



Reflections

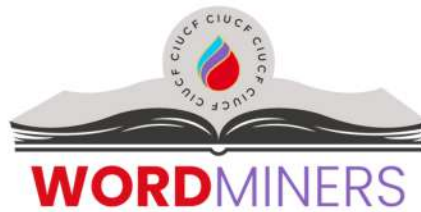
(A monthly Devotional Series)



A publication of
CIU Christian Fellowship Bible Study Unit

WORD MINERS

JANUARY 2025 EDITION



Reflections

(A monthly Devotional Series)

A publication of
The Bible Study Unit
Cyprus International University Christian Fellowship (CIUCF)

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INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME FOR THE YEAR 2025

By Pst. Desire Awoh (Lead Pastor)

As we step into the year 2025, our hearts are filled with gratitude for God's unwavering faithfulness. This year's theme, "Surely Goodness and Mercies Follow Me" (Psalm 23:6), serves as a powerful reminder of God's covenant of love and His abiding presence in our lives. This verse, drawn from the beloved Psalm of David, encapsulates the essence of a life lived under the care of the Good Shepherd—a life marked by His goodness, mercy, and unwavering guidance.

The word "surely" is a declaration of certainty. It emphasizes the unshakable truth of God's promises to His children. David, reflecting on his journey, recognized that God's goodness and mercy had not only been his anchor in difficult times but also his constant companions, pursuing him relentlessly through every season of life. This assurance is not reserved for a select few; it is the inheritance of every believer who walks in fellowship with Christ.

Goodness represents the abundant blessings, provision, and favor of God. It reminds us that the Shepherd provides for our needs and delights in our well-being. Mercy, on the other hand, speaks of God's unfailing love, forgiveness, and compassion. It assures us that even in our failures and shortcomings, His grace abounds, covering us and drawing us closer to Him.

As we meditate on this theme throughout the month of January, let us begin the year by anchoring our hearts in this truth: God's goodness and mercy are not conditional or fleeting—they are steadfast and enduring. They follow us, not as distant shadows, but as active, present realities in our daily lives. Whether we walk through green pastures or the valleys of life, His goodness sustains us, and His mercy renews us.

As we journey through January and beyond, may the words of Psalm 23:6 become a living testimony in our lives: ***"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Amen.***

**Desire Awoh,
Lead Pastor.**

BEGINNING WITH GOD

TEXTS: Genesis 1:1; Proverbs 3:5-6

Memory Verse:

*"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."
Genesis 1:1 (NIV)*



The first verse of the Bible introduces us to a foundational truth: everything begins with God. Before there was light, land, or life, there was God. Starting the year with Him as our foundation is essential for living a life of purpose and direction. As we begin to make plans for the new year, our mindset and approach must reflect a “God-first” inclination that embraces God as our anchor, guide, wisdom and light for life.

Proverbs 3:5-6 emphasizes the importance of trusting in the Lord with all our heart and leaning not on our own understanding. When we acknowledge Him in all our ways, He promises to direct our paths. Beginning the year with God means dedicating our plans, desires, and ambitions to Him and seeking His guidance above all else.

The Bible is filled with examples of individuals who began their journeys with God and experienced His faithfulness. For instance, Noah built the ark in obedience to God's command (Genesis 6:22), and Abraham stepped out in faith, not knowing where he was going, because he trusted God's promise (Hebrews 11:8). In both cases, their decision to align with God's plan brought about incredible blessings, not only for themselves but for generations to come.

To begin with God, we must first seek Him in prayer and study His Word daily. His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105). As we meditate on Scripture, we gain clarity and wisdom for the road ahead. This requires us to wait on God in earnest prayers and fellowship. Starting with God also means submitting our plans to Him, acknowledging that His ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9).

As you embark on this new year, ask yourself: What would your year look like if every decision, every plan, and every step were fully aligned with God's purpose for your life?

As you begin the new year, resist the temptation to hurriedly start projects, activities and plans just to impress people. Proverbs 14:12 warns of the way that seems right to a man but leads to death. When we begin with God, we are guaranteed that we are on the path of life. Begin the year with God and continue with Him, and you will walk on firm ground all through the year.

Begin your 2025 with God. It is the best way to start the year.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what areas of your life do you need to trust God more fully as you begin this year?
2. How can you make seeking God a daily priority in your life?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of a new year and for the opportunity to start fresh with You. I acknowledge that You are the foundation of all things and the source of wisdom, guidance, and strength. I surrender my plans to You and ask that You lead me in Your perfect will. Help me to trust You wholeheartedly and to seek Your presence daily. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take a moment today to write down your plans for the year. Pray over them, asking God to take control and align them with His will. Commit to starting each day this week with prayer and a Bible reading to set the tone for the year.



HAVE YOUR WAY, LORD

TEXTS: Matthew 6:10; Jeremiah 29:11

Memory Verse:

"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."
Matthew 6:10 (NIV)



To surrender to God's will is to invite Him to have His way in every area of our lives. It is an act of trust, acknowledging that His plans are far greater than our own. In Matthew 6:10, Jesus teaches us to pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. This prayer is not just a declaration but also a submission—a yielding of our desires to God's perfect purpose. It is an acknowledgment of the superiority of the way and plan of God for us over whatever plans and strategies we can come up with for our lives. It is trusting that God has it all figured out for our good and is both willing and able to fulfill what He has ordained for our lives.

The assurance we find in Jeremiah 29:11 reinforces this trust. God declares, "For I know the plans I have for you... plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." These words remind us that surrendering to God's way is never a loss; it is an exchange of our limited understanding for His infinite wisdom and goodness. God KNOWS how to take care of us and guide our lives.

However, surrendering to God's will is not always easy. Like Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, we may face moments where God's will seems challenging or unclear. Jesus prayed, "Not as I will, but as You will" (Matthew 26:39). In that moment, He demonstrated ultimate trust in the Father's plan, even when it led to the cross. In the same way, some of our plans and aspirations will face unexpected detours which will challenge our trust in God's promise, and like Christ, our disposition should be of trust in Him: "Not as I will, but as You will"

When we invite God to have His way in our lives, we open the door to His guidance, provision, and peace. This surrender is a daily decision that requires humility and faith. It means letting go of control and allowing God to shape our path, even when it diverges from our expectations. This means that we must

embrace the seasons when we do not have full control and understanding of our lives, trusting that as long as we follow God, the end is assured to be for our good.

Today, take time to reflect on the areas of your life where you are still holding on to control. Ask God to reveal His will to you and to help you walk in obedience to His leading. Trust that His way is not only good but perfect. God is committed and able to guide your life. Let Him.

Reflection Questions:

1. What specific area of your life do you need to surrender to God's will today?
2. How can you actively align your decisions with God's purpose for your life?

Prayer:

Father, I acknowledge that Your ways are higher than my ways and Your plans are greater than my plans. I surrender my desires, ambitions, and fears to You today. Have Your way in my life, Lord. Align my heart with Your will, and help me to trust You fully, even when the path seems uncertain. Thank You for loving me and leading me into Your best. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Choose one area of your life (e.g., career, family, relationships, or finances) and commit it to God in prayer today. Write down a declaration of surrender, such as, "Lord, I trust You with my future. Have Your way in this area of my life." Keep it somewhere visible as a daily reminder of your commitment.



PLANS AND PURPOSES

TEXTS: Proverbs 16:3; Ephesians 2:10

Memory Verse:

“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans.” Proverbs 16:3 (NIV)



God is a God of purpose. From the creation of the world to His intricate design for our lives, nothing He does is random or accidental. As we step into a new year, we are reminded that while we may have our own plans, God’s purposes are ultimate. Proverbs 16:3 encourages us to commit our plans to the Lord so that He may establish them. When we surrender our aspirations to Him, He aligns our desires with His divine purposes.

Ephesians 2:10 reminds us that we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works that God prepared in advance for us. This verse reveals two critical truths: first, we were intentionally created for a purpose; and second, God has already laid out plans for us to walk in. Understanding this frees us from the pressure of figuring out everything on our own.

