



LADIES' DAY
OF
Prayer

21
Day
Prayer
& Devotional
Challenge
To Go
Deeper
With God

This booklet was compiled with love and much
prayer by Ginger Smith



yourhbc.info/women

Hilldale Baptist Church
Women's Ministry

Scripture Promises

(Continued)

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psalm 34:18

When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

1 Peter 5:4

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

2 Timothy 1:7

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

James 1:5

Scripture Promises

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.”

Jeremiah 29:11-12

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Psalm 46:1

“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

Isaiah 54:10

For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Matthew 7:7-8

Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous fall.

Psalm 55:22

Welcome
TO THE

**21 Day
Prayer & Devotional Challenge
To Go Deeper
With God**

**We pray God moves in your life in
a mighty way during the next 21
days!**

Love,

**Hilldale Baptist
Women's Ministry**

Day 1

Prayer and Thanksgiving

Share one word you would use to describe your conversation with God today?

Where are you in your conversation with God?

If prayer offers intimacy with God, why don't we use it? Prayer is the way to plug into His power, perception and purpose. Prayer unlocks connection, belonging, wisdom, counsel and help from God. Which one of these actions do you need most today?

Why?

What are some struggles you face with prayer? *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." What does pray without ceasing mean to you?*

Are you familiar with the term, **Breath Prayer**? It is simply praying as we breathe in and out. We can't live on a single breath of air and we can't live on one single breath of God. We need to breathe God in all day long. This exercise of prayer reminds us that God's presence through the Holy Spirit is a gift in our life.

Set a timer for one minute...close your eyes and place your hands and feet in a relaxed position. Start the timer: **Breathe in slowly for about 5 seconds thinking of God's presence as you fill your lungs with air.**

Breathe out slowly as you let your thoughts flow from your head to your heart as you breathe.

Now try repeating these words in your head as you breathe in again, "Lord Jesus" and then breathe out, "have mercy on me."

Breathe in again slowly, "Lord Jesus" and then breathe out, "have mercy on me."

Next breathe in, "Jesus" and breathe out "I am here." Sit very still for at least a minute and then open your eyes.

What was that experience like for you? Did you feel connected to God through this prayer?

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers concerning the woman God has laid on your heart to pray for.

Day 21

P A CALL TO **Prayer**

**For the next 30 days pick a woman to Pray for.
She doesn't need to know. Intercede on her behalf.**

This is one challenge I'll take...how about you?

I can't wait to watch God work in her life.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your
thoughts and prayers.

Day 2

Thanksgiving and Praise

One dark night as I was driving my husband's truck home from a visit with my daughter, I suddenly caught a glimpse of a large object coming directly toward me. I glanced at the side mirror and discovered a large horse almost nose to nose to me. I didn't panic but thought my family would wonder how in the world I died from a collision with something large enough to wreck a truck and kill me. And then it was gone and I had control of the vehicle. I was shaken but alive. I pulled off the road and began praising God for miraculously protecting me. When I relayed the story to my husband he just grinned and said it couldn't have been a horse on a busy highway. The next morning several sources reported that a horse had escaped his stall and gone through a fence on Highway 12. All at once my version of the story gained ground. I have never stopped praising and thanking God for His protection that night. I have, however; reflected and questioned just why He saved me from a horrible accident.

Have you experienced times in your life when in a split second, you realized that God just gave you a miracle? I have never believed in coincidence...have you? Look for miracles every day...they're all around us. Ask God to make you sensitive to His Holy Spirit.

Read Psalm 71 and Psalm 135. Reflect on **what** God has done for you and write down a few experiences and compliments for God. Read Psalm 100 and reflect on **who** God is in your life. Write down a few times He showed up for you when you can't explain it.

Find a quiet place and turn your compliments to God into a prayer conversation with Him. Tell Him what you love about who He is and what He's done for you

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 20

Reflection

Congratulations to you for investing your time in Deeper Conversations with God. His Word is alive and so relevant in our lives. Everyone is so busy running here and there, raising children, working and trying to keep up with daily responsibilities.

