

New Year Prayer Challenge ~ FOCUS January 2017

Prayer Challenge Day 1 ~ *If you are single, please do not dismiss the days that focus on marriage! It is important for you to begin now praying into your future marriage! It is also important to pray for the marriages around you (your parents, your friends)!*

Scripture: Genesis 2:18, "It is not good for man to be alone..."

Prayer Focus: Marriage, the Divine stamp

This statement was made by God (Genesis 2:18). It was a Divine pause in history. It was as if God was making a statement about His Nature. There had never been aloneness in all eternity until that moment. God intentionally stopped to get our attention~ relationship; oneness; community; fellowship; intimacy; unity~ that is His mark upon His beloved ones because that is who He is as Father, Son & Holy Spirit. We are to reflect Him in the world. The Nature of God was stamped on the first family.

Prayer Points:

- *Pray for marriages to be marked with God's Nature in intimacy
- *Pray that marriage will remain the foundation of the family unit & society
- *Pray for marriages to be relational and full of fellowship (pray specifically for those marriages who have been marked by "aloneness" even though they are together).
- *Pray for love to be awakened in husbands/wives where it has gone to sleep in their hearts. Let love arise!

Resource: <http://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage>

Prayer Challenge Day 2 ~ *If you are single, please do not dismiss the days that focus on marriage! It is important for you to begin now praying into your future marriage! It is also important to pray for the marriages around you (your parents, your friends)!*

Scripture: Proverbs 20:6-7, "Many claim to have unfaithful love, but a faithful person who can find? The righteous lead blameless lives; blessed are their children after them."

Prayer Focus: Marriage, reflecting God's Glory

Marriages are to stand out in this generation. This relationship was designed to reflect God's glory. What a perspective. Regardless of how satisfying marriage is or isn't, the real issue is how is God's glory shining forth from marriage? There are many Christians caught up in their own personal satisfaction, giving no thought to the way in which their lives show a deep satisfaction in God, for the sake of God's glory? Our lives & marriages should make it believable that there is a God. The way we love should make the love of Christ believable and true. The world desperately needs to see an accurate reflection of Christ and marriages are to be the mirror, to show that this is what God's love looks like.

Prayer Points:

- *Pray for marriages to stand out in this generation, to be a light shining in the darkness
- *Whether you are married or single now, begin to dream with God about what your marriage could look like in 10 years. Write out what you "see" and declare it every day until you begin to see it manifest in your life.

*Ask Holy Spirit to bring to mind any thoughts/attitudes/mindsets that need to be confessed and done away with; any habits or pursuits He is asking you to cultivate for the sake of God's glory?

Resource: <https://www.youandmeforever.org/>

Prayer Challenge Day 3 ~ If you are single, please do not dismiss the days that focus on marriage! It is important for you to begin now praying into your future marriage! It is also important to pray for the marriages around you (your parents, your friends)! Let us commit to being a generation that honors marriage like never before!

Scripture: Galatians 6:9, "Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

Prayer Focus: Marriage, Don't Give up

Having a marriage characterized by humility will require commitment and sacrifice. God gives us promises that include great benefits, both here on earth and in eternity if we do not give up! When is the last time you prayed specifically and earnestly for marriages? How about for your spouse (or the spouse you hope to have one day)? PRAYER CHANGES EVERYTHING! The seed of prayer, mixed with humility and the power of heaven brings a harvest every time! I know that you may be tired. I know that you may be struggling to keep your heart & mind focused on the right things, especially if you have been longing to be married or if you find yourself in a difficult marriage. And I'm sure you may have wanted to give up. This promise is for you to hold onto. You WILL reap a harvest if you do not give up.

Prayer Points:

*Pray for marriages~ oneness, intimacy, communication, love to be awakened & increased.

*If you are married, ask your spouse how you can pray for him/her and do it. 😊☺

*MEN, there are affirmations for you to speak (pray) daily (whether you are married or hoping to be married): I will hold my wife close to my heart. I will protect her. I will praise her publicly. I will compliment her. I will trust her and treasure her. I will listen to her. I will always be faithful. I will never abuse or abandon her. I will love her night and day. I will grow old with her. I will hate divorce.

*WOMEN, these are affirmations for you to speak (pray) daily (whether you are married or hoping to be married): I will stand beside my husband. I will be trustworthy. I will enrich his life. I will appreciate him and all he does. I will take care of his needs. I will yearn deeply for him. I will share my body with him. I will cooperate and work with him. I will love and respect him. I will hate divorce.