However, aligning our plans with God’s purposes requires intentionality. James 4:13-15 warns us against boasting about our plans without considering God’s will. Instead, we are to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” This mindset shifts our focus from self-reliance to dependence on God’s guidance.

In practice, committing our plans to God means involving Him in every stage of the process — praying before we act, seeking His wisdom in decision-making, and trusting Him with the outcomes. It also means being open to His redirection when our plans do not align with His greater purpose. As Proverbs 19:21 states, “Many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.”

A true mark of submission to God is shown in the willingness of our hearts to let go of the control over the course of our lives and surrender to the purposes of God for us, trusting that His purposes are better than any plans we can craft for ourselves.

Today, let this truth sink in: God's purposes for your life are far greater than anything you could imagine. When you align your plans with His will, He not only establishes them but also ensures they bear eternal fruit.

Reflection Questions:

1. How can you better involve God in your planning process this year?
2. Are there any plans or desires you need to surrender to God's purposes today?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for creating me with a purpose and for preparing good works for me to walk in. I commit my plans, dreams, and goals to You today. Align my desires with Your will, and guide me in every decision I make. Help me to trust that Your purposes are good and perfect, even when they differ from my plans. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Spend time today reviewing your plans for the year. Take each plan to God in prayer, asking Him to reveal whether it aligns with His purposes. Write down one or two ways you will actively seek God's guidance in your decision-making process moving forward.



TIME AND CHANCE

TEXTS: Ecclesiastes 9:11; Psalm 90:12

Memory Verse:

"I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all."
Ecclesiastes 9:11 (NIV)



Life is full of opportunities and uncertainties, and these are often governed by time and chance. Ecclesiastes 9:11 reminds us that success is not always determined by strength, wisdom, or skill alone. Instead, time and chance—factors often beyond our control—play a significant role in shaping the course of our lives. This truth points us to the sovereignty of God, who holds time and circumstances in His hands.

Psalm 90:12 teaches us to number our days so that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Recognizing the fleeting nature of life compels us to use our time wisely and to align our actions with God's purposes. Opportunities ("chance") often come unexpectedly, and being prepared spiritually and mentally ensures that we can respond to them faithfully.

The Bible is filled with examples of individuals whose lives were shaped by divine timing and unexpected opportunities. Esther, for instance, found herself in a position of influence "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). Joseph, despite enduring years of hardship, was elevated to power at the perfect moment to save Egypt and his family (Genesis 41:46-57). These stories remind us that God orchestrates the events of our lives according to His perfect plan.

Understanding the implications of time and chance is not an invitation to laziness and passivity in the course of our lives. It is a call to humble ourselves in the hands of the Lord and seek His guidance to align us to our times and seasons. It is also a reminder that certain situations we may encounter as 'coincidences' are actually God's unseen hands aligning time and chance in our favor.

While we cannot control time or chance, we can position ourselves to make the most of them. This involves trusting God's timing, being diligent in our responsibilities, and staying sensitive to His leading. As Proverbs 3:5-6 advises, when we trust in the Lord and acknowledge Him, He directs our paths.

Today, consider how you are using the time and opportunities God has given you. Are you making room for His plans, or are you focused solely on your own? Are you diligently making good stewardship of your time, or are you misusing your time?

Trust that God's timing is always perfect, keep being diligent in His instructions, and seek His wisdom in every decision.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there any missed opportunities in your life where you could have trusted God's timing more fully?
2. How can you better position yourself to recognize and respond to the opportunities God brings your way?

Prayer:

Lord, I thank You for being the Author of time and the Orchestrator of every opportunity. Help me to trust in Your perfect timing and to recognize the doors You open before me. Teach me to use my time wisely and to prepare my heart to respond faithfully to the chances You provide. I surrender my days to You, Lord, and ask for wisdom to live them well. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Reflect on your daily schedule and identify one area where you can prioritize time with God or improve your use of time. Additionally, commit to praying for discernment in recognizing God-given opportunities and acting on them when they arise.



**JAN.
05**

REFLECTIONS

RESIDENT PASTOR'S TOPIC

TEXTS:

THE POWER OF PRAYER

TEXTS: James 5:16-18; Philippians 4:6-7

Memory Verse:

"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

James 5:16b (NIV)



Prayer is one of the greatest gifts God has given to His children. It is a direct line of communication with the Creator of the universe and a tool through which we align our hearts with His will. James 5:16-18 emphasizes the power of prayer, using Elijah as an example. Elijah, though human like us, prayed earnestly, and God responded by controlling the weather, demonstrating the miraculous power available through fervent prayer.

Philippians 4:6-7 teaches us not to be anxious about anything but to present our requests to God in prayer. This act of surrender not only brings us peace but also strengthens our faith as we trust God with our concerns. Prayer is more than a means of requesting things from God; it is a way to deepen our relationship with Him, experience His presence, and receive His guidance.

As we navigate the new year and seek clarity concerning the journey ahead, and peace in uncertainties, prayer is our way of communing with our Father, the Father of light who guides us with the light of His wisdom through the year and orders our steps. We cannot hope to go through the year successfully without prayer. Psalm 91:1 reminds us of the protective power of prayer by reminding us that it is those who DWELL in the secret place of the most high that will ABIDE under the protective shadow of the almighty.

Throughout Scripture, we see the transformative power of prayer. Daniel's prayers shut the mouths of lions (Daniel 6:22). Hannah's prayer brought about the birth of Samuel (1 Samuel 1:27). In the early church, prayer led to miraculous healings and breakthroughs, such as Peter's release from prison (Acts 12:5-7). These stories remind us that prayer is not a passive act but a powerful force that moves the hand of God. To access the power of prayer, we must pray with faith, persistence, and alignment with God's will. Jesus teaches in Matthew 21:22, "If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." This doesn't mean treating prayer as a way to fulfill selfish desires but rather seeking God's purposes with a heart of trust and obedience.

As you reflect today, remember that prayer changes situations, strengthens the believer, and aligns earthly realities with heavenly purposes. No matter how small or big your request may seem, bring it to God in faith, knowing that He hears and answers according to His perfect will.

Reflection Questions:

1. How often do you rely on prayer to seek God's guidance and power in your daily life?
2. What is one specific area in your life where you need to pray with more faith and persistence?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of prayer and for the privilege of communicating with You. Teach me to pray with faith, persistence, and alignment with Your will. Strengthen my spirit as I seek Your face daily, and let my prayers reflect trust in Your goodness and power. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayers. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Dedicate at least 10 minutes today to focused prayer. Bring before God one specific area where you need His intervention or guidance. Keep a journal to record your prayers and the ways God answers them, building your faith as you witness His power at work.



LISTENING TO GOD

TEXTS: 1 Samuel 3:9-10; John 10:27

Memory Verse:

*"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."
John 10:27 (NIV)*



Listening to God is an essential part of our relationship with Him. Just as prayer is our way of speaking to God, listening allows us to receive His guidance, wisdom, and encouragement. In 1 Samuel 3:9-10, young Samuel learned the importance of listening to God when he responded to God's call with the words, "Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening." This posture of openness and humility is key to hearing God's voice.

Jesus assures us in John 10:27 that His sheep know His voice and follow Him. This relationship requires attentiveness. To listen to God, we must silence the noise around us, create space for reflection, and cultivate a heart sensitive to His Spirit. God speaks through His Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17), through prayer, through the prompting of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13), and even through circumstances and godly counsel.

The challenge for many of us is not that God isn't speaking, but that we are too distracted or preoccupied to hear Him. Elijah's experience on Mount Horeb reminds us that God often speaks in a gentle whisper rather than through dramatic signs (1 Kings 19:11-13). This means we must learn to quiet our hearts and listen attentively, seeking His guidance in the stillness.

