



Begin — How to Know God

A Seven Day Devotional

You've decided to follow Jesus!

Welcome to God's family!

Somehow, you've come to **know** that you need God's forgiveness and help. And somehow, you've come to **believe** in Jesus, God in the flesh, who came to earth to die for (pay for) your sins. Somehow, you believe He rose from the dead. And here's the decision you've made: Somehow...

**You were ready to surrender your life to Jesus to
be the one in charge, the leader, (the Lord) of your life.**

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life." John 5:24 NLT

What do you now have? Eternal life, already, right now!
Will you ever be condemned by God for your sins? Never!

You may not know it now, but this is the greatest and most important decision you will ever make. It is going to change everything about your life—in the best possible way!

Nothing just happens! This decision didn't happen by chance. If you look back over your life, I'm sure you'll see a series of moments and events that led up to this decision. Your entire life has been leading to this moment. God has been seeking you and revealing Himself to you because He loves you and wants you to know Him. He has a great purpose for your life to make a difference.

While that purpose may not be clear to you today, I know that God has led you to this beginning point of an incredible journey that will transform your life. It doesn't happen all at once. **There are steps we need to take to begin the journey.**

In the Bible, God invites you to, "... *put off your old self, corrupted by deceitful desires, and to be made new...and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness . . .*" Ephesians 4:22-24 NIV

This devotional is designed to help you begin the journey! We followed Jesus and He led us to you! It is our joy and honor to walk alongside you as you grow in your relationship with God and experience the abundant life He has for you.

Let's begin!

Dr. Darryn Scheske
Senior Pastor
Heartland Church



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Baptism

Day One

Begin — How to Know God

Day One

Baptism

The very first step on your journey as a Christian is to be water baptized. Baptism is a beautiful symbol, a picture of the death and burial and resurrection of Christ. The word “baptize” literally means to immerse underwater. Going under the water represents a death. Coming up out of the water represents being raised to new life. The old life has gone, and a new life has begun.

In the same way, to be baptized is to personally and publicly identify with Jesus. “For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ” (Col. 2:12 NIV). Just as Jesus died publicly for our sins, baptism is a public declaration to the world of my commitment to identify with Jesus and follow Him.

Jesus himself was baptized publicly as an adult. When He came out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended on His life and God the Father declared, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” Jesus began to fulfill the purpose of His life, publicly ministering to others and making a difference from that day forward. This is what God has in mind for you. He wants you to make a difference, but you cannot make a difference for God in your own power and under your own direction. The big idea is following Jesus and doing what He directs you to do.

Really, baptism is an act of humility. Baptism is the first command of Jesus for His followers. When we take this important first step, we are submitting to the instruction of Jesus and doing what He says. We follow His example in humbling ourselves, publicly putting to death our old self and embracing a new life of surrender and devotion to the God who gave His life for us. We are telling ourselves and everyone else, “I am not the same. I am not my own anymore. I belong to Jesus. He is my Lord (the one in charge of my life).”

Baptism is the vital first step of your transformational process. It’s humbling, but it’s the beginning of freedom and joy. If Jesus is now the Lord of your life, will you obey His first command? He wants you to personally make the decision to follow Him in baptism, even if your parents baptized you as an infant. Now it’s your decision. Take this first step, and begin your new life in Christ—in public!

Scripture about Baptism →

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. Galatians 3:26–27 NIV

But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Acts 8:12 NIV

And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name.’ Acts 22:16 NIV

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 NIV

Notes →

So in Christ Jesus
you are all children of God
through faith, for all of
you who were baptized
into Christ have clothed
yourselves with Christ.

Date

Action Step →

Be water baptized! Here at Heartland, we have baptism opportunities on the first Sunday of every month. Mark your calendar for the day you want to be baptized, and invite your friends and family to come celebrate with you! Scan the QR Code to learn more.