Resources: Why Marriage Matters

<https://nebraskafamilyalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Why-Marriage-Matters-summary.pdf>

Prayer Challenge Day 4

Scripture: Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

Prayer Focus: Greatest revival of children & youth is coming

Mike Bickle (IHOP-KC) tells the story of how when he was in Egypt and ministering among poor children in Cairo. God spoke to him and said this, "I AM GOING TO CHANGE THE FACE OF CHRISTIANITY IN ONE GENERATION!" I believe this is the generation. Never before has it been so vital that we possess kingdom values in relation to children and give them the gifts of the Spirit.

Children make up a large percentage of the population today, and the earth is yielding the greatest harvest field ever before in time (over 6 billion people). God is setting up the playing field for the greatest revival of youth and children the world has ever seen. As believers, we must begin to reassess our priorities and values and get them lined up with God's. God is calling us to overcome old wineskin mindsets towards children and to contend for the new thing that God wants to do in them and through them.

Prayer Points:

*Pray that the church will recognize the great value of Children & Youth Pastors and leaders and provide the resources needed to them so that the priority of the church is children and youth.

*Pray for the Children & Youth Pastors and leaders in our city; pray that they will be encouraged & strengthened in their inner man; that they will experience the Presence of the Lord in their personal time with Him~ to receive direction and greater understanding of what God is speaking about this young generation

Resource: 4-14 window @<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7AS24VlydM>

Prayer Challenge Day 5

Scripture: Lamentations 2:19, "Arise, cry out in the night, as the watches of the night begin; pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to Him for the lives of your children..."

Prayer Focus: Shaping your children's destinies

World history is shaped in the home of godly parents. Susanna Wesley gave birth to 19 children, including John & Charles, the founders of the Methodist movement. As a mom of 19 children, living in a very small house, there was no way of finding a quiet place to pray. This did not keep Susanna from praying. She would sit in her rocking chair in the middle of the living room, put a blanket over herself and intercede for her children! Any excuses just disappeared with Susanna's example. When you make your children's beds or fold their clothes, pray for them. Go into their rooms when they are sleeping and pray for them. Use your commute to work or your work out time to pray for them. You don't become a praying parent by default. You do it by design, by desire, on purpose. Susanna Wesley shaped the destinies of her children. Your prayers for your children are the greatest legacy you can leave. They mark them, shape them and create their destinies.

Prayer Points:

*Pray for your child(ren), whether physical or spiritual children: That they would: 1) know Jesus and walk faithfully with Him all the days of their lives, 2) know how to hear the Voice of Jesus and would listen to His Voice, 3) know God and live out the first commandment (of loving God wholeheartedly) and second commandment (to love others), 4) be trained in the gifts of the Spirit and be given opportunity to be activated in those gifts.

Resource: Praying Circles around Your Children
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfSOhgzpfx8>

Prayer Challenge Day 6

Scripture: Revelation 5:8, "...Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people."

Prayer Focus: Pray the promises of the Word over your children and your marriage
As you read God's Word, write out the promises (on index cards, notebook, journal) He gives you concerning your marriage and your children. Pray them back to the Lord for your children and for your marriage when you make beds, do laundry, prepare meals, before bed, waking up in the morning, etc. Prayer is the way we fight for the lives of our children and for our marriage. There is no greater weapon we have than prayer. When we get on our knees (literally or figuratively), God extends His mighty powerful right hand on our behalf.

Those prayers live on, around the throne room of God. Revelation 5:8 tells us that the living creatures around the Throne are holding a golden bowls filled with the prayers of the saints. Your prayers are a sweet incense before God and they fill the throne room with fragrance. Prayer is powerful. Prayer moves God's heart. Prayer changes hearts. Prayer changes circumstances. Prayer changes atmospheres.

Prayer Points:

*Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you as you pray for your marriage today. Are there words/phrases or verses He highlights to you? Write those down and pray them daily. (Remember, the Holy Spirit only speaks what is in alignment with Scripture. He doesn't speak contrary to the Word.)

*Ask the Holy Spirit to give you Scripture promises to pray for your children.

*Pray for oneness in your marriage (no matter how you feel about it~ this is God's plan for marriage).

*Pray for parents~ that they would steward the hearts of your children with tenderness before God.

Resource: The movie War Room is an excellent resource that can help equip you to pray Scripture for your marriage and family!