The primary way God will speak to us is through His word, but if we do not learn to still our hearts and meditate on His word daily, we will often miss the simple yet profound instructions from His word that will guide our lives (Psalm 119:105). We must daily spend time reflecting on the word of God as a guide for our lives and a mirror through which we view our lives.

Listening to God is not just about hearing His voice; it's about responding in obedience. James 1:22 reminds us to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. When we listen to God and act on what He says, we align ourselves with His will and experience His blessings.

Today, make a deliberate effort to tune out distractions and seek God's voice. Whether through reading Scripture, meditating in prayer, or simply being still in His presence, open your heart to hear what He has to say to you.

Reflection Questions:

1. What steps can you take to quiet the distractions in your life and listen more attentively to God?
2. How can you practice obedience to what God reveals to you?

Prayer:

Lord, I thank You for speaking to me through Your Word, Your Spirit, and the circumstances of my life. Teach me to listen attentively and to recognize Your voice. Help me to respond with obedience and faith to all that You reveal. Quiet the distractions around me and within me so that I can hear You clearly. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Set aside 15 minutes today to be still in God's presence, focusing on listening to Him. Read a passage of Scripture (e.g., Psalm 46:10) and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart. Write down any impressions, verses, or thoughts that come to mind and prayerfully consider how to act on them.



WALKING IN WISDOM

TEXTS: Proverbs 4:5-7; James 1:5

Memory Verse:*"Wisdom is supreme; therefore, get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding."***Proverbs 4:7 (NIV)**

Walking in wisdom means living a life guided by God's principles, making choices that honor Him, and discerning the right paths even in challenging situations. Proverbs 4:5-7 underscores the value of wisdom, describing it as supreme and worth pursuing at all costs. Wisdom is not merely intellectual knowledge but practical insight that comes from God and is applied in everyday life.

James 1:5 encourages us to ask God for wisdom when we lack it, promising that He gives generously to those who seek Him. This invitation reminds us that true wisdom is a gift from God, not something we can achieve on our own. Solomon's prayer for wisdom (1 Kings 3:9-12) demonstrates the importance of prioritizing God's guidance above personal gain or earthly power.

We need wisdom to successfully navigate life's many decisions and uncertainties, and scripture reminds us that wisdom comes from the Lord and from His mouth proceeds knowledge and understanding (Proverbs 2:6). We cannot walk in true wisdom outside of God.

Walking in wisdom requires both spiritual discernment and practical application. Paul instructs believers in Ephesians 5:15-17 to walk carefully, making the most of every opportunity and understanding God's will. This means being intentional about our decisions, avoiding foolishness, and seeking God's direction in all areas of life.

The book of Proverbs offers practical guidance on how to live wisely. For example:

- Proverbs 9:10 declares that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. A reverent relationship with God is foundational to wise living.

- Proverbs 11:14 highlights the importance of seeking advice from the right advisers, reminding us that wisdom often comes through wise counsel and the right community.
- Proverbs 21:23 emphasizes that wise speech can protect us from trouble.

As you walk in wisdom, remember that it is a daily commitment to seek God's guidance, act on His principles, and trust His leading. The more you walk in wisdom, the more your life will reflect His glory and bear fruit for His kingdom.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what areas of your life do you need to seek God's wisdom today?
2. How can you practice walking in wisdom by applying God's Word to your daily decisions?

Prayer:

Father, I thank You for being the source of true wisdom. Teach me to walk in wisdom daily, making choices that align with Your will and bring glory to Your name. Give me discernment to navigate life's challenges and the courage to apply Your Word in every situation. Help me to value wisdom as a precious treasure and to share it with others through my actions. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and meditate on its instruction to trust in the Lord for guidance. Identify one decision or situation where you need God's wisdom, and intentionally pray about it.



SPEAK LIFE

TEXTS: Proverbs 18:21; Ephesians 4:29

Memory Verse:

"The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit." Proverbs 18:21 (NIV)



Words have incredible power. They can build up or tear down, encourage or discourage, heal or wound. Proverbs 18:21 reminds us that the tongue has the power of life and death, meaning our words can bring life to situations, relationships, and people, or they can cause harm and destruction.

Words are creative forces, forming strongholds in our minds and creating realities that propel the cause of our lives. It is for this reason that we must be careful with our words and insist on using our words in agreement with the will and purpose of God concerning us as seen in His word, regardless of what life presents us.

In Ephesians 4:29, Paul urges believers to use their words to edify others: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." This is a powerful call to speak life, ensuring our words align with God's truth and reflect His love.

The Bible is filled with examples of the impact of words:

- Creation: God spoke the world into existence with His words (Genesis 1).
- Encouragement: Jesus' words brought life and hope to the weary, such as when He told the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you" (John 8:11).
- Faith: Joshua and Caleb spoke words of faith about conquering the Promised Land, in contrast to the other spies' words of fear (Numbers 14:6-9).

Speaking life requires intentionality. It means choosing words that inspire faith, foster hope, and convey love. James 3:9-10 highlights the contradiction of blessing and cursing coming from the same mouth, challenging us to use our words consistently for good.

As you go through your day, consider the impact of your words. Are they building others up or tearing them down? Are they reflecting God's love and truth? Speaking life is a daily choice, one that allows you to be a source of encouragement and strength to those around you.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are your words today speaking life into situations, relationships, and yourself?
2. How can you be more intentional about using your words to glorify God and bless others?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of speech and the ability to speak life into the world around me. Forgive me for times when my words have caused harm. Teach me to use my tongue to bless, encourage, and edify others. Let my words always reflect Your truth and bring glory to Your name. Help me to speak with kindness, wisdom, and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Make a conscious effort today to speak life. Start by encouraging at least one person with your words — whether through a compliment, a prayer, or a reminder of God's promises. Reflect on any negative words you've spoken recently, and seek to replace them with words of healing and hope.



STEWARDED YOUR TIME

TEXTS: Psalm 90:12; Ephesians 5:15-16

Memory Verse:

“Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”
Psalm 90:12 (NIV)



Time is one of the most precious resources God has given us. Unlike money or possessions, time cannot be replenished. Psalm 90:12 reminds us to number our days, asking God to teach us how to use them wisely. This means recognizing that our time on earth is limited and choosing to live with intentionality and purpose.

Ephesians 5:15-16 reinforces this principle by urging believers to walk wisely, “making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.” Managing time well involves aligning our priorities with God’s will, using our moments for what truly matters, and avoiding distractions that pull us away from His purposes.

The Bible gives us examples of individuals who managed their time with focus and purpose:

- Jesus: Despite His busy ministry, Jesus prioritized time with the Father in prayer (Mark 1:35). He also knew when to rest and withdraw from the crowds to recharge (Luke 5:16).
- Nehemiah: Nehemiah approached his task of rebuilding Jerusalem’s wall with determination and efficiency, refusing to be distracted by opposition or unimportant matters (Nehemiah 6:3).

Managing your time well requires intentional planning, discipline, and reliance on God’s guidance. Begin by identifying your God-given priorities—spending time with Him, loving others, and fulfilling your unique calling. Use tools like schedules and to-do lists to stay organized, but remain flexible to God’s interruptions. Sometimes, the unexpected opportunities He brings are part of His greater plan.

Reflect today on how you are using your time. Are you investing it in what truly matters, or are you allowing distractions to dominate your schedule? Surrender your time to God, asking Him to guide your steps and help you live with purpose each day.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas of your life where you are wasting time or not using it in alignment with God's priorities?
2. How can you make practical changes to better manage your time for God's glory?

Prayer:

Lord, I thank You for the gift of time and for the opportunities You provide each day to live for Your glory. Teach me to use my time wisely and to focus on what truly matters. Help me to overcome distractions and to prioritize You above all else. Guide me in making the most of my days, and let my life reflect Your purpose and will. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Evaluate how you are currently spending your time by keeping a log for one day. Identify any areas where you are wasting time or neglecting God-given priorities. Make a plan to adjust your schedule, setting aside time for prayer, Bible study, and meaningful work for God's kingdom.



STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

TEXTS: Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Peter 4:10

Memory Verse:

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."
1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)



Stewardship is the responsible management of the resources God has entrusted to us. Everything God gives us as blessings in the course of life is a resource that must be stewarded diligently. These resources go beyond money and material possessions; they include our time, talents, relationships, and spiritual gifts.

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), Jesus teaches that each servant was given resources according to their ability, and they were held accountable for how they managed them. The servants who invested wisely and multiplied their talents were commended, while the one who buried his talent out of fear was rebuked. This parable reminds us that we are accountable to God for how we manage what He has entrusted to us. The relationships, resources, money, spiritual gifts, talents, opportunities, positions and time God blesses us with are resources that we must utilize with diligence and faithfulness as stewards for God's glory.

1 Peter 4:10 tells us that every believer is called to be a faithful steward of God's grace, using the gifts and abilities we have been given to serve others. God does not expect us to use our resources solely for our benefit, but to bless and serve others as an extension of His love. This includes managing our finances, using our time wisely, sharing our talents in the church and community, and being generous with what we have.

Stewardship is not just about giving money or managing possessions, but also about prioritizing God's kingdom in all areas of life. Jesus teaches in Matthew 6:33 to "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness," reminding us that everything we have is ultimately a gift from God and is meant to serve His purposes. When we view our resources through this lens, we see them as tools to further His work on earth.

The principle of stewardship also involves trusting God with what we have. Whether we have little or much, God expects us to use our resources wisely and faithfully, knowing that He will provide for our needs. As we practice good stewardship, we grow in faith and trust in His provision, and we participate in His work on earth.

Reflection Questions:

1. How are you currently managing the resources God has entrusted to you (time, talents, finances)?
2. Are there areas in your life where you could be more intentional about using your resources to serve God and others?

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the many resources You have entrusted to me. Help me to be a faithful steward of all that You have given — my time, my talents, my finances, and my relationships. Teach me to use these resources wisely, to serve You and others, and to invest in Your kingdom. May I always trust You to provide for my needs as I faithfully manage what You have provided. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take time today to assess how you are currently managing your resources. Are there any areas where you could be more intentional about being a good steward? Whether it's reviewing your budget, offering your talents in service, or simply managing your time more effectively, take one small action today to practice better stewardship.



**JAN.
12**

REFLECTIONS

RESIDENT PASTOR'S TOPIC

TEXTS:

BE INTENTIONAL

TEXTS: Colossians 3:23-24; Proverbs 16:3

Memory Verse:*"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."***Colossians 3:23 (NIV)**

Living intentionally means making deliberate choices that align with God's purpose for your life. It's about being purposeful in your actions, decisions, and priorities, ensuring that they glorify God and contribute to His kingdom. In Colossians 3:23-24, Paul urges believers to do everything wholeheartedly as unto the Lord. This scripture reminds us that our work, relationships, and daily activities should be carried out with a focus on pleasing God, not just fulfilling earthly obligations.

Proverbs 16:3 tells us to "commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans." Intentionality requires surrendering our plans to God, trusting Him to guide our steps, and aligning our goals with His will. When we seek His direction and act purposefully, we walk in alignment with His plans for us (Jeremiah 29:11).

Jesus exemplified intentional living during His earthly ministry. He was purposeful in spending time with the Father, choosing His disciples, teaching the crowds, and fulfilling His mission of salvation. Nothing Jesus did was accidental—every action and decision was part of God's divine plan. As His followers, we are called to live with the same focus and determination, ensuring that our lives reflect His love and purpose.

Intentional living requires clarity of purpose and consistency in action. Begin by asking yourself: What is God calling me to do today? How can I make the most of the opportunities He has given me? Avoid the trap of drifting through life or making decisions based on convenience. Instead, cultivate a mindset of purpose, knowing that each moment is an opportunity to glorify God and serve others.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas in your life where you have been passive or unfocused? How can you approach them with greater intentionality?
2. What practical steps can you take today to align your actions with God's purpose for your life?

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the gift of life and for the opportunities You provide each day. Help me to live intentionally, making choices that honor You and reflect Your purpose for me. Teach me to commit my plans to You and to work wholeheartedly as unto You. Guide my steps and grant me clarity and focus in all that I do. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take a moment today to write down your goals and priorities for the week. Pray over them, asking God to help you align your actions with His will. Identify one specific area where you need to be more intentional (e.g., time management, relationships, spiritual growth) and commit to making purposeful changes.



GROW UP!

TEXTS: Hebrews 5:12-14; Ephesians 4:14-15

Memory Verse:

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ."
Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)



Spiritual growth is not optional for a believer; it's a sign of a healthy relationship with God. Hebrews 5:12-14 admonishes those who remain on "milk" when they should have progressed to "solid food." This passage illustrates the need for maturity, moving beyond basic teachings, and stepping into deeper understanding and application of God's Word.

In Ephesians 4:14-15, Paul contrasts spiritual immaturity with maturity. He warns against being tossed about by every wind of teaching and deception, urging believers to grow into the fullness of Christ. Spiritual maturity involves developing discernment, wisdom, and Christlike character.

Growing up in faith requires intentional effort:

- Study of God's Word: The Bible is the primary tool for spiritual growth. As we read and meditate on Scripture, we are transformed (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- Prayer: Communing with God deepens our relationship with Him and aligns our hearts with His will (Colossians 4:2).
- Obedience: Growth comes through practicing what we learn, allowing God to shape us through life's challenges (James 1:22).
- Community: Surrounding ourselves with mature believers encourages accountability and growth (Proverbs 27:17).

Spiritual maturity is not about perfection but progression. It's a daily journey of becoming more like Christ. Just as a child grows into adulthood through consistent nurturing and learning, so we grow spiritually as we seek God and live out His Word.

Take a moment to reflect on your spiritual journey. Are you growing, or are you stuck in the same place? God desires for you to grow into the fullness of His purpose for your life. Choose today to commit to the process of spiritual growth.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what areas of your spiritual life do you need to grow or mature?
2. What practical steps can you take to move from spiritual milk to solid food in your relationship with God?

Prayer:

Lord, thank You for calling me to grow into maturity in Christ. Forgive me for any areas where I have been stagnant or complacent in my faith. Help me to hunger for Your Word, to seek You in prayer, and to live out what I learn. Surround me with people who encourage my growth and challenge me to become more like You. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Evaluate your spiritual habits — Bible study, prayer, service, and fellowship. Identify one area where you need improvement, and set a specific goal for growth this week. For example, commit to reading a chapter of the Bible daily, joining a Bible study group, or volunteering in a ministry.



BY FLESH SHALL NO MAN PREVAIL

TEXTS: 1 Samuel 2:9; Zechariah 4:6

Memory Verse:*"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord Almighty."***Zechariah 4:6 (NIV)**

The phrase "by flesh shall no man prevail" is a profound truth that highlights the futility of relying on human strength alone to achieve lasting success or victory in life. In 1 Samuel 2:9, Hannah declares in her prayer that "He will guard the feet of His faithful servants, but the wicked will be silenced in the place of darkness. It is not by strength that one prevails." This scripture underscores that ultimate victory comes only through God's power and guidance.

Zechariah 4:6 further reinforces this truth: "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord Almighty." Human effort and ingenuity, though important, are insufficient without the enabling power of God's Spirit. God's strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9), and it is through His Spirit that we accomplish what we cannot do on our own.

The Bible provides numerous examples of those who trusted in God rather than their own abilities:

- David vs. Goliath: David prevailed not because of his skill with a sling but because he relied on the name of the Lord (1 Samuel 17:45-47).
- Gideon: Though he led a small army of 300 men, Gideon defeated the Midianites because God was with him (Judges 7:7).
- Jesus: In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus submitted to the Father's will, accomplishing salvation through obedience and the power of God rather than resisting in human strength (Luke 22:42).

