

CONTEMPLATE

YOUR WALK WITH

JESUS

DAILY



MONTH ONE



Encountering Christ Helping Others

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Table of Contents

Day 1 - Loving the Lord.....	1
Day 2 - Who Are We Really	2
Day 3 - Cost of Unity	4
Day 4 - Love Really.....	6
Day 5 - IF	8
Day 6 - Sharing	9
Day 7 - Endurance	11
Day 8 - Testing.....	13
Day 9 - Helping	15
Day 10 - I Could Never.....	17
Day 11 - Up To You Father.....	19
Day 12 - Wicked Servant	21
Day 13 - Thought Traps.....	23
Day 14 - My Thoughts Are Not Your Thoughts.....	25
Day 15 - Helplessness.....	28
Day 16 - Impatient.....	30
Day 17 - Praise HIM	32
Day 18 - Homecoming.....	34

Day 19 - Condemnation.....	36
Day 20 - Connection.....	38
Day 21 - Misunderstanding.....	41
Day 22 - Thankfulness.....	43
Day 23 - Do You Know Him By Name	46
Day 24 - Counterfeit	48
Day 25 - Through You To You	50
Day 26 - Rehabilitation.....	52
Day 27 - Appointed.....	55
Day 28 - Incorporate.....	57
Day 29 - Soundness of Mind.....	59
Day 30 - Greater Purpose.....	61

Day 1 - Loving the Lord

Ultimately, nothing is more fulfilling and valuable in our daily walk than focusing on loving Him more. As our love for Him increases, our desire to sin decreases. Our growing love becomes a more potent force directed by our Heavenly Father as He draws us to His beloved Son.

John 6:44 NKJV

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Remember our Savior Himself. When asked what is the greatest commandment He responded,

Mark 12:29-30 NKJV

Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

Decades of my life were wasted because I did not understand this principle. Things began to change once the Holy Spirit reinforced the

preeminence that loving the Lord should have in my life. As we continuously ask the Holy Spirit to show us how to love the Lord more, we become more aware of His presence in our lives. The spirit of truth Himself, our constant companion, resides within us to be our Helper in every situation. This excellent Helper becomes a continuous guiding force so that the light of Christ shines through us in ever-increasing intensity.

This Christlike behavior emanating from our being becomes a drawing force that should affect those around us for His glory. His power and might working in us can produce continuous changes if we operate with a surrendered heart to His will in every situation. This is where the challenge comes for us: not to resort back to our old ways but to continue in the sanctification process to become holy as He is holy!

Is there something in your life that is keeping you from wholehearted devotion to our beloved Savior? If you ask the Holy Spirit with a sincere heart, He will reveal it to you!

Day 2 - Who Are We Really

Do the words we speak and the persona we project align in challenging situations? This is a crucial test of our character. Can we

consistently exhibit Christlike behavior, regardless of the circumstances? It's a difficult task, and relying solely on our own strength, we often fall short. Even when we handle a situation correctly, pride can creep in. This is why it's vital to reflect on our actions and rely entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit within us.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJV

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body [and in your spirit, which are God's.

John 14:15-18 NKJV

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

The Scripture is quite clear regarding the Holy Spirit. If the spirit of Truth is not operating within us at all times, it can only be that our flesh has decided to take charge of certain situations. We then deny the

ultimate Truth revealer of all things. And when we do this, the possibility of quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit becomes real. What does this mean to us? The ability to hear His voice diminishes. This can lead to a cascade effect and eventually backsliding. As servants of the Most High, we must endeavor to discern His voice with greater intensity each day.

Do you allow the Holy Spirit to be in charge at all times, or do you let your emotions take charge when you feel like it?

Day 3 - Cost of Unity

As believers, we often find unity challenging. Our Lord Jesus Himself instructs us to love one another so people know we are His disciples. When our Lord uses the word love, it is far more encompassing than our worldly use. We must understand and live out the depth of what Jesus refers to.

John 13:35 NKJV

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

What people of the world should see in us as believers should draw them to the Lord, not push them away. We have the most significant purpose when we proclaim to be His followers. Yet we squabble and bicker, constantly find fault with others, and quickly get offended. According to what the Word of God says, none of these behaviors should be tolerated within ourselves. What is it that causes us to fail in this area frequently? Let's remember forgiveness plays a crucial role in maintaining unity in our relationships.