Prayer Challenge Day 7

Scripture: Matthew 18:3, "*And He (Jesus) said: 'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven.'*"

Prayer Focus: Play is as pivotal for adults as it is for kids
Children love to play! And as adults, we know how important play is to the development of children. The truth is~ we never outgrow play. "The only kind [of play] we honor is competitive play," according to [Bowen F. White](#), MD, a medical doctor and author of *Why Normal Isn't Healthy*. But play is just as pivotal for adults as it is for kids. "We don't lose the need for novelty and pleasure as we grow up," according to Scott G. Eberle, Ph.D, vice president for play studies at [The Strong](#) and editor of the *American Journal of Play*.

Play brings joy. And it's vital for problem solving, creativity and relationships. In his book [Play](#), author and psychiatrist Stuart Brown, MD, compares play to oxygen. He writes,

“...it’s all around us, yet goes mostly unnoticed or unappreciated until it is missing.” This might seem surprising until you consider everything that constitutes play. Play is art, books, movies, music, comedy, flirting and daydreaming, writes Dr. Brown, founder of the [National Institute for Play](#).

Prayer Points: In today’s prayer points, we will be using “listening prayer” which is asking questions of the Lord and listening to the response. Have a few minutes where it is quiet and you will not be distracted. Write down in a journal what you hear from Him.
*Ask the Lord what play looks like in your relationship with Him and with your friends. (Give time for the Lord to talk to you about it)
*Ask the Lord what He enjoys doing with you.

Resource: Ted Talk with Stuart Brown, MD (Play is more than just fun)
http://www.ted.com/talks/stuart_brown_says_play_is_more_than_fun_it_s_vital

Prayer Challenge Day 8

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1, “*There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven.*”

Prayer Focus: Recreation improves your health

Thinking of going on an outing this weekend? Planning a trip with close friends? Go ahead, for you need recreation. Recreation is the spending of time in pleasurable activities. Engaging ourselves in activities that invite happiness and peace of mind is recreation. It can be in the form of rest, entertainment, or adventure. It is the means to take a refreshing break from the structure and routine of everyday life.

Giving some time for recreational activities on a daily basis, helps in the long run in maintaining overall health. Participate in some a physical activity, play a sport, or exercise daily. These activities pave the way to good health. Research has shown that recreation on a daily basis reduces the risk of diabetes and hypertension, enhances physical and mental health, and improves the quality of life.

Prayer Points:

*Ask the Lord to give you the discipline to set aside time for recreation/physical activity in this New Year (What could that look like in your schedule?)
*Ask the Lord to bring to mind some of your family or friends who have active lifestyles. Could he/she be an encouragement to you getting started in a new habit?

Resource: World’s largest list of hobbies ☺
<http://www.notsoboringlife.com/list-of-hobbies/>

Prayer Challenge Day 9

Scripture: Job 12:7-10, “*But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In His hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.*”

Prayer Focus: Recreation in Nature

Recreation means that you take part in something you enjoy. Recreational activities help boost energy, reduces stress, encourages the development of a positive temperament,

helps boost self-esteem, improves your mental well-being and helps you feel relaxed. Recreation especially that involving the company of nature, brightens your day and refreshes your mind. Through recreational activities like water sports, visits to parks, going to the zoo, running or walking outside, hiking, picnics, and outdoor sports, you get an opportunity to stay in the proximity of nature.

Prayer Points: A day of Thanksgiving in prayer for God's creation

*Thank the Lord for: 1) stars in the sky, 2) brightness of the sun, 3) all the variety of animals He created, 4) the expanse of the sky, 5) water~ oceans, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, 6) seasons of the year, 7) zoo in Omaha ☺, 8) mountains, 9) trails, 10) vegetation (trees, flowers, grass, etc)

Resource: A list of 25 most popular recreational activities

<http://list25.com/25-most-popular-recreational-activities-for-first-time-participants/>

Prayer Challenge Day 10

Scripture: Isaiah 54:2, "*Enlarge the place of our tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes.*"

Prayer Focus: Recreation helps you get out of your comfort zone

God meets you in new ways in recreational activities. A recreational activity like traveling increase your knowledge of the world; it lets you visit new places and meet people you never knew. It introduces you to people from different cultural or educational backgrounds, exposing you to the world around you. An activity like reading gives you information from around the world and increases your knowledge of different fields or lets you engage with different worlds and adventures that allow your imagination to run. Recreation through something as simple as shopping or a visit to an art gallery or museum proves to be not just refreshing, but enriching too. This lets you get out of your comfort zone (enlarging the place of your tent ☺), making you more capable than before. Recreation in its different forms, helps broaden your view of yourself, of others and of life.