Today would be a good time to share what has meant the most to you during this journey. Perhaps God revealed an opportunity to serve. Maybe you read a story in the Bible that you remember from being a child in Sunday School. Maybe you learned to just breathe and slow down. Or maybe you found a special time and place to praise and worship undisturbed. Maybe you've been singing hymns to God or found how natural and comfortable you can be talking to God about anything.

Jot down some thoughts...

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 3

Slow Down

Are your days so fully scheduled that you forget to experience what's happening now? Are you trying to give your all at work, church, community service, and relationships? When was the last time you just took a walk or even a deep breath? **Remember to practice the Breath Prayer!** Slowing down is one way we honor our own limits and also the fact that God is found in the present. If we are in the present also, we will be more mindful to Thank and Praise Him for who He is and not just what He's doing in our lives. Being intentional is not easy and taking focus from self to God takes practice.

For one day, keep track of your activities and the approximate time you give them. List a few.

How much of your day is spent on social media? What activities have no value in your life?

Have you spent time with God through scripture and prayer?

What changes could you make to use your time more effectively?

Read Matthew 26:36-46. Are you more like the disciples falling asleep from exhaustion or have you been like Jesus who teaches us to pause, pray and acknowledge God in the present?

Slowing down doesn't happen overnight. You actually have to make a conscious decision by putting practices into place. Are you getting enough rest? Do you stop and look people in the eyes during conversation? Do you sit down with your family and ask about their day? Do you take a walk and enjoy God's creation? Do you silence your cell phone at dinner or after work?

Right now, pray and ask God to remind you to slow down.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 19

Where's Your Treasure?

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Luke 12:34

Where do you spend your time?

Where do you spend your money?

What do you think about most?

How often do you speak of God in conversation?

What do you chatter about? Your kids, grands, friends, hobby, work, movies, stock market, politics, in-laws, boss?

What others know about you is a pretty good indication of what and whom you treasure. When you say that Jesus and your spiritual life is a high priority, would those who know you best laugh under their breath?

Do you get up early in order to pray and spend time in God's Word or do you only have time for a workout and a quick trip to get coffee?

Do you spend hours at the gym but never have time to serve God or join a Bible study?

Do you say you can't afford to tithe but spend money on manicures and hobbies?

Reflect on what makes you happy to discuss or where you love to spend your free time. It may surprise you to discover your real treasure.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 4

Gratitude

Thank God for as many things as you can think of in a couple of minutes.

Thank God for the people, places and things that mean the most to you.

Thank God for a meaningful time someone thanked you or a group praised you for something. How did it make you feel? Thank the people who have made a huge impact on your life by sending a note or giving them a call. If you haven't slowed down yet, it may just be a quick text. We all have spiritual giants in our lives. Take the time and energy to reach out to them. If they are already in Heaven, share with a friend how a special person encouraged you and perhaps become an encourager to someone.

Thank God for answered prayer. Be specific and write some down as you reflect.

Thank Him also for unanswered prayer. Thank Him specifically if you're glad that prayer went unanswered.

Thank God for the way prayer is shifting the focus from yourself to God. Ask Him to give you the ability to see the world around you the way God does.

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. Being ready for the Lord's coming and verses 12-28 receiving final instructions and greetings. Jot down key verses that relate to you most.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 18

A Time for Everything

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, 11

Everything that happens, in this world, happens at the time God chooses.

He sets the time for birth and the time for death, the time for planting and the time for pulling up, the time for killing and the time for healing, the time for tearing down and the time for building. He sets the time for sorrow and the time for joy, the time for mourning and the time for dancing, the time for making love and the time for not making love, the time for kissing and the time for not kissing. He sets the time for finding and the time for losing, the time for saving and the time for throwing away, the time for tearing and the time for mending, the time for silence and the time for talk. He sets the time for love and the time for hate, the time for war and the time for peace.