Colossians 3:12-15 NKJV

Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

In this area, almost everything that prevents us from doing what the scriptures directed us can be summed up as the fact that we have not died to ourselves. As the Holy Spirit has granted insight into strengthening unity, I've realized that my opinion doesn't matter much. If I rely on my thoughts and ideas, I am most likely not being

Christlike. It's pretty easy for us to make allowances, especially for family members and loved ones, to allow behaviors not conducive to serving as an ambassador for the Kingdom to continue.

Ask the Holy Spirit to scrutinize everything about yourself. Are there areas in your life where unity with others could be strengthened? This self-reflection is a powerful tool for personal growth and unity with others.

Day 4 - Love Really

The Lord woke me up in a dramatic fashion to make me understand that the way humans use the word love and the way He uses it are vastly different. 1 Corinthians chapter 13 is quoted often but rarely implemented to its fullest intention. I, too, fell into this category most of my life. Now, I am much more cautious and conservative about using the word as an expression toward others. It's heartbreaking to recall the times I used the word in an empty, hollow fashion. Not only as one precipitating it but also have been on the receiving end many times.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NKJV

Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek

its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

As the Lord continues the paradigm shift in my being to His measure of love, I must restate it. No longer can I flippantly throw out the word love without consideration. At best, I can tell people I love them in transition. What is that transition? From the standard of the world that is easily offended, easily judged, and quickly turns from love to hate and a plethora of other things, the Lord doesn't want me operating under this standard anymore. No wonder others who don't know the Lord don't flock to churches in droves. Generally speaking, the example of love we demonstrate as a collective is no different from what the world does. I am thankful that the Lord is patient and kind and will lead us into a more kingdom-based love. Isn't this kind of love part of picking up our cross daily? In other words, we die to ourselves and don't act as we want to but take on our beloved Savior's character in all we do and say!

1 John 2:5-6 NKJV

But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

Are there areas in your life that you need to focus on to demonstrate heavenly kingdom love? Until we do, we will still be loving in transition.

Day 5 - IF

The two-letter word 'IF' is frequently used in scripture, making numerous appearances in the gospel of John and the letters of John. As believers, it's crucial that we don't overlook even these seemingly insignificant two-letter words. Jesus, through His teachings, provides us with numerous examples and commands for living as His followers. He challenges us to follow them if we truly love Him.

John 14:15 NKJV

"If you love Me, keep My commandments.

John 15:9-11 NKJV

"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.

One of the numerous wonders of endeavoring to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength is the word “IF,” which is no longer considered a prerequisite. Instead, loving the Lord, which is on a continuous path of growth within us, becomes, “Of course, Lord, I love you.” When our focus on loving Him begins to approach this level, obedience to Him doesn’t become a challenge but a pleasure.

Do you experience the joy of the Lord as your strength? Through a multitude of experiences, the Lord has made me abundantly aware that my joy in Him can continue regardless of the situations in my life. Maybe there’s an enhanced version of (if) that we should apply. **The I stands for (in) and the F for (faith). In faith, I will!** Doesn't our beloved Savior deserve this kind of commitment from us?

Is your attitude of obedience to the words of Jesus begrudgingly or that of great joy?

Day 6 - Sharing

Two distinctive aspects of this word come to mind immediately. The first is focused on this physical, temporal world. The second is of a more eternal nature that encompasses our existence throughout infinity. This statement is mind-boggling to comprehend, yet little time

and effort is put into its absolute imperative importance. Every time we see a living individual, we should remind ourselves that the infinity of existence lies ahead. Do we care about them enough to share what we have that sustains us in this world? And to share what we have been gifted from our Lord Jesus for our eternal life.

Hebrews 13:15-16 NKJV

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices, God is well pleased.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 NKJV

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Many of us may look at our situation and not consider ourselves rich. My wife and I have been blessed to spend a few years in Africa. The shocking reality of the disparity between the standard of living in the

US and many Third World countries is real and present. So, when you read the Scripture in Timothy and live in America, this most likely applies to you. All the possible blessings the Father has given us are meant to be shared. Remember, we are here to serve Him, not Him serving us.