Prayer Points:

*Ask the Lord "What does my comfort zone look like? How can I 'enlarge the place of my tent'?"

*Pray for an increased capacity to try new things that previously you wouldn't have attempted.

*Ask the Lord to give you courage to do something you haven't tried

Resource: Dangerous Book for Boys

<https://www.amazon.com/Dangerous-Book-Boys-Conn-Iggulden/dp/0062208977>

The Lost Art of Cheap Recreation (the art of manliness website)

<http://www.artofmanliness.com/2015/10/12/the-lost-art-of-cheap-recreation/>

Prayer Challenge Day 11

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:24-25, "*A man can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in his work. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, for without Him, who can eat and find enjoyment?*"

Prayer Focus: Arts & Entertainment

The Arts & Entertainment (an area where many find their recreation) should reflect the Glory and Majesty of our Creator. God is a master craftsman and an artist and we are made in His image. May we be instruments to celebrate His creativity in the arts, music, dance, sports, fashion, entertainment and every other way we celebrate and enjoy life! "Artists help us make sense of our world and they broaden our experience and understanding. The arts enable us to image the unimaginable, and to connect us to the past, the present and the future, sometimes simultaneously...Great literature, films and the visual arts transport us to different places and cultures; great art even allows us to see ourselves and our own community through a different lens...science can give us empirical facts and try to tie them together with theories, but it is the artists who turn them into narratives with moral, emotional and spiritual meanings...Art gives meaning to the data science provides," Dr. Mitchell B. Reiss (President of Washington College)

Prayer Points:

- *Pray for the sound of heaven to touch earth (in this area of the Arts & Entertainment).
- *Pray that God would release resources to His artists who will faithfully produce work that brings Him Glory
- *Pray for God to encounter those who are creative with His beauty. God, put Your beauty on display we pray!

Resource: Hollywood Prayer Network
<http://hollywoodprayernetwork.org/>

Prayer Challenge Day 12

Scripture: *Luke 6:45, "The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."*

Prayer Focus: Cultivating a fruitful heart.

In Proverbs, Solomon calls the heart the wellspring of life. God created us to have hearts that are whole and wholly given to Him. God created us to be fruitful in love.

We can hide the condition of our hearts for a while but eventually the true condition of our hearts will come out and it will come out through our speech. What words are you speaking about God? What words are you speaking about yourself? What words are you speaking about others?

The reality of brokenness and pain is very real. However, even in our brokenness and pain, it is still God's desire that we would have hearts that are fruitful – producing love, faithfulness, forgiveness, trusting the Lord.

Prayer Points:

- Take 5 minutes to sit in a quiet place. Have a journal with you and write down the things that you hear in your spirit.
- *Ask Father God to reveal to you if there is any forgiveness, bitterness, fear, anger, and/or rejection in your heart.
- *Invite the Lord into those emotions you are feeling, have been feeling, and have held on to for years. Invite God's presence to come and take each one of those emotions and heal the hurt that they have caused.
- *Ask God to show you the truth of each emotion or situation that He revealed to you. Ask God to reveal to you what He says about each of those emotions/situations.

Resources:

One Whole Heart Ministry - <http://www.onewholeheartministry.com>

Prayer Challenge Day 13

Scripture: *2 Corinthians 10:5*, "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ..." *2 Corinthians 2:16*, "... But we have the mind of Christ."

Prayer Focus: We have the mind of Christ.

Since we have the mind of Christ we have both the ability and the responsibility to think the way Jesus thinks. God created us with emotions! God is an emotional God! We need to line our emotions and our thoughts up with the truth of what God says. So often it is easier to believe the negative things our minds think about ourselves, about God, about others. However, this is a wrong thinking that needs to be lined up with the Word of God – lined up with what God says in His word about you, about Himself and about others.

Prayer Points:

*Ask God to help you take negative thoughts captive - Ask God to help you think they way He thinks

*In the moments when you think negative thoughts, ask Holy Spirit to reveal what is true about how you are feeling/ what you are thinking

*When you are struggling with negative thoughts and/or emotions – "I have the mind of Christ. Jesus, reveal your truth." Pray this as many times as needed.