God has set the right time for everything. He has given us a desire to know the future but never gives us the satisfaction of fully understanding what He does. I realize that all we can do is to be happy and do the best we can while we are alive.

Isn't this a thought-provoking set of scriptures? As we look at life, we struggle but only God knows. What if there was no God? Man would certainly be caught in circumstances beyond our control. These show the common human experiences and God's sovereignty.

King Solomon wrote the passage probably in his old age. How many of these relate to you in your season of life?

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 5

Thanksgiving and Praise

Psalm 28:6-7 *“Praise the Lord for He has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust Him with all my heart. He helps me and my heart is filled with joy. I burst in songs of thanksgiving.”*
Look up these verses and list some attributes of God.

Hebrews 1:3, 2 Peter 1:3, Colossians 1:17, Matthew 5:48

Shout to the Lord

Words and Music by Darlene Zschech

My Jesus, My Saviour

Lord there is none like You

All of my days I want to praise

The wonders of Your mighty love.

My comfort, my shelter

Tower of refuge and strength

Let every breath, all that I am

Never cease to worship You

Shout to the Lord

All the earth, let us sing

Power and Majesty, praise to the King

Mountains bow down and the seas will roar

At the sound of Your Name.

I sing for joy at the work of Your hands

Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand

Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

In your prayer time today, share with God as many reasons as you can think of to thank Him for who He is and for what He's doing or has already done in your life.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 17

Jonah

We've all heard the story of the prophet Jonah. God told him to go to Nineveh, the deadly enemy of Israel. Jonah didn't want to go there because they were too wicked to hear God's message. So, he hopped a ship going in the opposite direction so he would be away from the Lord.

Have you ever thought you could hide from God?

But God sent a strong wind storm on the sea that was so violent the ship was about to break up. The sailors were terrified and each began to pray to their own god. Meanwhile Jonah went and took a nap. The captain found him and told him to get up and pray to his God and maybe He would feel sorry for them and spare their lives. The sailors decided to draw lots and Jonah's name was drawn. They began to ask questions. Jonah told them he worshipped the Lord and that he was running away. He told them to throw him into the sea and then it will calm down. While he is trying to outrun God, the sailors began to cry out to the Lord, turning from their false gods to true God.

Has God ever used your disobedience to draw someone to Christ?

Has God ever done a miracle in your life and you got angry?

So, Jonah just went out from the city and sat in the shade pouting. The Lord allowed a plant to grow over him and when Jonah was still pouty, God caused it to disappear. God didn't need to explain to Jonah why He chose to forgive Nineveh but He did.

Amazing story – right? How many times have you questioned God?

Do you cheer for an enemy who seems to be receiving blessings you wanted for yourself?

Ponder and pray about what you should learn from this children's story that isn't a children's story at all. Lord, let me be moved by what moves you.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 6

Thanksgiving Celebration

Our immediate family always travels to Ohio to spend Thanksgiving weekend with our son and his family. It has become a highlight of our holiday season. Several years ago, God laid it on my heart to have a time of sharing our individual blessings from God. I announced this after the turkey was enjoyed but just before dessert!! Our four young grandchildren, though caught by surprise, all shared from the heart as did our children, Pop and me. There was lots of laughter and yes lots of tears.

The next year, unexpectedly, the grandkids came to the table with prepared stories and yes, even some notes they'd made on their phones. It was overwhelming to me that they actually saw the value of this exercise and well to be truthful, they are all competitive and didn't want to be outdone by a sibling or cousin.

Several years later, it's become a precious activity for us. We randomly go around the table in no certain order. Sometimes one of us is excited and wants to be first. Other times it is a big announcement that begs to be shared. Sometimes it is a very hard lesson that needed to be learned that year. Sometimes it has been an illness or passing of a loved one we're grieving. We just never know where God will take us. I cry a lot but beam with delight to see the way God is working in all our lives.