Notes →

Reading the Bible

Day Two

Begin — How to Know God

Day Two
God's Word

The most important guide for your journey of following Jesus is the Holy Bible. The word "Bible" literally means "book of books." It's not one book—it's a collection of 66 books, written over 40 generations (1,500 years), on three different continents, in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek). It contains 30,442 verses written by more than 40 authors from a rich diversity of perspectives, including kings, peasants, philosophers, preachers, fishermen, scholars, poets, statesmen, a tax collector, a doctor, a shepherd and others.

The Bible is the most accurately translated and reproduced book in all history. There are more ancient manuscripts of Biblical texts than any other book in the history of literature. The Bible was the first writing ever to be assembled in book form and the first book ever printed. The Bible is read by more people and published in more languages than any other book in history. More copies have been produced than any other book. The Bible is still THE number one, all-time, best-selling book in the world. No other book comes close to its constant circulation over the centuries. It has been the most banned, burned and outlawed book of all time.

The miracle of the Bible is this: In spite of all the different cultures and languages and centuries over which the Bible was written, the Bible has one constant theme from cover to cover. There were many writers, but only One author. The Bible is God's story of His unending love for all people. The Bible's pages reveal the heart of God who wants to be known and loved in return. It contains the raw stories of people who repeatedly turned away from God and did whatever seemed right in their own eyes. You'll read the Gospel accounts of God coming to earth in the person of Jesus to show us what He is really like. You'll read how His life, death, and resurrection restored and redeemed people to God.

Finally, the Bible is alive. Its words are living and active. When you read the Bible, expect God to talk to you through His Word. His Spirit inspired people to write them, and that same Spirit will enable you to understand and know Him. Think of it this way. Don't read the Bible to read the Bible. Read the Bible to get to know God. These are His Words of life to you. As you read, study and follow His Word, you will be transformed by it and begin to live the abundant life you were created to live.

Set a time and place to read God's Word every day. Ask Him to speak to you as you read. Begin with one of the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John—and get to know Jesus; who He is, what He taught, and what He did. A great prayer to pray while reading is this, "Jesus, please make me like You." As you do this, you will be transformed from the inside out!

Scripture about God's Word →

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 Timothy 3:16–17 NIV**

Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are those who keep His statutes and seek Him with all their heart— they do no wrong but follow His ways. You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed. Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying Your decrees! Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all Your commands. I will praise You with an upright heart as I learn Your righteous laws. I will obey Your decrees; do not utterly forsake me. How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to Your word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You. Praise be to You, Lord; teach me Your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from Your mouth. I rejoice in following Your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on Your precepts and consider Your ways. I delight in Your decrees; I will not neglect Your word. **Psalms 119:1–16 NIV**

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. **Psalms 119:105 NIV**

But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it —not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do. **James 1:25 NIV**

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What
Word
about

God's
says
me

Day Three

Begin — How to Know God

Day Three

What God's Word Says About Me

Who are you? For many people, that feels like a loaded question. But you need to understand that the way you would answer this question may not actually be the correct answer. Throughout your life, your experiences, relationships, and family of origin have all contributed to the narrative you have about yourself. Chances are, those contributing sources have misinformed you in some way about your identity. Think about all the different kinds of difficult situations and emotions a person encounters in life. How might have these common experiences potentially impacted you and the view you have of yourself?

Rejection	Betrayal
Abandonment	Abuse
Harmful Words	Anxiety
Failure	Regret/Mistakes

But a definition of ourselves—established only by life experiences—is insufficient and often harmful. Let me say it this way: You may have made some mistakes, **but you are not a mistake**. You may have experienced failure, **but you are not a failure!** The sacrifice of Jesus has paid the debt for all your mistakes, regrets and failures. These past events do not define you! If any part of your self-narrative does not align with what God's Word says about you, it is not the truth!

God's Word gives a striking visual image of the follower of Jesus now clothed in the righteousness of Jesus. Our past is covered. What God sees is His child: made in His image, created for divine purpose, and sins covered (or redeemed) by the blood of Jesus.

This is the next step on your new journey as a Christian: to break free from your old identity and labels of yesterday, and accept the truth of who you are in Christ today. You are accepted. You are loved. You are valuable. You are forgiven. You are whole. You are enough. You are a part of a family. You are a child of God.