Prayer Challenge Day 14

Scripture: *Galatians 5:22-23*, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

Prayer Focus: Cultivating lives that look like Jesus.

Desiring to live lives that imitate Jesus, we need our emotions, our will, our thoughts, our speech to line up with what the Word says. Galatians 5:22-23 tells us what fruit Holy Spirit produces and as born-again believers we have Holy Spirit living on the inside of us. This is great news! We **can** live lives that produce the fruit of love, of joy, of peace, of patience, of kindness, of goodness, of faithfulness, of gentleness and self-control. A way to cultivate a life that looks like Jesus is to desire and pursue the very fruit that Holy Spirit produces.

Prayer Points:

*Ask God to help you desire the fruit of the Spirit!

*Ask God to help you pursue the fruit of the Spirit!

*Make a commitment, with the help of Holy Spirit, to change the way you think and feel so that your thoughts and emotions line up with the Word and the fruit of the Spirit.

*Ask God for revelation of what each of the fruit of the Spirit look like in your life.

Prayer Challenge Day 15

Scripture: *Isaiah 55:8-11*, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the *LORD*. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. 'For as the rain and

the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

Prayer Focus: Lining our will with the will of God.

When we make the decision to trust the will of God in our lives we partner with God in what He wants to do in our lives! We have heard Isaiah 55:8 & 9 quoted many times as a way to explain away things that bad things, hard things, painful things, that happen in our life. We have used it as an excuse to not understand the will of God. We are meant to partner with the thoughts and ways of God. God’s will for our life is perfect! The way God chooses to do things is perfect! When He speaks, His words water the seeds that have been planted in our hearts and the water is meant to activate our hearts to run with Him in His will.

Prayer Points:

*Ask God to reveal ways that you have accused Him or believed that His ways, thoughts and leadership were not perfect. Ask God to reveal to you what His perfect will is for those things.

*Ask Holy Spirit to lead you to align your heart, thoughts and emotions with God’s will.

*Ask God for wisdom and revelation to walk in partnership with the thoughts and ways of God.

Prayer Challenge Day 16

Scripture: Romans 12:2, *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

Prayer Focus: Cultivating renewed minds.

A renewed mind is a powerful thing. A mind that refuses to believe the lies of the enemy but instead believes the truth of what God says, is powerful. Renewing of the mind is not a one-time thing. It’s not a one-time prayer. Cultivating renewed minds takes action! To live as ones who have renewed minds requires that we actively change the way we think, the way we speak, the things we allow into our hearts. There will be testing, trials, temptations that come our way as we commit to cultivating renewed minds but the testing will produce strength in us!

Prayer Points:

*Ask God to show you the areas of your thought lives, emotions, and speech that need to be renewed.

*In the areas that need to be renewed, ask God to reveal what is true in those areas.

*Ask God to give you strength to commit to cultivating a renewed mind – a mind that believes what God says and refuses to believe the lies of Satan.

Prayer Challenge Day 17

Scripture: Colossians 3:23-24

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

Prayer Focus: Grace to Serve Wholeheartedly

Deep within us is the longing to do something wholeheartedly and to make impact. And thankfully, everything that we do for the Lord makes an impact! Even serving a cup of cold water is meaningful to Him! Even if we aren't working at our "dream job," we can be wholehearted and make impact with whatever we are doing!

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord for grace to serve wholeheartedly
- Ask God to give you His perspective at your job
- Ask God to show you the inheritance available to you from Him

Prayer Challenge Day 18

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:18-19

"Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully."

Prayer Focus: Praying for Your Boss

Prayer Points:

- Pray for your boss(es) to be strengthened in their walk with the Lord
- Ask God for grace to submit and honor your boss(es)
- Ask God to strengthen your relationship with your boss(es)

Prayer Challenge Day 19

Scripture: Colossians 1:9-11

"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy."

Prayer Focus: Praying for Coworkers

Prayer Points:

- Pray that your coworkers' walk with the Lord would be strengthened
- Ask God to give them wisdom and spiritual understanding
- Ask God to help them be fruitful in their work

Prayer Challenge Day 20

Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 3:1, 5

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you, now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ."