As believers, we are called to depend on God in every aspect of our lives. While we must put in effort and diligence, we must always acknowledge that it is God who gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:7). Relying on the flesh alone leads to frustration and failure, but trusting in God's Spirit brings victory, peace, and fulfillment.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas in your life where you are relying solely on your own strength instead of seeking God's help?
2. How can you cultivate greater dependence on God's Spirit in your daily life?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that without You, I can do nothing. Forgive me for the times I have relied on my own strength instead of trusting in You. Teach me to depend on Your Spirit in every area of my life. Strengthen me where I am weak, and guide me in Your perfect will. Help me to remember that true victory comes from You alone. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Identify one specific challenge or task you are currently facing. Commit it to God in prayer, asking for His wisdom and strength to guide you. Throughout the day, remind yourself to depend on His Spirit rather than relying solely on your abilities.



HATE THE WORLD

TEXTS: 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4

Memory Verse:

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.”

1 John 2:15 (NIV)



When Scripture speaks of “hating the world,” it does not mean rejecting God’s creation or the people in it. Instead, it calls for a rejection of the sinful systems, values, and desires that are opposed to God’s will. In 1 John 2:15-17, we are warned against loving the world because the things of the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — are fleeting and contrary to God’s eternal kingdom.

James 4:4 sharpens this point, stating that “friendship with the world means enmity against God.” When we align ourselves with worldly pursuits, we risk compromising our relationship with God. Loving the world often leads to idolizing material possessions, prioritizing temporary pleasures, or seeking approval from others above obedience to God.

Jesus modeled how to live in the world without being of the world (John 17:14-16). He engaged with sinners, showing love and compassion, but He did not partake in their sinful ways or compromise His mission. Similarly, as believers, we are called to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16), influencing the world for Christ while resisting its corrupting influence.

Hating the world means prioritizing God above all else, choosing His will over societal pressures or personal desires. It requires a daily commitment to align our hearts with God’s Word, to seek His kingdom first (Matthew 6:33), and to remain steadfast in our faith despite the allure of worldly temptations.

Ultimately, the things of this world are temporary, but those who do the will of God will abide forever (1 John 2:17). Choose today to love God wholeheartedly and reject anything that stands in opposition to Him.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas in your life where love for the world has taken precedence over your love for God?
2. How can you actively resist worldly influences while still being a light for Christ in the world?

Prayer:

Father, help me to love You above all else and to reject the sinful desires and values of this world. Teach me to live in a way that honors You, seeking Your kingdom and doing Your will. Strengthen me to resist worldly temptations and to be a light for You in the world. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Evaluate your daily habits and priorities. Identify one area where you have been overly influenced by worldly desires or pursuits (e.g., materialism, entertainment, pride) and commit to surrendering it to God. Replace it with a God-honoring activity, such as prayer, Bible study, or serving others.



TARRY IN PRAYER

TEXTS: Luke 18:1-8; Acts 1:14

Memory Verse:*"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."***Romans 12:12 (NIV)**

To “tarry in prayer” means to persist, wait, and remain steadfast in seeking God through prayer. In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus shares the parable of the persistent widow, illustrating the importance of perseverance in prayer. The widow, through her relentless appeals, receives justice from an unrighteous judge. Jesus uses this example to encourage His followers not to give up in prayer, reminding them that God, who is infinitely just and loving, will respond to the cries of His children in due time.

In Acts 1:14, we see the early church embodying this principle. After Jesus’ ascension, the disciples devoted themselves to prayer as they awaited the promise of the Holy Spirit. Their tarrying in prayer was not passive—it was a time of active expectation, faith, and preparation for the outpouring of God’s power.

Tarrying in prayer requires faith, patience, and trust in God’s timing. It is easy to become discouraged when answers don’t come immediately, but prayer is as much about building our relationship with God as it is about receiving answers. When we tarry in prayer, we align our hearts with God’s will, develop spiritual endurance, and open ourselves to His work in and through us.

Tarrying in prayer is beneficial for us too. It gives us the opportunity learn to dwell in the secret place, growing from struggling in prayer to delighting in the fellowship it grants us with God.

The Bible reminds us to pray continually (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and to approach God with boldness (Hebrews 4:16). Whether you are praying for a breakthrough, guidance, or strength, know that God hears you. Your waiting is not in vain, for God is faithful, and His timing is perfect.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there prayers you've given up on because you didn't see immediate results? How can you renew your commitment to tarrying in prayer?
2. How can waiting in prayer strengthen your faith and deepen your relationship with God?

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the privilege of coming to You in prayer. Teach me to wait on You with faith and patience, trusting in Your perfect timing. Strengthen my heart when I feel weary or discouraged, and remind me that You hear every prayer I pray. Help me to persevere and to seek Your will above all. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Identify one prayer request or area of your life where you need God's intervention. Commit to praying about it daily for the next week. Set aside a specific time each day to tarry in prayer, trusting God to answer in His perfect way and timing.



STRENGTH IN THE LORD

TEXTS: Ephesians 6:10-11; Isaiah 40:29-31

Memory Verse:

*"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power."
Ephesians 6:10 (NIV)*



The Christian life is often described as a battle, requiring more strength than human effort can provide. Ephesians 6:10 reminds us to “be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power,” emphasizing that our strength must come from God, not ourselves. Paul’s words encourage us to rely on God’s limitless power to face challenges, resist temptation, and stand firm in our faith.

Isaiah 40:29-31 provides a vivid image of what it means to find strength in the Lord:

- God gives power to the weak and renews the strength of those who trust in Him.
- Even the strongest individuals can grow tired and stumble, but those who hope in the Lord will soar on wings like eagles, run without growing weary, and walk without fainting.

To draw strength from God, we must abide in Him through:

- Prayer and Worship: These connect us to the source of divine power, refreshing our souls and renewing our perspective (Psalm 28:7).
- The Word of God: Scripture equips us with truth and encouragement, reminding us of God’s promises and His faithfulness (Hebrews 4:12).
- Faith and Surrender: When we acknowledge our limitations and depend on God, He works through our weaknesses to display His strength (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

God’s strength is not just for moments of crisis but for daily living. Whether you’re facing physical exhaustion, emotional distress, or spiritual battles, remember that God’s power is sufficient. Lean on Him, and let His strength carry you through every challenge.

Reflection Questions:

1. What areas in your life are you trying to manage in your own strength instead of relying on God?
2. How can you develop habits that help you draw daily strength from the Lord?

Prayer:

Lord, thank You for being my strength and shield. I confess my weakness and acknowledge my need for Your power in every area of my life. Teach me to trust You fully and to draw my strength from Your Word, Your Spirit, and Your presence. Renew me daily so I can face every challenge with faith and courage. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Begin your day by committing your challenges to God in prayer. Write down a specific scripture (such as Isaiah 40:31 or Ephesians 6:10) that reminds you of God's strength and meditate on it throughout the day. When you feel weak or overwhelmed, pause and pray for renewed strength.



**JAN.
19**

REFLECTIONS

RESIDENT PASTOR'S TOPIC

TEXTS:

ACKNOWLEDGE HIM IN ALL YOUR WAYS

TEXTS: Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 37:5-6

Memory Verse:

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

Proverbs 3:6 (NIV)



Acknowledging God in all our ways is a fundamental aspect of walking in faith and dependence on Him. An essential foundation of our faith is understanding that our lives are guided by the wisdom of God, because outside of God, our lives lose its meaning and essence.

Proverbs 3:5-6 emphasizes trust in God over reliance on human understanding. To acknowledge God is to recognize His sovereignty, wisdom, and presence in every aspect of our lives. It is not just about seeking Him during crises but about inviting Him into our daily decisions, actions, and plans.

Acknowledging God is not just acknowledging His existence but also the sufficiency of His wisdom and sovereignty to guide us, keep us, and perfect our lives.

Psalm 37:5-6 echoes this principle, encouraging us to commit our ways to the Lord and trust Him to act on our behalf. When we acknowledge God, we demonstrate humility and surrender, aligning our lives with His perfect will.