Left to ourselves, we will argue with these truths. In some way, we are all held prisoner to lies, hang-ups, and destructive coping habits that hold us back from fully embracing our identity in Christ. The struggle tells us there is work to do!

It's time to dig into God's Word with others and discover what God says about who you are. These truths cannot just be read and accepted. For example, I can read about God's love, but it's another thing to actually experience it personally. That's why this process of finding freedom cannot be done alone. We need others to help us see, feel and experience the truth of what God sees when He looks at us.

Finding freedom from the past takes time, but it is absolutely worth it. Redefining yourself from God's perspective is the new work God wants to do inside you. It is only when we see ourselves accurately that we can really know God's heart for us and be able to share His heart with others!

What God's Word Says About Me →

God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9 NIV

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. 1 John 3:1 NIV

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household, Ephesians 2:19 NIV

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:26–29 NIV

For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will— Ephesians 1:4–5 NIV

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Community: Become a Part of God's Family

Day Four

Begin — How to Know God

Day Four

Community: Become a Part of God's Family

As a follower of Jesus, you are identifying as a child of God! This means that you are now a part of the family of believers that make up the Church! The Church is God's family, and one of the primary functions of God's family is providing a place of community, support, healing, growth, and purpose. Because you have decided to follow Jesus, it's time to connect with a local church to participate in God's family.

Another metaphor in the Bible for this family is "the body of Christ." Each of us belongs to His body and while we all may have different functions in the body, we are all a necessary part of it. Understanding this idea is another essential step in your spiritual journey.

Think of the great questions of life:

"Does anybody care about me?"

"Does my life matter?"

"Can I connect to something that really makes a difference?"

God uses the community of His Church to answer all of these questions. We live much of our lives feeling alone, disconnected, and insecure about our worth. Along the way, we pick up baggage — hurts, habits, and hang-ups that we have gathered throughout our lives. Though we have begun a new life in Christ, we still carry the isolation, insecurities, and baggage from the past.

Gratefully, we don't have to figure out how to get rid of our baggage on our own. God has designed the Church (His Body) to carry His Spirit, wisdom and power in the world. As a part of the Church, you get to be a part of what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world. Think of it this way: We're no longer focused on "finding ourselves". We're now focusing on what God's Spirit is doing in the world and how we can join Him.

So, it's time to get the right people in your life! The people you journey with will determine your destination. Those who surround you will either pull you up or drag you down.

Because God wants to do something beautiful in you and through you, you need a community of the right people to call you to your best, the person God wants you to be. This is good accountability, allowing others to support you, encourage you, and challenge you as you follow after Christ.

Accountability is often misunderstood as having to rehash the sins of the past or feeling shame admitting to past failures. But simply put, healthy and profitable accountability is borne out of a beautiful humility that says, "Here's who I want to become! Will you help me get there?" With the right people in your life, you will avoid falling back into self-destructive patterns and old ways of thinking that will limit your growth in Christ. You'll find you're not alone. We're all on the journey together. The more you connect to the Body of Christ, made up of imperfect people who are on the journey with you, you'll find acceptance, solidarity in the Church and be able to say, "I've got baggage, you've got baggage—let's all pursue Jesus and become more like Him together."

There are no solitary disciples of Christ. To be a follower of Jesus is to join the community of other followers. The growth of your new life in Christ will not occur in isolation. Join a local church and find the community God has for you in the Body of Christ. Jump in with both feet!

Scripture about Community →

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow My decrees and be careful to keep My laws.

Ezekiel 36:25–27 NIV

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. **James 5:16 NIV**

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. **Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 NIV**

Notes →

Purpose

Day Five

Begin — How to Know God

Day Five

Purpose

Did you know that God created you for a specific purpose? God made you to make a difference. Think about it! You've discovered God's love for you. He's forgiven all your sins and given you a new life. You're now a part of God's family! And as a part of His body, the Church, you are a necessary part of it. God made you with something unique in mind to contribute to the building of His kingdom. In the Bible, specifically Jeremiah 29:11, God says He has a plan for you and that plan is a prosperous and hopeful future. In Psalm 139, God says He formed you in your mother's womb. He designed you in detail and equipped you with all you need to fulfill His purpose in your life. It's humbling to realize that God chooses us, ordinary humans, to do His work on the earth. God sees the great potential in every one of us. He has put great potential inside of you. So now it's time to take a step to go through a process of discovering what He created you to do!

