rituals like going to church, fasting, and tithing - although these things are good and the Bible tells us to do them.

In **Isaiah 58:6-7**, the prophet Isaiah warned the people of Judah that they were missing the point of worshipping God. They were going through the motions and performing religious rituals but their hearts weren't right. They were acting pious but they weren't serving others by showing kindness, generosity and justice for prisoners, the oppressed, and the needy.

Are we just going through the motions too? Is God a *part* of our lives or is God the *center* of our lives?

A living, vital relationship with God is one where He is the center of our lives. When we glorify and exalt God through our obedience to Him and His Word in **everything we do**, that is true worship.

God wants our service to go beyond our own person growth. He gives us the motivation and energy to serve others by continually restoring us with the unlimited refreshment of His Spirit. Without the power of the Holy Spirit who indwells us, helping others would become a chore.

Let us drink deeply of God's Spirit, a river of living water (**John 7:37-39**), so we will find the inner strength and joy needed to serve others with love.

Prayer Points:

1. Repent if you are just going through the motions and ask Father God to forgive you and fill you with a hunger for His Word and a desire to make Him the center of your life.
2. Receive the ever-flowing refreshment of God's Spirit so you can serve others with joy and love.
3. Immerse yourself in His glory and exalt Him through your obedience to Him and His Word.

Come Home

“The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is His faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning.” (**Lamentations 3:22**)

The goodness of the Lord is on display each day. Jesus tells the parable of the prodigal son who left his Father’s house after demanding his inheritance. The son then spent the money foolishly. This is a story about the Father’s mercy for the son. The son returned home in humility and was welcomed by the Father with open arms of love and a homecoming celebration. The same is true in our lives. If we seek our own way and get lost in the wilderness of our own making, the Lord’s love for us never ends. He does not give up on us when we are in our deepest valley. “His mercies begin afresh each morning.” He is always there for us even if we have turned from Him and gone our own way. When we turn around and come home, He is waiting for us, not with judgement but with love and mercy. It doesn’t matter how long and how far we have strayed; He welcomes us to come home. The Father’s heart is mercy, love and forgiveness and John 3:16 expresses God’s heart. “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.”

Luke 15:11-32; John 3:16

Prayer: Father thank You that Your Son, Jesus Christ died for our sins. He is waiting for you to ask Him into your heart if you have not already done so. Ask for forgiveness of sin and believe that He is the Son of God, and you will be saved. Amen

Faith is a Decision

The prophet Habakkuk couldn't understand why God didn't intervene when Judah was being overrun by evil. He wanted to know why evil people seem to go unpunished.

So, he asked God some difficult questions, and God answered Habakkuk letting him know that His plans were to discipline Judah and allow them to be punished at the hands of the Babylonians.

“Look at the proud! They trust in themselves, and their lives are crooked. But the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God.” 2:4

Habakkuk asked God why it seems like the evil people prosper while the righteous suffer? God's answer was that they don't – at least not in the long run. God always does what is right even when we don't understand why He lets evil continue.

Even though Habakkuk knew things were going to get rough, including famine and great loss, He made the decision to wait quietly and remain faithful and “rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation. The Sovereign LORD is my strength.” **3:18 & 19**

We can't see all that God is doing, nor can we see what He will do in the future. But we can make the decision to remain faithful and live in the strength of His Spirit as we navigate this confusing world. Our hope comes from Him.

Habakkuk 1-3

Prayer Points:

1. Declare the strength of the Holy Spirit to remain faithful, even in times of hardship and chaos.
2. Rejoice in the LORD and be joyful in the God of salvation. Lean on His promises; He is our hope.
3. Bring your questions to God, and listen to His answers.

Standing In the Gap

When God created the earth, He saw all that He had made, and it was very good. Then sin entered the picture, and sin created a gap between heaven and earth and between what God wants for us and what is actually happening here on earth.

So, how do we bridge that gap and bring God's power from heaven to earth? Through prayer.

Prayer releases the power of God to accomplish His will in our lives. It's the avenue God has established to bring His finished work from the spiritual realm into the material realm. The Bible describes prayer as "standing in the gap."

God has bound Himself to His people through prayer. It is prayer that brings God's intervening power directly to our earthly situations.

Jesus showed us that our prayers release and activate God's specific will. Jesus modeled a kind of praying that is determined and powerful. When we pray, we are reaching into the spiritual realm (heaven) and grabbing hold of the will of God for that situation. Then the will of God pierces through the gap and is established on earth.

God doesn't need us to do His will but He wants us to be involved. He wants us to communicate with Him and be in a relationship with Him. It's through that connection that His will is done.

God gave us an active role in bringing heaven to earth. In our obedience to Him, we stand in the gap.

Genesis 1:31; Psalm 106:23 MSG; Ezekiel 22:30 NLT

Prayer Points:

1. Pray with boldness and determination knowing God is using you as a conduit to bring His will to earth as you stand in the gap.
2. Seek the LORD's will so you know how to confidently pray in alignment with His will.

Hear Our Prayers

“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” (**Psalm 18:2**)

Jesus is “altogether lovely...” (**Song of Solomon 5:6**) When I seek your presence, I find peace that is not found anywhere else. There is such joy in knowing Jesus. What an amazing privilege that we can be friends of the King of Kings. Lord, You alone are worthy. Thank You for the cross and because of Your sacrifice we can live in Your presence. You are as close as a prayer. You hear our prayers, and Your answer comes to us with the wisdom from above. You know the plans You have for us. We look to Your word and find our hope is in the Lord. “Let my cry come before You, O Lord; Give me understanding according to Your word. Let my supplication come before You; Deliver me according to Your Word. (**Psalm 119:169-170**)

Psalm 6:9, Jeremiah 29:11, Psalm 71:5

Prayer: My Father, You are not distant but near to me. Give me a continued desire to seek You and spend time in Your presence. Amen