This acknowledgment can take several forms:

1. **Prayer:** Bringing every decision, no matter how small or significant, before God in prayer (Philippians 4:6).
2. **Obedience to His Word:** Allowing Scripture to guide our thoughts and choices (Psalm 119:105).
3. **Dependence:** Trusting in God's timing and provision rather than our efforts or resources (Isaiah 40:31).
4. **Gratitude:** Recognizing God's hand in our successes and blessings, giving Him glory for all things (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Acknowledging God ensures that our paths are not only directed but blessed. It shifts our focus from self-reliance to God-dependence, creating room for His guidance, favor, and peace to flourish in our lives. When we let Him lead, He aligns our plans with His purposes, making our lives testimonies of His faithfulness.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas of your life where you rely more on your own understanding than on God's guidance?
2. How can you make acknowledging God a consistent part of your daily routine?

Prayer:

Father, I thank You for being my guide and the source of my wisdom. I confess the times I have leaned on my understanding instead of acknowledging You. Help me to trust You completely and to seek You in all my ways. Teach me to depend on You daily and to walk in alignment with Your will. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take time today to evaluate a specific area of your life where you need God's guidance (e.g., career, relationships, health). Commit that area to Him in prayer and ask for His direction. Write down Proverbs 3:5-6 and reflect on it throughout the day as a reminder to trust and acknowledge God in every decision.



KEEP YOUR EYES ON THINGS ABOVE

TEXTS: Colossians 3:1-4; Matthew 6:19-21

Memory Verse:

"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."

Colossians 3:2 (NIV)



As believers, we are called to live with an eternal perspective, keeping our focus on God's kingdom rather than becoming consumed by the temporary distractions of the world. In Colossians 3:1-4, Paul urges us to set our hearts and minds on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. This instruction challenges us to align our thoughts, desires, and actions with God's will and purpose.

Matthew 6:19-21 reinforces this by warning against storing up treasures on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and thieves break in to steal. Instead, Jesus encourages us to store up treasures in heaven. Our priorities reveal where our hearts truly lie. Focusing on heavenly things means valuing what God values—such as faith, obedience, love, and eternal rewards—over material possessions, fame, or fleeting pleasures.

Keeping our eyes on things above does not mean ignoring our earthly responsibilities but approaching them with a kingdom mindset. When we focus on Christ, our daily choices reflect our eternal hope. For example:

- We choose integrity over shortcuts, knowing our ultimate reward comes from God (Colossians 3:23-24).
- We pursue relationships that encourage spiritual growth, recognizing their eternal significance.
- We find peace in trials, trusting in God's promises and His sovereign plan (Romans 8:28).

Fixing our eyes on Jesus keeps us grounded in faith, anchored in hope, and motivated by love. It helps us navigate life's distractions and challenges with purpose and clarity.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there earthly distractions or pursuits that are taking your focus away from God and His kingdom?
2. How can you practically shift your attention to things above in your daily life?

Prayer:

Lord, thank You for calling me to a higher perspective. Help me to set my heart and mind on things above, where Christ is. Teach me to value what matters to You and to live with an eternal focus. Keep me from being consumed by the temporary and guide my steps to reflect Your will. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take time today to evaluate your priorities. Identify one area where you may be overly focused on earthly things (e.g., materialism, approval, or worry). Commit to replacing that focus with a godly priority, such as serving others, meditating on God's Word, or investing in your spiritual growth.



STANDING ON HIS PROMISES

TEXTS: 2 Corinthians 1:20; Hebrews 10:23; Joshua 21:45

Memory Verse:

"For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through Him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God." 2 Corinthians 1:20 (NIV)



God's promises are a firm foundation for believers to stand on. The Bible is filled with assurances from God that cover every aspect of life—provision, protection, guidance, salvation, and eternal life. In 2 Corinthians 1:20, Paul reminds us that every promise of God is fulfilled in Christ. This means we can trust God's Word completely because His character is unchanging, and His faithfulness is unwavering (Numbers 23:19).

Hebrews 10:23 encourages us to "hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful." Standing on His promises means believing and acting on His Word, even when circumstances appear contrary. For example:

- Abraham believed God's promise of a son despite his old age, and his faith was credited to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6).
- Joshua and the Israelites experienced God's faithfulness when every promise He made to Israel was fulfilled (Joshua 21:45).
- Jesus assured His followers of God's provision, peace, and eternal life, promises that remain true for us today (Matthew 6:33, John 14:27, John 3:16).

Standing on God's promises requires faith, patience, and action. Faith believes in God's ability and willingness to fulfill His Word (Hebrews 11:1). Patience waits for His timing, knowing that His delays are not denials. Action aligns our lives with His promises, stepping out in obedience and expectation, even when we have not seen the fulfillment of His promises.

Standing on God's promises guards our hearts against discouragements and the lies of the enemy especially in seasons when we are waiting on the promise. It also helps us to withstand afflictions, trusting that God's word is settled in our lives (Psalm 119:89-92).

When we stand on His promises, we declare that His Word is true, His power is sufficient, and His plan is perfect. No matter what you're facing today, remind yourself that God's promises are trustworthy, and His faithfulness never fails.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there promises from God's Word that you need to trust and hold on to more firmly in your current season?
2. How can you align your actions with the promises of God in your life?

Prayer:

Faithful God, thank You for the assurance that Your promises are true and unchanging. Help me to trust in Your Word and to stand firm, no matter what circumstances I face. Teach me to walk in faith, patience, and obedience as I wait for Your promises to be fulfilled. Thank You for Your faithfulness and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Choose one promise of God from Scripture that speaks to your current situation (e.g., provision, healing, guidance). Write it down, meditate on it, and pray over it today. Commit to living in alignment with that promise by stepping out in faith and obedience.



THE GOODNESS OF GOD

TEXTS: Psalm 34:8; Exodus 33:19; Romans 8:28

Memory Verse:

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him."

Psalm 34:8 (NIV)



The goodness of God is one of His most beautiful and comforting attributes. It speaks of His benevolence, kindness, and unwavering commitment to act in love toward His creation. Psalm 34:8 invites us to personally experience God's goodness: "Taste and see that the Lord is good." This is not just a concept to know intellectually but a reality to be lived out through faith and trust in Him.

In Exodus 33:19, God declares to Moses, "I will make all my goodness pass before you." This profound statement reveals that God's nature is inherently good, and His goodness is expressed in His actions, His promises, and His interactions with us.

Romans 8:28 assures us that "in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." This means that even in challenges or trials, God's goodness is at work, orchestrating everything for our ultimate benefit and His glory.

Experiencing the reality of the goodness of God requires:

1. **Trusting His Character:** Believing that God's plans for us are always good (Jeremiah 29:11).
2. **Gratitude:** Recognizing His blessings, both big and small, as evidence of His goodness (James 1:17).
3. **Resting in His Sovereignty:** Trusting that His goodness is constant, even when life is uncertain (Psalm 27:13).

God's goodness is not based on our circumstances but on His unchanging nature. God is good! It is His nature to be good, and He delights in showing us His goodness and mercies daily. This is why He reminds us that SURELY His goodness and mercy follow us every single day (Psalm 23:).

When we reflect on His goodness, it fills us with hope, joy, and a deeper desire to know Him more intimately, to experience all of that goodness, and to radiate that goodness to the world around us.

Reflection Questions:

1. Can you recall specific moments in your life where you experienced God's goodness? How did it impact your faith?
2. How can you actively "taste and see" God's goodness in your daily life?

Prayer:

Father, I thank You for Your goodness that never fails. Help me to trust in Your love and to recognize Your hand at work in every area of my life. Teach me to rejoice in Your blessings and to hold fast to the truth of Your goodness, even in challenging times. May my life reflect gratitude and confidence in Your perfect will. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take time today to reflect on God's goodness in your life. Write down three specific ways He has shown His goodness to you recently. Share one of these testimonies with someone to encourage them in their faith.