Are you actively distributing all the blessings the Lord has given you so that others will benefit from them both in this world and in the world to come?

Day 7 - Endurance

We are inundated with so many different forms of human competition. Even in the area of running, there are many different categories. The apostle Paul uses this analogy to depict our faithfulness and endurance while competing in the race. If Paul had been with us today, he might have compared our race to a marathon. What is one of the most important aspects of running a marathon? Pace yourself. It seems elementary for a new Christian to want to sprint for the Lord. I have done this many times and consequently got ahead of the Holy Spirit, doing things in my power and understanding. It was a big mistake; I have gone through this cycle many times. But now, I'm more cautious about getting guidance and direction from the Holy

Spirit, the one who knows everything. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for your constant guidance and wisdom!

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NKJV

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

In an effort to keep these devotionals short, I didn't include the selected scripture. But I highly recommend it to be read and considered. **Hebrews 12:1-15 NKJV**, we will look at one verse from the section. **12:11** Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

A true committed athlete knows the aches, pains, and muscle soreness of intense training. Also, he or she is keenly aware of the outcome. They have trained themselves that the discomfort that they endure will in the end help them achieve the goal they set their mind

to. Similarly, we as believers obedient to our Lord Jesus need to understand that enduring the challenges that the Lord puts before us is crucial for our spiritual growth. Our life is one lesson after another building on the foundation of Christ. We don't grumble and complain but endure with faith and perseverance to get the most out of each.

Are you willing to endure anything to obtain the peaceable fruit of righteousness?

Day 8 - Testing

A substantial part of our journey with the Lord involves testing. It is a continual process that we need to be very aware of. Many times, I have questioned the Lord about why. Why this situation, why that situation, why am I getting treated like this? Almost always, I sense there's a lesson in the purpose, and as I grow in my understanding, the testing continues to grow and become more complex. Realizing this is part of my Father's plan for me, I now have much greater clarity and focus on the reasons and purpose of things that transpire around me. This understanding reassures me that each test is not a random event but a guided step in my journey with the Lord.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-5 NKJV

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;

There have been numerous instances where I failed to connect the dots and either prolonged the lesson or retaken it innumerable times. When the Holy Spirit gives us a revelation intended to be implemented in our lives, we are tested to see if we've absorbed the lesson. This process, which I am now very aware of, is a crucial part of our journey towards sanctification, and I see it at play in my life and the lives of those around me.

Unfortunately, trying to convince others of this reality proved to be difficult. I have often made others aware that testing is coming in a particular area, yet they seem oblivious to applying what they have learned when it does come. This has been most prevalent in the area of taking thoughts captive. This only solidifies the importance of achieving this directive correctly and consistently before the Lord.

2 Corinthians 10:5 NKJV

casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

Are you learning the lessons the Lord allows so that you can apply them to the testing?

Day 9 - Helping

How often have we found ourselves in a situation that maybe didn't go as planned, and our response was, "I was just trying to help." It's important to remember that true help is selfless, devoid of any personal gain or benefit. It's not about ensuring others know it, but about genuinely making a positive difference. In all things, we must check the motives of our hearts. Are the actions that I'm considering doing something that Jesus would do? In Matthew chapter 5, Jesus tells us about the Beatitudes. If we have all of these in our minds and operate within us, chances are our helping will be of the right motive.

Matthew 5:3-12 NKJV

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and
thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. Blessed are the
merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall
be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for
righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are
you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil
against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for
great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets
who were before you.

The topic of this discussion is helping. But it should be clear to us as
followers of Jesus Christ that these Beatitudes can be applied in our
lives across the board. We must discard all forms of darkness within
us and assimilate all things of the light—in other words, become
Christlike. If we don't see a continual change in ourselves toward
becoming more bearers of light, we must ask why.

Galatians 2:20 NKJV

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Ask the Holy Spirit if you can say this about yourself as Paul did. Are you willing to give up whatever the Holy Spirit reveals to you to be more Christlike?