As my daughter would say – *“we all have a story.”*

Do you have special memories about Thanksgiving? Take some time to reflect on family traditions? Is there a favorite dish you remember having that maybe you'd like to try this year? Maybe there were changes in your life this year and you want to start fresh with your own tradition. Maybe you have a neighbor or loved one who will be alone this year and would love to join your family.

Just remember that on Thanksgiving Day and all year long, God deserves to be praised with much thanksgiving. Now, will He be an honored guest at your table this year?

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 16

True Righteousness

Read Philippians 3:1-11

What did you want to be when you grew up? Me? I wanted to be a doctor. I've always loved the atmosphere of hospitals and I love to interact with people. Instead, God put me on a church staff. I still got to help with healing but just the spiritual side. It's fun to think about who we wanted to be as a kid. Maybe it worked out exactly as you planned. Maybe we should be grateful we didn't end up being a cowboy, clown, super hero or juggler. No matter how our lives turned out so far, it is easy to put pride in our identity – our salary, education, family, alma mater, reputation.

Paul, in this scripture, shows us how his attitude toward his credibility and how his view of Jesus transformed him. He says what he has gained in life is garbage, so worthless it should be thrown away. He says everything should be put behind Jesus – kids, spouse, friends, career and all possessions. He says Jesus is worth it all. To know Jesus, to be found in Christ and His righteousness and have the hope in the future knowing Jesus will return is far better.

Is there an area of your life you value more than Jesus?

What pressures have you experienced from the world to value yourself over Jesus?

Spend some time praying about how you view yourself and your walk with Jesus.

“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be satisfied with what you have. For God said, “I will never leave you; I will never abandon you”. Let us be bold, then, and say “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?” Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” Hebrews 13:5-6, 8

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 7

Getting Back into the Habit of Praying

After a week are you inspired to walk closer to God and seek Him in prayer daily? Is it getting easier to practice the breath prayer as you go about your routine? God will become more real to you than ever before as you spend time abiding with Him.

Are you feeling discouraged and tempted to just give up on praying? Please continue to have simple, ongoing, heartfelt conversations with God.

Philippians 4:5-7: ***“The Lord is near. Do not be anxious, but in everything through prayer and supplication and thanksgiving let your request be made known to God, and His peace which passes all understanding shall guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.”***

Call a friend and share that you are on a new journey of prayer. Ask her to be an encourager to you as you, little by little, one day at a time, form this habit.

Maybe you need to get up 15 minutes earlier to start your day. Maybe you could find a quiet place on your break or hey, why not sing praise and pray out loud as you drive to work.

Some people wait to have their devotion at night. I heard Anne Graham Lott say once that waiting until evening to read scripture and pray is like waiting until the end of a concert to tune your instrument. That’s always stuck in my mind.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” (your name here) declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me (your name here) and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me (your name here) and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart.”

Jeremiah 29:11-13

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 15

Are you a Mary or a Martha? Or Both!

Luke 10:38-42, we find Jesus and His disciples going to visit the home of Martha. This was a big deal that He would choose to visit her. He had a relationship with Martha, Mary (her sister) and Lazarus (her brother). We know they were close because they gave to Jesus and Jesus gave to them. He considered them friends. Now, Martha was a doer, always busy. She was prepared for His visit. She had been cooking and cleaning. She was a little put out and asked Jesus, "don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself?" Mary had immediately gone to sit at the feet of Jesus listening to Him teaching. So, Jesus said to Martha, "Martha, you are worried and troubled over so many things, but Mary has chosen the right thing and it will not be taken away." Her attitude changed at His words. Now being a Martha gets a bad rap sometimes. Can we just ignore that people are coming for dinner and there's nothing to eat in the house? A Bible Study is beginning but nobody ordered materials to use? There's a baptism planned for Sunday but no one filled the baptistry! I think Jesus had respect for Martha and for all us Martha's. Mary on the other hand, was honored and exalted by Jesus. She gave Him her total attention. Remember when she poured out the expensive oil on his head and Judas fussed at her. Jesus again spoke kindly to her.