STAYING TRUE TO THE WORD

TEXTS: Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Matthew 7:24-25

Memory Verse:

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
Psalm 119:105 (NIV)*



In a world filled with shifting opinions, trends, and philosophies, staying true to God's Word is essential for living a life that honors Him. The Bible is not just a book; it is the living Word of God, inspired by His Spirit and given to guide, instruct, and correct us (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Psalm 119:105 describes God's Word as a "lamp to my feet and a light to my path." This imagery illustrates how the Scriptures provide clarity and direction, helping us navigate through life's complexities. Without the Word, we stumble in darkness, but with it, we walk securely on the path God has set before us.

In Matthew 7:24-25, Jesus likens those who hear and obey His Word to a wise builder who builds on a solid rock. When storms come, the house stands firm. Similarly, when we stay rooted in the Word, we remain steadfast in faith, even in challenging times.

Staying true to the Word involves:

1. **Consistent Study:** Regularly reading and meditating on Scripture deepens our understanding and builds a firm foundation (Joshua 1:8).
2. **Obedience:** Applying the truths of the Bible in our daily lives is key to living out our faith (James 1:22).
3. **Discernment:** Using God's Word to distinguish between truth and deception helps us stay aligned with His will (Hebrews 4:12).

God's Word is unchanging and eternal (Isaiah 40:8). As we hold firmly to it, we develop a life that pleases Him, equips us for good works, and keeps us grounded in His truth.

Reflection Questions:

1. How much priority do you currently give to studying and applying God's Word in your daily life?
2. Are there specific areas in your life where you need to align your actions more closely with Scripture?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of Your Word, which provides wisdom, guidance, and strength. Help me to treasure it in my heart and to live according to its truths. Strengthen me to remain steadfast, even when the world around me wavers. May Your Word continue to light my path and guide my steps. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Commit to spending at least 15 minutes today reading and meditating on a passage of Scripture. Choose one verse to memorize and reflect on throughout the day. Take one practical step to apply what you've read to your life.



OBSERVING TO DO ALL THAT IS WRITTEN IN THE WORD

TEXTS: Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 37:5-6

Memory Verse:

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Joshua 1:8 (NIV)



God calls us not only to hear His Word but to live it out in obedience. Joshua 1:8 provides a divine principle for success: meditating on God's Word and observing to do all that is written in it. The instruction given to Joshua remains relevant to us today. By aligning our lives with God's Word, we position ourselves for blessings and spiritual growth.

In James 1:22-25, believers are urged to be doers of the Word, not hearers only. Listening to the Word without putting it into practice is like looking in a mirror and immediately forgetting what you look like. True transformation comes when we apply what we learn from Scripture to our daily lives.

Jesus reinforced this principle in Matthew 7:24-27 when He compared the wise builder to someone who hears His words and puts them into practice. The house built on the rock withstood the storm, while the house built on sand collapsed. Obedience to God's Word is the foundation that enables us to withstand life's trials.

To observe and do all that is written in the Word:

1. Prioritize Study and Meditation: Spend time reading and reflecting on the Bible to understand God's will for your life (Psalm 1:2-3).
2. Apply the Word Daily: Let God's Word shape your decisions, attitudes, and actions (Colossians 3:16-17).
3. Rely on the Holy Spirit: Depend on the Spirit for the strength and wisdom to obey (John 14:26).

Living in obedience to God's Word is not always easy, but it is always rewarding. God honors those who honor His Word and faithfully live it out. As we intentionally commit ourselves to the transformative power of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit empowers us both to will and to do according to the will of God.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas in your life where you know God's Word calls for obedience, but you've been hesitant to follow through?
2. How can you practically ensure that you move from being a hearer of the Word to a doer?

Prayer:

Loving Father, thank You for giving me Your Word as a guide for life. Help me not only to hear Your Word but to live it out in obedience. Give me the courage to follow through on Your instructions and the humility to depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance. May my life reflect Your will and bring glory to Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Identify one specific command or principle from God's Word that you can begin to obey today. Whether it's forgiving someone, helping the needy, or spending more time in prayer, take a concrete step to put it into practice.



**JAN.
26**

REFLECTIONS

RESIDENT PASTOR'S TOPIC

TEXTS:

HE RESTORES MY SOUL

TEXTS: Psalm 23:3; Matthew 11:28-30; Isaiah 40:29-31

Memory Verse:*"He restores my soul; He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."***Psalm 23:3 (NIV)**

Life can be draining. Whether from spiritual battles, emotional burdens, or the challenges of daily living, our souls can grow weary. Yet, the promise of God in Psalm 23:3 reminds us of His restorative power. When we feel depleted, God lovingly refreshes our souls and directs us toward righteousness.

Matthew 11:28-30 emphasizes Jesus' invitation to all who are weary and burdened: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This rest isn't merely physical but a deep spiritual renewal that only Christ can provide. As we surrender our worries and burdens to Him, He restores our joy, peace, and strength.

Isaiah 40:29-31 paints a beautiful picture of renewal, describing how those who wait on the Lord will have their strength renewed like eagles. When we spend time in God's presence through prayer, worship, and meditating on His Word, we open ourselves to His healing and rejuvenation.

God's restoration often involves leading us in paths of righteousness. He doesn't merely patch up our wounds and leave us as we are; He transforms us, aligning our lives with His will. As we follow His guidance, we find purpose, peace, and a renewed sense of direction.

The good news is that God is giving us the open invitation with arms wide open to come to Him and receive rest for our souls (Matthew 11:28-30). It is God's desire that we enjoy the peace that comes from knowing Him (Isaiah 2:3), resting in the confidence that His love brings, and embracing all that His love has in store for us.

Let us remember that God is our Shepherd, ever attentive to our needs. Whatever may weigh on your heart today, bring it to Him, and trust in His ability to refresh and restore your soul.

Reflection Questions:

1. What burdens or weariness do you need to surrender to God so He can restore your soul?
2. How can you create regular time in your life to rest and be renewed in God's presence?

Prayer:

Dear Lord, thank You for being my Shepherd and Restorer. When my soul is weary and burdened, You refresh me and guide me in the right path. Help me to continually seek Your presence and trust in Your ability to renew my strength. Lead me to live a life that honors You, and may Your peace fill my heart. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Set aside time today to rest in God's presence. Find a quiet place to pray, read Psalm 23, or worship. As you do, consciously lay down your burdens before Him and trust Him to renew and restore your soul.



YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

TEXTS: Matthew 28:20; Psalm 139:7-10; Isaiah 41:10

Memory Verse:

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
Matthew 28:20b (NIV)



In life's most difficult and isolating moments, the assurance that we are not alone brings immeasurable comfort. God's Word is filled with promises that His presence is constant and unwavering, even when we feel otherwise. More importantly, He never fails in His promises. As scriptures remind us in Numbers 23:19 *"God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?"*

In Matthew 28:20, Jesus declares to His disciples, "I am with you always, to the very end of the age." This promise isn't limited to them but extends to every believer. No matter what challenges or circumstances we face, Jesus assures us of His abiding presence. This assurance gives us the confidence to go through challenges grounded in the knowledge that He is with us.

Psalm 139:7-10 beautifully captures the omnipresence of God: "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? If I go up to the heavens, You are there; if I make my bed in the depths, You are there." These verses remind us that there is no situation, location, or season of life where God is absent.

Isaiah 41:10 reinforces this promise: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." God's presence isn't passive. He actively strengthens, upholds, and guides us through every challenge.

Sometimes, our circumstances may whisper the lie that we are forgotten or alone. But God's truth loudly declares that we are never forsaken (Hebrews 13:5). When we meditate on these truths, we can find peace and confidence, knowing that God's presence surrounds us at all times.

Let today be a reminder that you are never alone. Whether in joy or sorrow, triumph or struggle, God is with you—your faithful companion and guide, and He will always be with you without fail. His goodness, His loving kindness, His mercies and His faithfulness will keep you through every season.