The best way to identify God's purpose for your life is to examine your design:

- What comes naturally to you?
- What gifts and talents do you bring to the table?
- What are you passionate about?
- What's the first thing you notice when you walk into a room?
- What life-shaping experiences have you been through?
- How does your personality offer something unique to contribute?

The answers to these questions can help you narrow down the most effective and fulfilling ways God wants you to serve others as a part of His Body—being the hands and feet of Jesus in the lives of those around you.

It's important to understand that your purpose extends beyond serving in the church. God's calling on our lives is to change the world. God intends for you to serve others and share His love in your everyday life. Think about how you can use your gifts to bless others in every sphere of your life: at home with your family, at work and in your community. God has called you to carry His presence and love people well everywhere you go!

Over time, through experimentation and experience, God's plan is to place you among groups of other believers who are making a difference for eternity together. Are you gifted to motivate? To administrate? Are you gifted with the ability to lead? Are you gifted with special talents to serve? Are you gifted with mercy? Are you gifted to give? Are you gifted to heal?

You have a special God-given ability. Really, your destiny will be revealed in how God has designed you. There is no greater fulfillment than knowing you've found your calling with others doing something bigger than yourselves to change people's lives, being the hands and feet of Jesus.

So take this next important step and engage in the process of self-discovery! Learn how God made you, and find out what He made you for. Then, get ready to live it out. This is how you will truly experience the abundant life He has for you!

Scripture about Purpose →

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. Psalm 139:13–14 NLT

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10 NLT

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for He called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9 NLT

Additional Scripture Passages: 1 Corinthians 12:7–26 NLT

Notes →

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

Date

Action Step →

Go through the Heartland Growth Track. This 3-step process will give you an opportunity to become a member of the church, discover your design and join the Dream Team. Step One begins on the first Sunday of every month, so mark your calendar for the next one you can attend, and join us!



Notes →

Making a Difference

Day Six

Begin — How to Know God

Making a Difference

The Church is called the Body of Christ because God intends for us to be His presence to the world. God builds His kingdom relationally, through people, to people. It's only through us that the world will tangibly experience who God is and what He has done for them. But the message of Jesus, called "The Gospel" or "Good News," is never just a transaction of intellectual facts. The Church is called to demonstrate who He is, a God who IS love and wants to be in relationship with every person. God's "Good News" to the world is that He sees you! He knows. He cares. He's not "watching from a distance," divorced from the plight of people. In Psalm 102, God says He hears the cry of the destitute and He will not reject their plea. He cares. He knows. He sees. So therefore, as His followers, we are to love people like He does and respond to the real needs of people.

Jesus stated his mission this way, "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, for He has anointed Me to bring Good News to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, and that the time of the LORD's favor has come" (Luke 4:18–19). As His followers, this then is our mission too.

In Matthew 25, Jesus became even more specific. If people need water, give them something to drink. If they are hungry, feed them. A foreigner? Invite them in. Naked? Clothe them. Sick? Visit them. In Prison? Care for them. **He calls us to love in action.** And in the same passage, according to Jesus, on judgment day there will be some to claim Jesus as Lord but who never followed Him. In other words, they know the facts of the good news, but they never did anything about it—you never cared for the thirsty or hungry, the poor or prisoner, the sick and the suffering, you never gave a cup of water in My name. And He will say, "I never knew you. You used My name for your agenda and convenience, but I was never your Lord."

To call Jesus Lord is to actually follow Him, demonstrating His love to all people, everywhere, sharing the Good News that God IS love. Now, if we say we love God but don't love our neighbor in this way, we are liars and the love of God is not in us.