Day 10 - I Could Never

I have a beloved friend who is the director of an international mission organization. If I did not know him personally, I would question the validity of some of the stories he shared with me. However, we have experienced some situations together, and I have witnessed some miraculous and unbelievable things. Shouldn't this be our expectation with our Heavenly Father? I want to mention him because of the response people sometimes give regarding what he will go through to serve the Lord and his brothers and sisters.

I could never do that, which is quite common. I could never put my family in perceived danger. I could never leave my family for weeks or months at a time while I was doing missionary work in remote areas. I could never travel those great distances on terrible roads and lousy

living conditions, getting sick from the water and the food. And many more “ I could never “ are common responses.

These responses could have been mine until the Lord put me in several situations in Africa where I had to rely on Him. Then the Holy Spirit made it abundantly clear to me that when we say, “ I could never,” we stifle, grieve, or quench the Holy Spirit and the possibilities of a mighty God. This is dangerous territory for us to tread on. If our Father has an assignment for us, He will provide the necessary skills and abilities, funds, and so on to make sure it happens. This reassurance of God's empowerment instills in us the confidence to overcome our self-limiting beliefs. Who are we to doubt the Almighty?

Romans 8:31-37 NKJV

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written:

“For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

According to the Scriptures, we are to expect many treacherous situations ahead of us as believers. That day is already happening in many parts of the world for our brothers and sisters. Adopting a fearless mindset based on the Lord never leaving or forsaking us is where we must be.

Are you ready to change your “ I could never “ into “ I will do whatever” for You, Lord?

Day 11 - Up To You Father

Over the past few days, the Holy Spirit has communicated that His guidance for these devotionals is a matter of divine inspiration. I had initially committed to writing one devotional each day, but I now understand that it's more about 'The Lord inspiring me once a day '. This divine inspiration is not something I can force or rush; it's like manna from heaven- to be gathered only as much as needed for each day.

1 Corinthians 2:10-13 NKJV

But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

The Holy Spirit, in His infinite patience, kindness, and always truthful nature, has been a constant guide. A few years back, as my heart grew more sincere in serving the Lord, the Holy Spirit became much more vigilant in watching over the words that flowed out of my mouth—even to the point of correcting me. If I said that someone had used the word marvelous and it was the word wonderful, I would be prompted to correct myself on the fly. Correction would be in my mind almost instantaneously as the words flowed out of my mouth. But now, that buffering process usually occurs before the words become audible. Thank You, Holy Spirit.

At first, I thought this was being nitpicky. But now, I continually ask for correction whenever the Holy Spirit deems necessary. I love the fact that His voice is clear and precise. And it's primarily up to us whether that clarity is maintained. Only if we obey the corrections and guidance consistently and quickly will the link with our beloved Holy Spirit be steadfastly strong and prevalent.

Are you willing to ask the Holy Spirit to correct you whenever necessary? Most importantly, are you willing to take His corrective action and put it into action?

Day 12 - Wicked Servant

The actions of our lives are on display when we demonstrate them before others. Our secret thoughts are not hidden. We are deceived into believing that we only know. But our heavenly Father is fully aware of all of them. According to the parable in Matthew 25, our beloved Savior refers to the servant who buried his talent as a wicked and slothful servant. I have heard a multitude of explanations about this parable. However, I like the simplest possible explanation. We are given life. What are we doing with it? It's a question that demands deep self-reflection.

The Lord created the atmosphere around us and allowed us to breathe it. For most of my life, I was a wicked servant. I chose to focus on the personal aspect of what this world could give me. Our Creator ordained my life, ability, timeline, location, and other factors. But nearly all my actions did not acknowledge or give Him the appropriate accolades. Not only that, but I also lacked the well-deserved reverence that our Savior deserves. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for opening my eyes so I can see myself as You have seen me. Our Lord is patient and kind and will transform us into His likeness when we surrender entirely to His will, offering us a beacon of hope and inspiration in our journey to be like Him!

Matthew 25:24-30 NKJV

“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’ “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given,

and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

We don't know when our last breath will be. I have no excuse for wasting my life uselessly on worldly matters anymore. I know I am here to serve the Lord wholeheartedly, bring as much glory and honor to His name, and be used by Him to influence as many as possible to become a sincere-hearted follower of my beloved Savior, Lord Jesus.

What kind of servant are you? Do you understand and have the fear of the Lord? After all, it is the beginning of wisdom.