Prayer Focus: Prayer for Strength to Live a Godly Life in Workplace/ Share Gospel

Prayer Points:

- Pray for the salvation of people at your workplace (bosses, coworkers, customers, etc.)
- Ask God for His Word to run swiftly and be glorified at your workplace
- Ask God for boldness and strength to live a godly life and share the gospel at work

-Ask God to help those you work with grow in love and perseverance in Christ

Prayer Challenge Day 21

Scripture: Psalm 90:17, "May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us - yes, establish the work of our hands."

Prayer Focus: Prayer for Success/ Favor in Workplace

Prayer Points:

- Ask God for favor in your workplace
- Ask God to make your organization successful and prosperous
- Pray that God would establish you and your coworkers in your occupation

Prayer Challenge Day 22

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:3, "And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."

Prayer Focus: Developing a healthy relationship with food.

Food is a necessary part of human life. We all must eat food to survive but the food we eat is just as important as the fact that we must eat. When the Israelites were in the wilderness God fed them by manna (an unknown substance) that nourished their bodies and kept their bodies healthy and strong. However, in America, food can be as addictive and harmful as illicit drugs. God created our bodies to "eat to live" not "live to eat." Developing a healthy relationship with food will help us in developing a healthy relationship with God.

Prayer Points:

- *Ask the Lord to reveal to you if you have an unhealthy relationship with food.
- *Ask the Lord to help you "hunger and thirst" for His presence above anything in your life.
- *Ask the Lord to help you develop a nutritious eating lifestyle and ask for Him to highlight a friend in your life that you can change your eating habits with! It's some much better and easier to make changes when you have someone to do it with!

Prayer Challenge Day 23

Scripture: Genesis 2:2-3, "And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation."

Prayer Focus: Rest is a vital component to our lives.

If no other reason, God did it so you should to! Work is an important part of our lives and God is honored by hard work. He does require it of us. However, rest is also honoring to the Lord. Taking a few hours a day or an entire day a week to step away from working to rest will help us to connect with God, our families, our friends, our own hearts. If we do not take time to step away from working then we are not able to rest our minds, our hearts, or our emotions. Rest allows us to find new perspectives as well as give our physical bodies time to recuperate.

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord for grace to take time to rest.
- Ask the Lord when is the best time for you to rest (what day of the week, times of day, seasons of your life).
- Ask the Lord to reveal to you how you can implement rest into your life and how it will honor Him and better your relationship with Him!
- Ask the Lord for revelation of any negative thoughts you have towards rest and ask Him to help you see it the way He sees it.

Prayer Challenge Day 24

Scripture: Matthew 6:31-33, "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Prayer Focus: Stress and Unbelief.

Stress is very harmful for our physical bodies. Stress is linked to or can cause depression, anxiety, heart disease, high blood pressure, immune system disturbances that increase susceptibility to infections and colds, as well as autoimmune diseases (*The American Institute of Stress*). In the day that we live, stress is very real and but we are not called to live stressful lives! We are called to live free of stress – as stress is the physical manifestation of unbelief. The fear or belief that God will not care for, does not care about or won't provide for our everyday needs, is unbelief that manifests itself as stress. We must know if we are walking in unbelief and how that is affecting our lives and causing our bodies stress.

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord to reveal to you any areas of unbelief in your life.
- Once He reveals that/those area(s) to you, ask for forgiveness for walking in unbelief. Then ask the Lord to reveal to you what is true about that/those area(s).
- Ask the Lord for wisdom to partner with Him in your life to walk in belief.
- Ask the Lord for wisdom to know how to manage the manifestations of stress in your life in a healthy and positive way (prayer, meditating on scripture, exercise, etc.)

Prayer Challenge Day 25

Scripture: Psalm 127:2, "...for he grants sleep to those he loves."

Prayer Focus: Sleep is restorative and we need it!

During sleep our bodies are able to repair tissue, restore important hormones, allows for a decrease in breathing and blood pressure, all of which restores our overall health. Sleep is one way our bodies keep functioning here on earth! We have heard conflicting views of sleep over our lifetime but the truth is that God created our bodies to sleep in order to function properly therefore sleep is God honoring.

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord to reveal to you what He thinks about our sleeping habits.
- Ask the Lord how you can change your sleeping habits to be more honoring to Him
 - Example: Are you staying up very late and therefore cannot get up in the morning to get to work/school on time? That is not honoring to the Lord and is a behavior that needs to change.

- If you struggle with sleep issues, ask the Lord to help you to sleep! Before you go to bed each night pray this verse over yourself, "The Father grants sleep to those he loves. Father, I am one that you love, therefore you will grant me restorative sleep. Father, help me to fall asleep, stay asleep, and repair my body to be aligned with how you have created me. Amen."