Later in John 11, Mary & Martha sent word to Jesus, their friend, that Lazarus has died. Jesus, in order to show God's glory waited a couple of days to go. The sisters were upset knowing that He could have been healed. When Jesus saw the sisters, He cried. The family was obviously more than acquaintances. Lazarus was raised from the dead and walked out of His tomb. It was a miracle. Well, what I believe is that we can be a little bit Martha and a little bit Mary. If you lean to one or the other, how about finding a sister who can make up the difference. I know in my life I have a close friend who I know will always be praying for a situation when I'm organizing but I also know she depends on me to handle the details. Jesus loved them both. He appreciated them being comfortable in their own skin. I think those sisters completed each other. What do you think?

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 8

Restoring Broken Fellowship

On February 22, 1955 (a day I never forgot) my mom woke me to begin the celebration of my sixth birthday. Being one of eight children, we didn't get much individual attention but we did get our favorite flavor of birthday cake on our special day. While still in my pjs I saw my dad coming across the yard carrying a bike. I can't honestly remember if I asked for a bike or not. We mostly only got a gift at Christmas but not necessarily on birthdays. He sat it down on the sidewalk in front of me. I immediately said "*why did you get me a baby bike? I don't want this bike with training wheels.*" My mom being the peacemaker shushed me back. I just cried and kept telling him I don't want this baby bike. I wanted a real bike because I am six! Very quickly my dad grabbed the bike and turned his back to me and walked away. Mom, on the other hand, dragged me inside and spanked me telling me how much I had hurt my dad. I never saw that bike again. The event was never discussed. In fact, I never got a bike until I was twelve when my older sister graduated from high school and gave me hers. I'd like to say my dad and I became great friends but that never happened. We had one conflict after another. I never dishonored him but we just never had a relationship. Relationships are always worth restoring. But it takes effort and I don't think either of us put forth the work. The Bible tells us that God has given us the ministry of restoring relationships. **Until God brought this memory to my mind today, I don't think that I ever repented for doing such a hurtful thing to my parents. I have unconsciously carried this burden for decades. All these years later I asked God to forgive my bratty self.** Is there someone in your life that my experience has brought to your memory? Don't carry that guilt like I did. It needs to be handled. God expects you to make the first move. I encourage you to talk to God before you try talking to that person. Pray about the conflict and confess your part of the problem. Confession is a powerful tool.

2 Corinthians 5:18: ***"God has restored our relationship with Him through Christ, and has given us this ministry of restoring relationships."*** Romans 12:18: ***"Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody."***

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 14

In the Garden

I've always loved music. I was singing solos by second grade. I started singing in the church choir by the time I was twelve. As a teenager I wanted to drop out but my dad had a different idea that in order to go out on Saturday I had to have been in the choir the previous Sunday. So, it goes! When I was just a kid, I remember a song **"In The Garden"** we sang several times a year. Perhaps you sang it too. These are the lyrics:

**I come to the garden alone
While the dew is still on the roses
And the voice I hear falling on my ear
The Son of God discloses.
I'd stay in the garden with Him
Though the night around me is falling
But He bids me go
Through the voice of woe
His voice to me is calling.
And He walks with me
And He talks with me
And He tells me I am His own
And the joy we share as we tarry there
None other has ever known.**

I remember singing this song as a child when I was working on the farm. I can't remember a time I haven't been singing it. I sing it as a praise at least once a week. I sing it when I don't know how to pray or when I just can't find the words. God knows and I believe He accepts my praise.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 9

Spiritual Burnout

A devotion I read today that is just too good not to share...