Demonstrating the heart of God matters, because His message to the world is that He loves people so much so, He gave His only Son, so that whoever would believe in Him, would not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16). It's important to note that the difference we are called to make is a difference in people's lives for eternity. Not all "difference-making" is created equal.

The missing element from singularly humanitarian efforts is often a lack of humility. "Look at us! Look what we did!" Even some Christians and churches can fall into that same self-serving trap. Some people want to bring justice without Jesus. But there are a lot of people who want to bring Jesus to people, without any concern for justice. To represent the heart of God, we must be both. We meet needs with love so that we can lead people to Jesus.

Your need to make a difference comes from God. Once you know the unique ways He created you to contribute as a part of His Body, it's time to live out your purpose to make a difference so that others can know God, experience His life-changing love, and become a part of His family. So lean into that desire! Begin to invest your life today in a way that impacts others forever!

Scripture about Making a Difference →

*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 NIV***

*The Lord isn't really being slow about His promise, as some people think. No, He is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. **2 Peter 3:9 NLT***

*In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. **Matthew 5:16 NLT***

*And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God. **Hebrews 13:16 NLT***

*Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. **Hebrews 10:24 NLT***

*When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. **1 Corinthians 9:22 NLT***

*Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." **Matthew 28:18–20 NLT***

Let us think of ways
to motivate one another
to acts of love and
good works.

Date

Action Step →

Join the Heartland Dream Team and begin serving people both within the church and in your community. You can join the Team at Step Three of the Growth Track. To learn more about joining the team, scan this QR Code.



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Gene rosity

Day Seven

Begin — How to Know God

Day Seven

Generosity

Because you have decided to follow Jesus, becoming like Him is now one of the main goals of your life. “The Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image” (2 Corinthians 3:18). The reality is we are never more like God than when we are generous.

Remember, “God so loved the world that He gave . . .” (John 3:16) His greatest act towards us was one of generosity. Can you imagine the personal cost the Father experienced in giving us His Son, knowing He would die for us? That is radical generosity! It’s His love in action. So as we go on this journey to become more like Him, we need to find ways to put His love in action through giving ourselves. Why? Because love gives.

Giving is not limited to finances. God has given us three main commodities: our time, our talent and our treasure. We can be generous with all three of these resources to bless and serve others, share the message of God’s love, and build the kingdom of God

Now, you may look at what you have and think it’s insignificant. Perhaps you aren’t confident in the gifts you have to offer or you think you don’t have financial margin to give. It’s important for you to know that no gift is small in God’s eyes. Generosity with God is measured by percentages and not totals. In one story in the Gospels, He praised a woman who gave less than two pennies over someone who gave a large amount, simply because he gave out of his abundance. But she gave all she had.

Begin to open your eyes to see the needs of those around you. Following Jesus is training yourself to meet needs He shows you with love. Is someone you see hurting? God wants to do something in their life. Begin to think of yourself as a partner with God. You may work for your employer, or your company, but it’s so much more of an adventure to see yourself on mission with Him. So cultivate curiosity for how you can be a part of the solution for the needs God reveals to you. Maybe what you have to give won’t cover the full need, but what you have is enough for Jesus. He’ll take what you give and multiply it with the gifts of others to meet every need. He is more than capable of taking care of the rest.

When you think about giving, don’t just give spontaneously. Think about putting a system in place in your life to make generosity a way of life. In the Bible, God established “tithing” (giving one out of ten) as a system of putting God first. Rather than seeing tithing as a law of something you have to do, think of putting in place an easy, percentage-based, automatic way of trusting God as your source and putting His kingdom in first place in your life. Rather than only responding to need, this is how you begin to build a life of generosity.

God makes it clear in His Word that we are saved by grace. There’s nothing you can do to earn your salvation. But because He has given to you so freely, it’s time for you to freely give. “Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” (James 2:17 NIV). So if God has truly changed your life and you have put your faith in Jesus, it’s time to put that faith in action. Find ways to give to others. In doing this, you will become more and more like Jesus.

