



PRAYER JOURNAL

This week, I will praise God for...

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I will ask God for...

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I will thank God for...

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I need to confess...

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I will pray for others...

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MONDAY

READ → **Jeremiah 32:6-10, 13-15**

⁶ Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me: ⁷ Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, 'Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it.'

⁸ "Then, just as the LORD had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard and said, 'Buy my field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. Since it is your right to redeem it and possess it, buy it for yourself.'

"I knew that this was the word of the LORD; ⁹ so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver. ¹⁰ I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales.

¹³ "In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions: ¹⁴ 'This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time. ¹⁵ For this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.'

REFLECT → Jeremiah was one of God's prophets who lived during a time when Babylon occupied Judah. The people had been reduced to slave status, many of them forced from their homes and exported to Babylon. It sure seems like a dumb time to buy land, especially because the transaction would be meaningless. Technically, all of the land belonged to Babylon. It was neither Hanamel's to sell nor Jeremiah's to own.

So why did God direct this transaction to take place? It was a message of hope. Check out verse 15. At the time, the Jews were not in control of their land, but God is promising that the day is coming when they would be a free people once again. Jeremiah bought the land having faith that God's promise would be kept. The documents were sealed in a clay jar to preserve them, indicating Jeremiah's willingness to be patient while God worked through the situation.

When faced with turmoil, disappointment, or other difficult situations, what gives you hope? When have you experienced God working through a tough situation in your life? Is there a situation right now where you could use God's reassurance or an extra boost of patience?

RESPOND → Spend some time in prayer. Thank God for being forever faithful. Thank God especially for those specific times when you have been given hope in a bleak situation. Lift up any current difficulties to God.

TUESDAY

READ → **Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16**

¹ Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

² They say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

³ Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.

⁴ He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

⁵ You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.

¹⁴ "Because they love me," says the LORD, "I will rescue them;

I will protect them, for they acknowledge my name.

¹⁵ They will call on me, and I will answer them;

I will be with them in trouble,

I will deliver them and honor them.

¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy them and show them my salvation."

REFLECT → We can trust God to be our ultimate source of security. Which of life's troubling situations are talked about in these verses? Could there ever be a situation in which God would not make it through? How do we know that God is in the midst of all of our struggles? What are some ways in which we can strengthen that knowledge and, ultimately, our faith in God?

RESPOND → Find a quiet, private place to reread these verses slowly, meditating on each line. How is God speaking to you through this Scripture? What hope do you find in these verses?

WEDNESDAY

READ → **1 Timothy 6:9-10**

⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

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Matthew 6:19-21

¹⁹ "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Mark 10:23-25

²³ Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

²⁴ The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God."

REFLECT → What's wrong with money? Nothing, necessarily. In 1 Timothy 6:10, it says that the *love of money* leads us into bad situations.

Greed is one way to define the "love of money." There is something in our human nature that always has us wanting "more." It can consume us. It can make us unwilling to part with what we have, which renders us unable to minister to those in need. And often, in the nonstop pursuit of "more," we can only gain if somebody else loses. Greed is inconsistent with Jesus' command to love our neighbors.

Another way to define "love of money" is putting our faith in the things we have instead of in God. It's true that sometimes people only turn to God in times of need. What about people who don't really *need* because of they have wealth and live pretty comfortable lives? It's easy—and dangerous—for us to think that we can make it on our own, forgetting that all we have truly comes from God.

RESPOND → While today's verses talk a lot about money, the concepts apply to all worldly things, including possessions and popularity. The things of this world are temporary, but God and Heaven are eternal. Take some time to consider your priorities. Are any adjustments needed?

THURSDAY**READ** → **1 Timothy 6:6-7, 11-19**

⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹ In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

REFLECT → Jesus tells a parable in Matthew 25:14-30, where a man is going to be away for a long time, so he asks his servants to look after his money while he is gone. He divides the money among three servants. The first two go out and invest their money, doubling it before the man returns. However, the third is afraid to risk losing the money so he hides it until the man returns.

The man is very pleased with the servants who increased his wealth and promises to put them in charge of even more things. The third servant, he calls lazy and wicked and says that because he squandered this opportunity, he would not be put in charge of the man's money again.

The point of the parable is that God has blessed us all and expects us to use those blessings to bring about more blessings in the lives of others. We should be careful to not squander opportunities to do so.

RESPOND → In what ways has God blessed you? How can these blessings be used to be a blessing to others? What might make you afraid to risk your blessings in this way? How can you overcome those fears?

FRIDAY**READ** → **Luke 16:19-31**

¹⁹ "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

²² "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

²⁵ "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

²⁷ "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

²⁹ "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

³⁰ " 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

³¹ "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

REFLECT → The beggar sat at the rich man's gate everyday, yet the rich man did nothing to ease his suffering, leaving him to search through his garbage to find something to eat. It isn't that he didn't know the beggar was there. In fact, we come to find out he actually knew the beggar's name. But he was so consumed by his own greed and self-righteousness that he was unable to summon even the least bit of compassion.

In the afterlife, how does the rich man regard Lazarus? (Even in his current situation, he still looks down on Lazarus, expecting Lazarus to run errands for him.) What does this reveal about the man's heart?

RESPOND → How important is it to Jesus that we have compassionate and generous hearts? Is your heart in the right place? If not, what keep you from being compassionate? Who are some "Lazaruses" that you often pass by?

SATURDAY**READ** → **1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 12**

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.

⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

REFLECT → Most of this week's devos talked about money. The money we have is a gift from God, but we can get into spiritual trouble with it if we become greedy or fail to recognize God as the source of it.

God wants us to use our blessings to be a blessing to others. That could mean anything from putting a portion of our allowance into the offering plate at church to buying something for the annual food drive.

Money is not the only way we have been blessed. We have also been given time and talents. (Many of us have more time than money!) What can we do with time and talent?

RESPOND → How can you use your spare time to serve somebody else? How might change your schedule to free up more time to do this? What talents do you have? How can you use these talents to demonstrate the love of Christ?