Proverbs 9:10

Day 13 - Thought Traps

Seeking the Lord for direction in these devotionals is very important to me. The questions that arise during this time are often quite thought-provoking. Some may view them even as intrusive, but I ponder them myself as they come into my awareness. The Lord is making me keenly aware of the connection between the lessons He's trying to teach us and how they can be a tool to solidify the change in who we are and how we deal with things. There always is a follow-up testing of

the lesson that we just learned. The gap that existed in most of us between these two things causes a cycle of repeated lessons until we finally make the connection that the lessons are intended to reveal and reshape us and are validated through testing. How often do we allow ourselves to get caught in a thought trap regarding "Are we forgiven?" Here's a great example of whether we are learning from what Scripture says or listening to our flesh or the enemy.

Psalms 32:1-2 NKJV

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity,
And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

2 Timothy 4:17-18 NKJV

The Lord Is Faithful , But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also, I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

As long as we have breath within us, we have the opportunity to learn a lesson. The Scriptures unequivocally state that the blood of Jesus cleanses us of sin and forgives us when we repent with a sincere heart. And if we love Him, we will follow His commands. What excuses do we have not to do so? In my life, my resistance to obedience was rooted in selfish pride and a lack of love for the Lord. But as I've learned to surrender to His will completely, this has sparked a profound love for Him in my soul.

I was speaking with a brother this morning who has struggled with pornography addiction. I was so blessed by the realization that he has come to know that as he loves the Lord more, the pull to the filthiness of pornography continues to decrease. The Lord is showing him how to be an overcomer. Thank You, Holy Spirit. **HalleluYah**

Do you allow thought traps to grab and keep your attention when the Scriptures clearly tell you something else?

Day 14 - My Thoughts Are Not Your Thoughts.

See that little period I put at the end of the title? Imagine if that was the only communication we ever had from our Creator. We think that would be cold, unfair, distant, and unloving. We would be lost without

a clue why we even exist. Thank You, Heavenly Father, for being a loving, caring, adoring, merciful, patient, and continuous list of beautiful attributes you demonstrate towards humanity daily. The Scriptures, a treasure trove of unbelievable wisdom and insight, are a rock of trust and security in our lives. Surrendering to the Obedience of Christ is not just a choice but a necessity. It is through this surrender that we begin to believe and trust the Scripture as though our life depends on it. Indeed, our eternal life absolutely depends on it.

Isaiah 55:6-9,11 NKJV

Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts;

Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Our beloved Father is not boasting but stating facts. He's given us a glimpse of His infinite wisdom, eternal nature, and unrivaled power. This all exists in one form and one form only: **"TRUTH."** How wonderful to trust in something as magnificent as this. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for allowing us to be partakers of such Truth. Even though we see what it says in Isaiah, we have the balance of other Scriptures that give us eternal hope, filling us with optimism and a sense of the future.

Psalms 119:9-16 NKJV

How can a young man (or woman) cleanse his/her way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart, I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You. Blessed *are* You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. With my lips, I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies As *much as* in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts And contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

Are you willing to commit to memory these verses in Psalms and to be obedient to live them out?

Day 15 - Helplessness

What thoughts do you conjure up when you think of helplessness? An extreme form of this came to me as I was dwelling in the presence of the Lord for the right content. Imagine ferocious hand-to-hand combat where the weapons of death were swords, spears, possibly bows and arrows, even sticks or rocks. It doesn't take much to realize how gruesome a scene like this can appear. Now, amid all this mayhem, a toddler is walking around. That is what I imagined when I was thinking of helplessness.

What if I told you this total helplessness is one of the most desirable conditions before the Lord? If we are in a state of total helplessness, then we are also in a state of total dependence. Imagine a white stallion swooping in with its Rider in a brilliant glow, sweeping the toddler into His arms, and galloping away. This image of God's power and our complete dependence on Him is what we should strive for. Understanding how helpless our situations are without Him is humility. It's a crucial element in our relationship with the Lord. Without Him, we are nothing. With Him, all things are possible.