Scripture about Generosity →

So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image. 2 Corinthians 3:18 NLT

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. James 2:14–17 NIV

For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have. 2 Corinthians 8:12 NIV

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.” Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 2 Corinthians 9:6–11 NIV

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And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Date

Action Step →

- Acts of Kindness
- Participate in Outreach Efforts
- Show Mercy
- Do Good to Others

To find out ways to do this, attend the Heartland Growth Track. This 3-step process will give you an opportunity to become a member of the church, discover your design and join the Dream Team. Step One begins on the first Sunday of every month, so mark your calendar for the next one you can attend, and join us!



Notes →

The Lord's Prayer →

The Lord's Prayer is often recited in churches, at religious events, and often mumbled mindlessly. But there's so much more to this prayer. Jesus provided this model as an outline to teach us how to pray in a way that connects us to God. If you know nothing of God or the Bible, but if you know how to pray this prayer, then you know all the essentials of God and His word. This model takes us through each part of The Lord's Prayer, showing us how to pray the way Jesus instructed.

"This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father, Who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one, for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." Matthew 6:9–13 NIV

1. "Our Father, Who is in heaven"

Connect with God Relationally

God loves for us to call Him our Father. Establish your intimate relationship with Him and thank Him for that relationship.

2. "Hallowed Be Your Name"

Worship His Name

God loves when we worship Him, and there is power in His Name. Here is a list of some of His Names to help us worship Him specifically and personally:

- God is Righteousness** – He makes us clean
- God is Sanctifier** – He has called us and set us apart
- God is Healer** – He heals all our diseases
- God is Banner of Victory** – He defeated our enemies
- God is Shepherd** – He speaks to us and leads us
- God is Peace** – He is our peace in every storm
- God is Provider** – He supplies all of our needs

3. "Your Kingdom Come, Your Will Be Done"

Pray His Agenda First

Part of being a child of God is caring about what He cares about. We know His will is perfect, and we acknowledge His wisdom and sovereignty when we pray His agenda first. Spend time focusing on what God is focused on. His priorities include:

- Seeking and saving the lost**
- Guiding those in authority** – parental, spiritual, governmental
- His will to be done in our lives**

4. "Give us this day our daily bread"

Depend on Him first for everything.

God promises to supply all our needs, and He wants us to come to Him with our problems, needs and desires and to trust Him to provide. Ask God for what you need today. It may help to write down the concerns weighing on your mind or the desires of your heart. You can bring them to God, and trust Him enough to hand them over to Him fully. It may help to open your hands before God to physically show your surrender to Him. Problems can either be ours or God's; but they can't be both.

5. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors"

Forgive and be forgiven

God has offered us complete forgiveness, and we can receive it at any time. When we turn away from our sins and receive His forgiveness, our hearts are more prepared to forgive others. Ask God to check your heart and life and show you areas where you might need to ask for forgiveness from Him. Then, it's your turn to forgive those who have offended you. We can even choose to forgive people in advance. Ask God to forgive you and to help you forgive others.

6. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"

Engage in Spiritual Warfare

Spiritual warfare can seem difficult to understand, but the Bible makes it very clear that we have an enemy who is trying to steal from us, kill us and destroy us. As we pray, we take our stand against the enemy and fight from a place of victory through Jesus as we are empowered by His Holy Spirit. There is power in God's Word, and every lie the enemy has told us can be replaced with God's truth.

By recognizing that the enemy wants to destroy you, you can shed light on his lies and claim God's truth over your life. Ask God to show you any lies you're believing or areas of warfare happening in your life. Ask Him to expose the enemy and to help you understand and receive His truth. Simply speaking the Name of Jesus has great power in the spiritual realm. The Bible tells us in James 4:7 that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. Through prayer, we can resist him and walk forward in freedom.

7. "For yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever."

Express faith in God's ability

God is more than able to move in every situation, and ending our prayer time claiming His authority and power focuses our minds on the truth and hope of who He is and what He can do. Remind yourself of God's limitless power and then return to praising Him and declaring your faith in Him.



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Full Speed Ahead Series