Prayer Challenge Day 26

Scripture: Romans 12:1, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [dedicating all of yourselves, set apart] as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, *which is* your rational (logical, intelligent) act of worship."

Prayer Focus: Dedicating our physical bodies to the Lord, is worship! Choosing to honor the Lord with our physical bodies is the logical, rational choice to make. Scripture makes it clear that God will always give us the grace needed to honor Him with the choices we make with our physical bodies – what we eat, what we look at, how we view and walk out sexuality, sleeping habits, exercise patterns. It all matters to God because it's all connected. God gives us the grace and strength needed to make the best decisions to honor what He has created – Your body!

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord if there is any way you are not honoring Him with your physical body. Ask the Lord to forgive you for not honoring Him with your physical body.
- Ask the Lord to reveal to you ways that you can make changes in your life that will honor Him.
- Ask the Lord for grace and strength to lay down bad habits/poor choices.
- Ask the Lord for grace and strength to make God honoring choices day by day that will replace your old habits!
- Ask the Lord if He has someone in your life that He wants to come along side you to help you in making new habits/ better choices and can serve as a prayer and accountability partner.

Prayer Challenge Day 27

Scripture: 2 Cor. 9:8, "*And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.*" (NLT)

Prayer Focus: Financial Blessing

Finances can be one of the most difficult areas of life that can have a negative impact on our emotional health, relationships, marriages, etc. But the Lord didn't intend it to be that way! God promises financial blessing and prosperity to His people. Over and over again God promises to supply our needs and *richly* bless us- so much so that we can overflow in giving and blessing others!

Prayer Points:

- Ask God to generously provide for all of your needs and beyond
- Ask God to give you wisdom with your finances
- Pray and talk to God about your worries and lack of trust with finances. Confess and ask Him to give you strength and grace to trust Him in this area!

Prayer Challenge Day 28

Scripture: Deut. 15:10, *"You shall surely give to him [those in need in the community], and your heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the Lord your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand."*

Prayer Focus: Giving

Giving is meant to be a completely normal part of Christian life. We are not only encouraged to give, but *commanded* over and over in Scripture. However, God promises a blessing in the giving- we will be blessed and taken care of in the giving! Giving also enlarges our heart and our capacity to love God and others! The rewards are so much greater than simply financial rewards (although they are promised too!).

Prayer Points:

- Ask God for wisdom on where/who you should give your money to
- Ask God to make you a cheerful giver
- Ask God to bless you in giving

Prayer Challenge Day 29

Scripture: Proverbs 21:20, *"There is desirable treasure, and oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man squanders it."*

Prayer Focus: Stewardship of our finances

One of the commands with our finances is that we are expected to be good *stewards* with our finances. The Lord says that the earth and everything in it belongs to Him. In essence, everything that we have or could buy belongs to the Lord and we are simply taking care of it for Him. This requires that we look at finances through the eyes of God and take careful care of how we spend our money, what we invest in, etc.

Prayer Points:

- Ask God to help make you a good steward of the things you are given
- Ask God for grace to see finances through His eyes
- Ask God for wisdom on how to take care of your finances, where to spend money, how to save, etc.

Prayer Challenge Day 30

Scripture: Luke 16:11, *"And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?" (NLT)*

Prayer Focus: Stewardship of our finances

Not only are we asked to be good stewards with our finances, but God has another goal in mind in our stewardship on earth. He is training us and preparing us to be able to steward the riches of heaven! In the next age we will rule and reign with Him as kings and priests and He uses our finances as one area in our lives to test and train us for that day!

Prayer Points:

- Ask God to give you a vision for the heavenly riches and grace to order your life accordingly
- Ask God to give you wisdom with your finances and every area of your life

-Ask God to continue to test and train you to be a good steward of "the little" so that He can entrust you with more, both in this life and the age to come!

Prayer Challenge Day 31

Scripture: Luke 6:38, *"Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."*

Prayer Focus: Giving

Giving, while stretching, is meant to be so rewarding for us! But many times we are discouraged because we do not see the reward and therefore get discouraged in giving. But God not only *has* a reward for givers, He wants us to see it, and we will see more when we ask!

Prayer Points:

- Ask God to give you grace to be generous
- Ask God for eyes to see the rewards of giving- even the financial rewards
- Ask God for Him to be faithful to you when you give