Luke 18:25-27 NKJV

For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” And those who heard it said, “Who then can be saved?” But He said, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

Some of you may believe this verse is not talking about you because, in your estimation, you are in no way rich. I have experienced extended periods, mainly in Malawi, Africa. Here are a few things that would put you in the category of being rich. Do you have food each day? Do you have clean water to drink every day? Do you have running water? Do you have hot water? Do you have soap? Do you have more than one outfit to wear? Most of us in first-world countries take all of these things for granted. Often, it causes us to be prideful and self-reliant. Helplessness seems a distant and irrelevant possibility for us. However, it is crucial for our relationship with the Lord to flourish.

Philippians 2:3-8 NKJV

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal

with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Do you strive in your life to have the mind of Christ Jesus?

Day 16 - Impatient

Over the years, I have mastered the skill of being impatient. Upon reflection, it is now clear that it was driven by self-reliance and pride—probably a lot more pride than I realize. I've got things to do; they should have had this ready ahead of time; I could have done the same task in half the time; I thought the appointment was to start a half-hour ago, plus a multitude of other comments or thoughts that would've come to me over the years. Impatience is primarily a byproduct of self-centeredness. When we develop patience through the presence of the Holy Spirit working within us, we reap great benefits.

Lamentations 3:25-26 NKJV

The LORD *is* good to those who wait for Him, To the soul *who* seeks Him. *It is* good that *one* should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.

Romans 5:1-5 NKJV

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

There is a close relationship between impatience and inconvenience. I experienced inconvenience regularly, it seemed, until the Lord informed me that it would no longer be a word in my repertoire of understanding. I believe the Lord indicated by faith, "A servant of mine is never inconvenienced but obedient." Just to be clear, these were not audible instructions from the Almighty. They were impressions in my inner being from the Holy Spirit. That's why I use the phrase, "By faith, I believe."

Much of our understanding of Scripture and interaction with this world is based on our emotional responses. This is precisely where the father of lies, satan, wants us to operate. A large part of becoming transformed into Christ's image is denying what our flesh or emotions

want and instead processing and interacting with this world from a biblical perspective. When we surrender totally to this premise, it becomes exceedingly easier to put our emotions, wants, and desires under the directive of the Holy Spirit. Just as athletes gain abilities through repeated training, we also gain the nature of Christ as we repeatedly deny our flesh and take on His nature.

Are you willing to endure great tribulation knowing the outcome will be great patience?

Day 17 - Praise HIM

I have a bit of a unique way as I'm waiting on the Lord for each topic for the day. I put in temporary titles such as, It's up to you, God, or something like, What's next? Sometimes, they turn into titles, but generally not. Today, my temporary title was anticipation. I must admit that " Praise HIM " put a smile on my face when the words were in my spirit as I acclimated myself from the unconscious realm of sleep to the conscious realm of life on earth. It wasn't until I sat down to write and realized my temporary title was Anticipation. The joy it gave my heart to realize my anticipation led to Praise HIM.

I have learned to live from one awe-and-wonder moment to another. For too many, this seemingly insignificant experience could be meaningless. However, as we develop a personal relationship with the Lord, we will find He constantly goes to extremes to keep us in awe and wonder about who He is. Oh, how precious and beloved our Savior is. We should continually strive to walk closer to Him.

Psalms 146:1-6 NKJV

Praise the Lord, O my soul! While I live I will praise the Lord; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. Do not put your trust in princes,

Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help.

His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, Whose hope is in the Lord his God, Who made heaven and earth, The sea, and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever,

Romans 15:9-11 NKJV

So that the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy, as it is written: "For this reason, I will confess to You among the Gentiles, And sing to Your name." And again, he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!" And again: "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!"

Psalms 117:1-2 NKJV

Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples! For His merciful kindness is great toward us, And the truth of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!

This is just a snippet of all the beautiful verses in the Bible that discuss praising the Almighty. The Spirit of Truth will always direct our attention to the Lord Jesus. In doing so, He prompts us to have a heart of praise and thanksgiving for all that He has done for us and is continuing to do.

If you don't experience this regularly, are you willing to ask the Holy Spirit how it may be? After all, we will praise Him for eternity, so let's start now!

