



SOUL  
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SEARCH

21 Days of Prayer & Fasting  
**Strength / Transformation / Breakthrough**

Week 1 Devotional Guide



“The key to strength is focus. What you focus on, you will believe in. What you believe in becomes a driving force in your life, and no force is greater than the will of God.”



### Focus on His Word

*“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:14-17**

One of the most common challenges Christians face is knowing the will of God. If you ask most believers, they’ll readily acknowledge the importance of hearing God’s voice. But if you ask them *how* they are supposed to do that, you’ll find a very common answer: “I have no idea!”

Thankfully, we have been given the single greatest tool to solve this problem: The Word of God. The Apostle Paul, writing to a young pastor named Timothy, says that “all Scripture is God breathed” (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:16), which means that God Himself is responsible for what is written in Scripture. Paul then challenges his disciple to apply these beautiful words to all situations. In this, we learn a critical truth: The *Word* of God is the *Voice* of God.

Today, take time to thank God for His Word, and ask Him to reveal Himself to you through it.

**DAY**  
**2**

**Focus on His Voice**

*“The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”*

**John 10:25-30**

The first time I heard God speak clearly to me, I almost fell over! I had been praying for a lengthy period of time for this to happen, asking God to make His voice clear to me. I knew that He spoke to people in many different ways; sometimes through a passage of Scripture, other times through the Holy Spirit affirming truth to the heart. Still, what I wanted was the gentle whisper of the Father’s voice to validate (for me) Jesus’ words in the Gospel of John: “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me” (10:27).

When that moment finally came, I was ecstatic. I grabbed a pen and notebook and began scribbling furiously, writing as fast as I could to make sure I captured every word. I then spent time pouring over those notes, relishing each detail. But the most important thing I did – the thing that made the biggest difference in my life – is that I *kept* trying to hear His voice. Day after day, prayer after prayer, focusing on every word I heard from Him.

Today, take time ask God to speak to you in a clear, direct way – and be patient. Learning to hear from God takes time. When you do hear Him speak (and He *will* speak, because His Word promises us so) try to absorb every detail.



### Focus on His Promises

*“Help us, LORD! There is not a good person left; honest people can no longer be found. All of them lie to one another; they deceive each other with flattery. The promises of the LORD can be trusted; they are as genuine as silver refined seven times in the furnace.”*

#### **Psalm 12:1-2, 6**

I am a skeptic by nature. I question everything; if you tell me what time it is, I will probably double check! I like almost every person that I meet, but I don't necessarily trust everything I'm told. I believe that each person has a responsibility to perform their "due diligence" to ensure that those we place our trust in are, in fact, *deserving* of our trust.

When I made the decision to follow Jesus, it didn't initially change my skepticism. Week after week, month after month, I questioned God about anything and everything: *Why do I need to do this? Why can't I do that? Why should I serve? Why should I tithe? Why should I look to the Bible for everything when I am perfectly capable of using common sense to decide for myself? Why, why, why, why...why?*

There came a point where I was forced to consider that if God was worthy of my worship, He had to be worthy of my *trust* as well. In the book of Numbers, Balaam the prophet delivers a poignant message of God's trustworthiness to a king named Balak: "God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?" (23:19)

If I was going to commit myself to Christ, I needed to trust Him. I needed to allow His Word to fulfill itself in my life, and that could only happen by taking everything He said at face value – which was no easy task. Do you need to do the same?

Today, ask God to show you His promises for your life in His Word, and ask Him to help you trust Him to see them come true.

**DAY**  
**4**

**Focus on His Presence**

*“Whenever the people of Israel set up camp, Moses would take the sacred Tent and put it up some distance outside the camp. It was called the Tent of the LORD's presence, and anyone who wanted to consult the LORD would go out to it. Whenever Moses went out there, the people would stand at the door of their tents and watch Moses until he entered it. After Moses had gone in, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the door of the Tent, and the LORD would speak to Moses from the cloud. As soon as the people saw the pillar of cloud at the door of the Tent, they would bow down. The LORD would speak with Moses face-to-face, just as someone speaks with a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp. But the young man who was his helper, Joshua son of Nun, stayed in the Tent.”*

**Exodus 33:7-11**

I have four young children living at home, and they all have vastly different personalities. They all demonstrate varying levels of independence and express themselves in myriad styles of communication. But for all their differences, one thing is constant for them all: they want to be with their father. When I come home from a long day, they are always there to greet me, often waiting in the front yard with smiles and joy for my arrival. Sometimes I come home late in the evening to find one of them asleep in my chair, or even awake in their beds waiting for me to come in. They want to be with me, and when I'm not there, they go to the places I have been, or soon will be.

Moses met regularly with the Lord in the Tent of Meeting and his devotion to God was well-known. As the leader of God's people, Moses knew the value of being in God's presence and spending regular and consistent time with Him. What is sometimes overlooked is that Joshua, Moses' aide and eventual successor, learned and emulated that same devotion, though in a less obvious way. Moses met directly with the presence of God; Joshua would simply linger where the presence of God *had* been. Joshua wanted that presence, even if it was after the fact. Just as my children long to be where I am or have been, Joshua sought the presence of God.