Learn to relate to others through My love, rather than your own. Your human love is ever so limited, it's full of flaws and manipulation. My moving Presence, which always enfolds you, is available to bless others as well as you. Instead of trying harder to help people through your own paltry supplies, become aware of My unlimited supply which is accessible to you continually. Let My love envelop your outreach to others. Many of my precious children have fallen prey to burnout. A better description of their condition might be "drain out." Countless interactions with needy people have drained them without their conscious awareness. You are among these weary ones, who are like wounded soldiers needing R&R. Take time to rest in the Love-light of My Presence. I will gradually restore to you the energy that you have lost over the years. (Copied) ***"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."*** Matthew 11:28-29

Before you pray, remember that it's okay to not be okay. Are you worn out or do you think God is worn out because you're not regular in the spiritual disciplines you want to practice? Talk to Him. **He already knows!** Pay attention when God's Spirit tells you that you're heading in the wrong direction. Your conviction is a sign that He is working in you to bring the changes that will bring Him Honor and will bring you good. Focus on the fact that God is pursuing you even though you feel drained. Find your way right back into His arms.

"The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." Exodus 14:14

"I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring your prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for." Jeremiah 29:11 (one of my personal favs)

"We know that in all things God works for good with those who love Him, those whom He has called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 13

God, America Needs You

A couple of years ago as I walked in my neighborhood, I passed a cute boy about 10, backpack thrown over his shoulder waiting for his school bus. I was on the opposite side of the street and as I was getting close, I said "good morning." He didn't respond but I then asked him what grade he was in this year and what school he attended. He very politely said, "Mam, my parents don't allow me to speak to strangers. And what school I attend is a very personal question that I am not allowed to discuss." I told him I was very sorry if I made him uncomfortable and walked on. Immediately I felt warm tears flooding my eyes and dripping from my chin. I began to pray for our children and for our neighbors and our country. You see, we as a nation of Christians have allowed satan and his crowd to steal the rights of our children. Just a few days ago, two years later, I met a little girl and her older brother walking to school. The little girl said hi to me and wanted me to see her new backpack. I told her how pretty she looked and how much I liked her backpack. Her brother immediately scolded her for speaking to that lady and off they went. I see moms every day who won't even make eye contact with me as they walk their children to school and I think how different things are now, than when mine were in elementary school. Our children and their friends played all over our neighborhood and never did we think they might be in danger. Now not only children but even their moms are afraid to speak to a neighbor. It's time to pray and stand up for the rights we've enjoyed all our lives. Kids deserve to be kids. They deserve to know adults and to learn from the experiences we've already lived.

Please join me in praying today and every day for America's children, their parents and their teachers. Ask God to encourage each of us to find a way to make a difference in someone's life!

"Behold children are a heritage from the Lord." Psalm 127:3a.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 10

Just do It!

What will bring a smile to someone's face or encourage their heart? What might they need? Cook a meal, make a call, bake some cookies, offer to dog sit or send a text. **Show a little kindness** to those around you. **Encouragement?** An extra hand in preparing for a special event? Help painting a room? Babysitting? A listening ear? Maybe they need a hard truth spoken to soften a hard heart. The list of possibilities is endless. There are a zillion ways to minister to those around you. **Just do it!** Expand your friend group. Have you ever offered to take an elderly person to a doctor's appointment? How about inviting a new mom for a pedicure? (Your treat). I love to walk around in my neighborhood. As I pray and meditate, I can't help but notice the houses I pass. There's a ramp...Lord, I don't know the circumstances but I'm guessing an elderly person is behind that door. Bless them especially right now. I see a lady being walked down her driveway with the assistance of a physical therapist. I always stop and encourage her. I also pray that her family is cherishing every day they still have her with them. I see a couple sitting on their porch and shout hello to them. Sometimes I'm invited into a conversation or not, but I pray for them as I walk on. There's a new family moving in. Stop and welcome them. Ask if they need anything and then remember to pray for them as they adjust to a new environment. I love to pray for children as they walk to school and pray for their safety. I brag on moms who are running behind a stroller. Now that's commitment. If the conversation progresses, ask them if they attend church and invite them to yours. You might not want to go into the plan of salvation right then, but you have opened the door for a later conversation. It is so fun and makes a walk so much more interesting. Be alert. Be engaged. Be an encourager. Seek to be like Jesus. Life is just too short to miss opportunities right in front of us. Praying is free. You don't need flowery words. Just talk to God like you would share with a friend. Prayer will draw you near to God and He will draw near to you. ***"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and redeemer."*** Psalm 19:14. Life is like a box of chocolates and so is ministry....you have so many choices. God will give you a sweet taste of His Glory better than any chocolate ever offered to you. **Just Do IT!**