You are never alone.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas of your life where you've felt alone? How does God's promise of His presence encourage you in those areas?
2. How can you cultivate an awareness of God's presence in your daily life?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your constant presence in my life. In moments when I feel alone or overwhelmed, help me to remember Your promise to never leave me nor forsake me. Strengthen my faith and open my eyes to see Your guiding hand in every situation. Thank You for being my ever-present help. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Spend a few moments today reflecting on God's presence in your life. Write down a list of moments when you've experienced His guidance or comfort. If you feel distant from God, take time to pray and invite Him into your heart and situation, acknowledging His nearness.



BE ACTIVE IN THE THINGS OF GOD

TEXTS: Romans 12:11; Colossians 3:23-24; Matthew 6:33

Memory Verse:

“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.”

Romans 12:11(NIV)



God calls every believer to live an active and vibrant life in service to Him. Being active in the things of God means not only acknowledging His lordship but also prioritizing His kingdom in our time, talents, and resources. Romans 12:11 exhorts us to maintain zeal and spiritual fervor, which speaks to an intentional, passionate pursuit of God’s work.

Colossians 3:23-24 reminds us to approach all our work as though we are doing it for the Lord, not for human recognition. This perspective transforms even the simplest tasks into acts of worship and service to God. When we are active in the things of God, we become vessels through which His love and glory are displayed to the world.

Jesus instructs in Matthew 6:33 to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” This requires an intentional commitment to prioritize God’s purposes above all else. Whether it is sharing the gospel, helping the less fortunate, teaching others, or simply living out our faith in integrity, every believer has a role to play in God’s kingdom.

To remain active in the things of God:

1. Engage in Service: Use your gifts and talents to serve others and build up the church (1 Peter 4:10-11).
2. Grow Spiritually: Stay connected to God through prayer, Bible study, and fellowship with other believers (John 15:4-5).
3. Stay Zealous: Guard against spiritual complacency by regularly renewing your commitment to God (Revelation 3:15-16).

God desires not lukewarm followers, but those who are dedicated and willing to serve Him wholeheartedly. Be active, and let your life reflect the joy and purpose that comes from being a part of God's kingdom work.

Reflection Questions:

1. Are you actively using your gifts and abilities to serve God and others? If not, what might be holding you back?
2. How can you rekindle your passion for the things of God and avoid spiritual complacency?

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the privilege of serving You and being a part of Your kingdom work. Help me to remain passionate and dedicated to the things that matter to You. Give me the strength, wisdom, and zeal to be active in serving others and spreading Your love. May my life always reflect Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Identify one ministry or area in your church or community where you can actively serve. Volunteer your time, skills, or resources this week to make a tangible impact for God's kingdom.



COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

TEXTS: Psalm 103:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; James 1:17

Memory Verse:

*"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."
Psalm 103:2 (NIV)*



In the hustle and bustle of life, it's easy to focus on what we lack, what we don't yet have, and what we have not yet achieved rather than what we have. However, God calls us to a lifestyle of gratitude—taking time to remember and appreciate the blessings He has poured into our lives.

It is in our human nature to forget. It is much easier to forget the seemingly little blessings that God fills our lives with. That is why the word of God constantly encourages us to remember His goodness towards us and the blessings that surround us daily.

David's heartfelt words in Psalm 103:2-5 serve as a reminder to "forget not all His benefits." He lists blessings like forgiveness, healing, redemption, love, and satisfaction. These blessings, both spiritual and physical, are a testimony of God's goodness and faithfulness in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 further emphasizes this by encouraging us to "give thanks in all circumstances." Gratitude shifts our perspective, helping us to see God's hand in every season—whether in abundance or trial. It's not about ignoring life's challenges but choosing to focus on God's provision and faithfulness. Gratitude helps us to broaden our view from the myopic perspective of our lacks and inadequacies to the broader view of the beauties and blessings around us in spite of them. When we count our blessings, our minds begin to better appreciate that there is more to our lives than the lack we may be experiencing in that moment.

James 1:17 reminds us, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights." When we take stock of our lives, we begin to see countless gifts, big and small, that God has bestowed upon us—life, health, family, opportunities, and the ultimate blessing of salvation.

Counting our blessings helps us develop a heart of contentment and worship. Instead of dwelling on what we think we lack, we are reminded of how richly God has provided for us. Gratitude also strengthens our faith, as we reflect on how God has come through for us in the past and trust Him for the future.

Take time today to recount God's blessings in your life. You may find that even in difficult times, His goodness has never wavered.

Reflection Questions:

1. Have you taken time recently to reflect on the blessings God has given you? What are some specific things you can thank Him for today?
2. How does gratitude change your perspective in times of difficulty or uncertainty?

Prayer:

Gracious Father, thank You for the countless blessings You have given me. Help me to always remember Your goodness, even in challenging times. Teach me to live with a heart full of gratitude, acknowledging Your faithfulness in every season. May my life be an expression of thanks to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take a notebook or journal today and write down at least ten specific blessings you have received from God. Spend time thanking Him for each one. Let this act of gratitude encourage you to focus on His faithfulness throughout the day.



WITHHOLDING NOTHING

TEXTS: Romans 12:1; Luke 9:23-24; Mark 12:41-44

Memory Verse:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." **Romans 12:1 (NIV)**



To what extent will you go in your submission and surrender to God? How deep does your devotion to His Lordship go?

God desires every part of us—our time, talents, resources, and most importantly, our hearts. The call to follow Christ is a call to complete surrender. It is not about giving some areas of our lives while withholding others, but about yielding ourselves entirely to His will.

Romans 12:1 urges believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. This act of surrender is not extraordinary but reasonable in light of all that God has done for us through Christ. To withhold nothing from God is to say, "Lord, You can have it all—my plans, my possessions, my desires, my very life." Total devotion to God means surrendering every single detail and aspect of our lives to His will and desire. It means letting go of our agenda and surrendering control to Him in the affairs of our lives.

Jesus emphasized this in Luke 9:23-24 when He said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it." Surrender requires us to let go of our own agenda and trust God with every aspect of our lives.

The story of the widow in Mark 12:41-44 serves as a powerful example. Though she gave only two small coins, she gave all she had to live on. Her offering was small in value but immense in significance because she withheld nothing from God. Her act of faith showed her complete reliance on Him.

Are there areas in your life where you are hesitant to let go and trust God fully? True worship is found in holding nothing back from Him. When we surrender everything, we open the door for God to use us and bless us in ways beyond our imagination.

Are you willing to surrender all to Him today?

Reflection Questions:

1. Are there areas in your life — time, resources, relationships, or plans — that you are holding back from surrendering to God?
2. What steps can you take today to demonstrate full trust in God with every aspect of your life?

Prayer:

Lord, I come before You with a heart of surrender. I give You every part of my life — my plans, my desires, my talents, and my resources. Teach me to trust You completely and hold nothing back. Help me to live as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Recommended Action:

Take time today to pray and ask God to reveal areas of your life that you may be withholding from Him. Write them down and intentionally commit those areas to Him in prayer. Make one tangible act of surrender, whether it's giving more of your time to serve, sharing your resources, or letting go of a personal plan to align with His will.



YOU MADE IT TO THE END OF THE MONTH!

**Take time today to thank God for
His goodness and mercies!**

**And remember that SURELY
God's goodness and mercies
follow you every day of your life.**

**Dwell in His presence,
abide under His shadow,
stay rooted in His love,
draw from Him always.**

**You are the beloved of the Father,
the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus,
the redeemed of the Lord,
a royal priesthood,
the fragrance of Christ to the Father among men
called into His marvelous light
a living epistle of God's love unto men.**

**You are precious, bought by the blood
You have been made worthy by His grace.**

Embrace the gift of His love WHOLLY.

You are utterly loved by God!



*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path*

Psalm 119:105

Reflections

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