As much as my children want to be in my presence, I want them to desire God's presence even more! As Joshua sought the presence of God, so intent on being with Him that he would linger where God *had* been, so we too must seek Him out.

Today, ask God to spend time with you. Make yourself available to Him – block off time that is exclusively for Him – and ask Him to give you His presence.

**DAY**  
**5**

**Focus on His Power**

*“Praise the LORD! It is good to sing praise to our God; it is pleasant and right to praise him. The LORD is restoring Jerusalem; he is bringing back the exiles. He heals the broken-hearted and bandages their wounds. He has decided the number of the stars and calls each one by name. Great and mighty is our Lord; his wisdom cannot be measured. He raises the humble, but crushes the wicked to the ground.”*

**Psalm 147:1-6**

One of the amazing things about having young kids is that they think I am superhuman. In their eyes, there is nothing they’ve broken that I can’t fix, no problem they have that I can’t solve, and – my personal favorite – no single object too heavy for me to lift. While they will eventually figure out that I am a regular (and aging!) man, right now I get to be a *super*-man.

Their level of confidence in me is in direct correlation to what they think I am able to accomplish. Is it any wonder that I, as a fully grown adult, have the same perspective of God? He is my Heavenly Father, who says of Himself “I am the LORD, the God of all people. Nothing is too difficult for me” (Jeremiah 32:27). When I remember this, I have much less difficulty placing my trust in Him. It is only when I lose sight of this perspective that I question His capability to know what is best for me.

When I lose focus on God’s power, I want to take control of my life back from Him. I want to make my own decisions, to make my own rules, and to tell Him the way things ought to be. When I do this, I am my own worst enemy, the biggest threat to my own success. My need to be in control ruins any chance to have God’s best for my life. Can you relate?

Today, ask God to remind you of His power. Ask Him to show you where you need to give control back to Him, and then ask Him to take control back.

**DAY**  
**6**

**Focus on His love**

*“But now, O Jacob, listen to the LORD who created you. O Israel, the one who formed you says, ‘Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I gave Egypt as a ransom for your freedom; I gave Ethiopia and Seba in your place. Others were given in exchange for you. I traded their lives for yours because you are precious to me. You are honored, and I love you.’”*

**Isaiah 43:1-4**

“I want to live loved.” I often consider these words, uttered by a dear lady in my congregation. The years of her life before she met Jesus had been rough, and many in her life had been less than kind. Though she had every reason and opportunity to respond to the world in bitterness, she chose instead to let God love her. In return, she now has much love to give.

When you know you are loved, it changes the way you think. Too many people in our lives want to give us love for a moment, or even a season – but it is easily taken away when they become hurt or offended. Even the slightest offense can cause their love to be revoked, leaving a gaping hole where confidence once was felt.

But the love of God has no such stipulations. He declares His dedication to us with the full weight of His being: “I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself” (Jeremiah 31:3). When we are loved this way – that is, when we *know* we are loved this way – our life is changed. Our decision-making process is altered, and our level of self-confidence is raised. We need not live in fear of losing His affection but can instead walk with assurance that He will never stop loving us, no matter how bad our mistakes.

Today, take a moment and declare the following: “I am loved by God! I will never lose His love!” Write it down on a note card to slip in your pocket, or on a piece of paper to hang on the wall as a reminder for you to see. Then, ask Him to show you how much this love means to Him.



**DAY**  
**7**

**Focus on His plan**

*“Though I am surrounded by troubles, you will protect me from the anger of my enemies. You reach out your hand, and the power of your right hand saves me. The LORD will work out his plans for my life—for your faithful love, O LORD, endures forever.”*

**Psalm 138:7-8**

When I was 18 years old, I had a plan mapped out for my life. I knew the career I was going to pursue, the girl I was going to marry, the city I would live in, how many kids I would have, the car I was going to drive – you get the idea. I had it all worked out, and everything was going according to my plan. Can you guess what came next?

In the space of about a week, I lost it all. I don’t mean that as hyperbole; in less than seven days, my entire life plan evaporated before my eyes, as though it had never been. I felt like the invisible man, vanished from the lives of all the people that I thought meant so much to me. It was all gone – and with it, my sense of purpose.

When the plans we have for our lives don’t work out the way we hope for, we are devastated. There is a sense of mourning because what we have experienced is death – the death of our dreams. We build our plans on expectations, and expectations are invitations to failure when they are not supplied by God.

In our home, when things begin to fall apart or the plans we’ve made begin to slip away, we ask ourselves (and each other) these questions: “Did God know this was going to happen? Is any of this a surprise to Him?” Of course, nothing is a surprise to God, but that doesn’t make the sense of loss any easier for us. It does, however, remind us that God’s plans are much better than ours, and that no matter what is happening to us God is prepared for it. He knew what was coming, and already has a plan in place. Of course, this does not mean God *wants* for us to be in pain – He hurts when we hurt. He wants what’s best for us, which is the plan He created for us long ago.

Today, think about the plans you’ve made for your life. Are they working out just as you’ve hoped, or is it time to set them aside and let God fulfil *His* plans for you? Then, ask God to help you trust Him to let go of your own ideas, in exchange for His.