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 12

Celebrating Memories

Today would have been the 75th celebration of my parents' wedding commitment. My mom loved a celebration and my dad loved to shower her with gifts. He went to his eternal home in 2001 and my mom never stopped talking about him and the love they shared, the trips they took and the memories they made together all those years. She joined him in 2019. She missed him so much. I remember as a teenager how she would still sit on his lap in their favorite chair. Truth is, they were crazy about each other. They were always affectionate. When Mom came to stay with me for a few days after I gave birth to my daughter, she got more and more giddy as she knew Dad, six hours away, was coming to see her. I watched her run down the driveway into his arms. Watching them love one another, taught me how I wanted to love my husband. It's a lesson I'll never forget. I strived to show my children just how easy it can be to love the person God gave us and to never settle. I've prayed that my grandchildren will see it in our lives. Thank you, Lord, for Christian parents. I celebrate their example of love today, but no two marriages or relations are the same. Perhaps your family was different. For example, I came from a blended family –his children, her children, and their children. Yes, eight of us. My dad was a widower in his twenties and my mom was deserted in her twenties while she was carrying her third child. Maybe because of the circumstances they held on tightly to one another and we children were not the center of their world. I often observed in the home of various friends that all families are not created equal. For instance, we always ate our meals together at the table. I liked going to eat with friends that got to eat on the floor in front of the tv or maybe sitting at the bar away from their parents. I never had a room of my own until I was in high school and all my siblings were married. Some of my friends had really cool rooms from the time they arrived from the hospital as infants. I never had a car of my own. Some got a car for their sweet 16. I had a strict curfew and my friends had lots of freedom. All of our experiences growing up in different environments make us who we are! I understand that better every year. Pray that God will uncover scripture that will help you better understand why you are the person you are. Genesis to Revelation is full of references concerning relationships. Pray God will guide you in His plan.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.

Day 11

My Cell Phone vs My Bible

Wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phone? **What** if we carried it around in our purse or back pocket? **What** if we flipped through it several times an hour? **What** if we turned back to get it if we forgot it this morning? **What** if we used it to receive messages every few minutes, day and night? **What** if we treated it like we couldn't live without it? **What** if we gave it to family and friends as gifts? **What** if we used it for direction when we travel? **What** if we used it in case of an emergency? **What** if we panicked when it was misplaced? **What** if we read it during the Sunday message (instead of FB or making reservations for lunch)? Oh, and **what** if it goes dead and we don't have the charger? Unlike our cell phones, we don't ever have to worry about our Bible being disconnected because Jesus has already paid the bill. **John 3:16** *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."* So, no dropped calls! (copied)

Does it make you wonder – where **IS** my Bible? Now some will argue that their Bible **IS** on their cell phone, but when's the last time you actually held your red-lettered Word of God in your hand? Call me old fashioned, but it's just different to sit and read from THE book. 2 Timothy 2:15 *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."*

Hebrews 4:12 *"For the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

Romans 10:17. *"So then faith comes by hearing and hearing from the word of God."*

You will never have a successful prayer life without reading and memorizing the Word of God. It is your bread when you are hungry for a relationship with Him! Staying in the word is harder for me than praying, but how can we receive His answer but from the Bible and the Holy Spirit interpreting it for us? Make that a matter of prayer today.

Reflect

Use the space below to write your thoughts and prayers.