



PRAYER JOURNAL

This week, I will praise God for...

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

I will ask God for...

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

I will thank God for...

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

I need to confess...

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

I will pray for others...

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

© 2009 by Neal Bowes. Permission is granted to any Christian religious institution to download, photocopy, and distribute these daily devotions to teenagers in its community. This material is not for sale and may not appear in any commercial publication without written permission.

Please do what you can to inform other youth ministry leaders about this free resource. Updates are posted on Friday evenings at [www.DailyDevos.org](http://www.DailyDevos.org).

All Scripture quotations in this publication are from the HOLY BIBLE, TODAY'S NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION® TNIV®. Copyright © 2001, 2005 by International Bible Society®. All rights reserved worldwide.



Share your comments about these Devos online at [DailyDevos.org](http://DailyDevos.org)

MONDAY

**READ** → 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, 5:7

<sup>16</sup> Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. <sup>18</sup> So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

<sup>7</sup>We live by faith, not by sight.

**REFLECT** → I remember when we were working so hard getting ready to move into the new youth lounge at our church. The room needed a good cleaning and a fresh coat of paint. One of the colors we picked was a deep burgundy with a hint of brown. The sample room in the picture on the card we got from the paint store looked great and we were very excited to get the paint on the walls. But when we opened the can, something was wrong. The paint didn't look deep burgundy at all. It was pinkish-orange! And when it went on the wall, it was even worse. It looked like bubblegum. I got a little panicked. This isn't right...this is not good...it'll never work.

I'm a little ashamed to admit that I sometimes get panicked like this in my spiritual life, too. How often have I said, "God, what are you thinking? This isn't right. This is never going to work."

You know what happened? As the paint dried, it started to look like what it was supposed to. With the second coat, it looked perfect--just like the sample room on the card. I just needed to be patient and have a little faith in what was yet unseen.

**RESPOND** → As Christians, we know that God works to do good for us in *all things*. It says so in Romans 8:28. It doesn't mean we're going to know what God is up to. We might not understand God's plan. But it does mean that we don't need to panic, because through it all, God is caring for us, loving us, and doing good for us. Our God is good--all the time.

TUESDAY

**READ** → Ephesians 3:20-21

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

**REFLECT** → There is a story in the Bible that you're probably familiar with. It appears in all four Gospels. One day, Jesus was speaking to a very large crowd--the Bible says 5000 men, but if you include women and children, the number could have been 10 or even 20-thousand. It came to be dinner time and everybody realized that nobody had enough food to feed everybody. Some of the disciples suggested sending the people home hungry. But Jesus had a different idea. He asked how much food they had and the answer came: a couple of fish and a few pieces of bread.

Jesus had all the people sit down. He thanked God for what had been provided. And then he proceeded to feed all those in the crowd! Nobody went away hungry, and they collected twelve baskets full of leftovers.

The Gospel of John tells us that the fish and bread came from a small boy. Apparently, out of 20-thousand people, he was the only one who thought ahead to pack a lunch.

The boy couldn't possibly have thought that what he had to offer was enough to get the job done, but he gave everything he had without hesitation. That's our first lesson in this story: willingly give our all to Jesus and his work.

The next lesson is huge: God's work is not stifled by our human limitations. The boy had barely more than a lunch for a single person, but placed in God's hands, it fed thousands. What we have to offer may seem insignificant, but when we joyfully place it in God's hands, there's no telling what could happen.

**RESPOND** → Are you giving your all to God, or are you holding something back? Are you thinking, "Why bother?" or are you excited to give what you got and see what happens?

WEDNESDAY

**READ** → Hebrews 11:11-12

<sup>11</sup> And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. <sup>12</sup> And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

**REFLECT** → Abraham and Sarah weren't so sure. God had promised them a child and then millions of descendants. But they were 90 years old! And even when she was younger, Sarah was barren, unable to have children. At first, they didn't think God could come through on this promise. They thought God would not be unable to work through their physical limitations.

But nothing is impossible with God. As we learn from their story--found in Genesis 12-23--God is capable of doing amazing things and is not the least bit limited by our human conditions.

**RESPOND** → We, like Abraham and Sarah, often have very low expectations of God. But our God is a God of miracles and amazing things. It is OK and a good thing to *expect* that God will do amazing things in and with our lives.

## THURSDAY

**READ** → **Luke 19:10**

<sup>10</sup>For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

**REFLECT** → When you were a child, did you ever get separated from your parents in a store? You can probably still remember that deep sense of panic that came over you as you frantically looked this way and then that. Did you run from aisle to aisle? Did you cry out? That feeling of being separated from your parents was not a good one.

Of course, now as a teenager, there is a different feeling of dread whenever your parents *are* around!

But there are plenty of other ways in which we can feel lost. Maybe we don't have enough friends, or the right clothes, or talent, or money, or good looks. And as a result of that, maybe we feel cast aside, left out, marooned on our own little island, lost.

Let's go back to the store for a moment. How did you get lost in the first place? Something distracted you--probably a toy or something--and you lost focus on what was important: your parents. In life, we can get distracted by all kinds of things, especially the pursuit of popularity. When we allow ourselves to be focused on these kinds of things, we lose sight of what's really important: Jesus. And if we're being honest with ourselves, we have to admit that that leaves us feeling empty and even lost.

**RESPOND** → The good news is Jesus is looking for you! He doesn't want you to feel left out and alone. Jesus can offer you a peace and acceptance that nothing else in the world can. Start today making sure that your life is focused on Jesus, not on all the other stuff that doesn't really matter and will only leave you feeling empty and lost.

## FRIDAY

**READ** → **Galatians 2:20**

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

**REFLECT** → There is a story a boy who found a broken piece of mirror, and he carried it around with him everywhere he went. He made a game out of reflecting sunlight off of it. He'd reflect the light into deep, dark places where sunlight would never be able to shine on its own. As he grew older, he realized something important: he was not the source of the light, but the light could only get into those dark places with his help.

For Christians, this is true of our lives. Jesus is there. We are not the source of his love and acceptance, but we can...and should...reflect it.

A lot of people don't go to church or youth group. A lot of people don't really know Jesus or what he's all about. For a lot of people, *you* are the

only thing about Jesus they know. Hmmm, that can be a lot of pressure. How's your reflective surface?

**RESPOND** → A mirror that's smudged up or tarnished can't do all that good of a job reflecting. It can be the same way with our lives. What are some of the things that might be smudging you up? What are some things in your life that Jesus isn't too excited about. In prayer, ask God to reveal these things to you. Ask God for the courage to change them.

## SATURDAY

**READ** → **Ephesians 5:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

**REFLECT** → One time, a man was asked if he could play the violin. He surprised his friend when he answered, "I don't know. I've never tried." His answer was very wise and teaches us a good lesson.

There are many times when we assume things are beyond our abilities or we convince ourselves that things won't turn out well. And so, we don't bother trying, and we miss an opportunity.

For example, what about inviting friends to join you at a youth group activity? Do you just assume your friend isn't interested? Are you convinced your friend will just say no--or even worse, make fun of you for asking? Do you somehow know it won't turn out well and just skip it?

The fact is it's a little scary to invite friends to church activities. But the other fact is that when we don't, it's a missed opportunity. Today's Scripture would have us not waste that opportunity.

**RESPOND** → Think of two friends who you could invite to be a part of our group and write their names here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Now, pray for the opportunity to invite them to join in and for the courage to seize this opportunity. Pray for this for the next several days. Cut out your friends' names and tape them on your mirror or someplace where you'll remember to pray for them and the opportunity to invite them.