Day 18 - Homecoming

Various thoughts come into your mind when you think of this word. A returning military veteran was one of the first ones that came to my mind. Or any assignment that may take you away from loved ones, family, and friends for an extended period. Some may even have a calendar and cross the days as they pass by with an ever-increasing

desire to be reunited. Probably more times than not, homecoming is an exciting, much-anticipated event in someone's life. If you think about it, we all have one final homecoming.

Our time here on earth will come to an end. As a committed servant of Jesus Christ who trusts and believes Scripture, there are only two possible outcomes of our final homecoming. But there is only one aspect I'm going to focus on now. Eternity in the presence of our beloved Savior or something infinitely worse. We can be confident that this is not a possibility if we have a sincere longing in our hearts to be in His presence. Because if we have that sincere longing, then we also have an earnest desire to do His commands because we love Him. One of the biggest keys to obedience is a continued pathway of increased love, reverence, humility, and honoring Him with everything we are.

2 Corinthians 5:1-9 NJKV

For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed,

that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as [c]a guarantee. So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

Do you wrestle with a groaning in your heart, which I interpret as an intense desire to be in eternal companionship with our Lord Jesus? As each day draws to a close, do you feel a little bit more excited about your final homecoming?

Day 19 - Condemnation

I don't think anyone would like this word used to refer to themselves or their character as a result of their behavior. Who wants to hear so and so is under condemnation for what they have done? The first scripture

that comes to mind when I think of this word is Romans chapter 8. Countless times, I've heard it quoted by many pastors and teachers. Rarely have I heard it in its full context as it was intended. We, as humans, have this uncanny ability to justify seemingly anything we do. Let's look at the Scripture a bit closer to gain more clarity and to approach it with the humility it deserves.

Romans 8:1 NKJV

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

As followers of Jesus, we listen to the first part of this Scripture and believe erroneously that no matter our actions and behaviors, we will experience no condemnation/ judgment. This mindset allows us to operate, assuming that there's nothing terrible or unacceptable about our sins. However, as we read in Chapter 8, it becomes clear that this is untrue. I was one of those so-called believers who only considered the part of Scripture that fit my lifestyle. Allowing that false belief to propagate to others would be unloving and unkind.

Let's think about it carefully: is it that much of a reach to say if we follow the lust and desires of our sinful flesh that, without repentance,

we do face condemnation? I would much rather err on the side of cautiousness. After all, our love, devotion, honor, and reverence for the Lord should always give us the supreme sense of due diligence to understand His ways.

Romans 8:6-9 NKJV

For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Do you always investigate Scripture, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to understand the context and practical application we should have as believers?

Day 20 - Connection

My focus has been on the New Testament for most of my life. I could give a variety of reasons why that was so. However, being forthright with you, I would have to pinpoint the cause as lazy or uninterested in the Old Testament. And where does that stem from? It must be a lack

of love for Him, who paid the ultimate price for me. Now, I find great delight in all the places in the Old Testament where our Messiah is revealed.

I would like to give you a step-by-step process of how my love for Him has increased, which has led to much more curiosity about our Lord Jesus. Unfortunately, I can't except for one thing. Several times daily, there is prompting in my spirit to say, " I love you, Lord. " Other than that, I can convey the reality of Scripture: knock and the door will be open; seek and you will find and be willing to give up all to obtain the pearl of great price. Through these steps, the door was opened; I now love Him more, and that process is continuous. Thank You, Lord Jesus/ Yeshua!

Matthew 7:7-8 NKJV:

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Matthew 13:44 NKJV:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and **sells all that he has** and buys that field.

If we seek our Savior in search of a great treasure, we will rejoice and cherish it when we find Him. The Holy Spirit constantly reciprocates the value we put on our desire to know Him more. This important and powerful principle can only be realized through complete surrender and obedience to Him and His word. I hope that all who take their precious time to read these devotionals will commit to a pathway of loving the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength. And seeking the Holy Spirit daily; how to do that. There are many places in the Old Testament where Christ is revealed. One of the most powerful ones is Isaiah 53; please take the time to read the whole chapter.

Isaiah 53:6 NKJV

But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes, we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, everyone, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Are you willing to ask the Lord to identify anything in your life that is preventing you from totally surrendering to the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

Day 21 - Misunderstanding

If we have decided to be wholehearted believers and surrender our will to the Lord, we must also undergo a paradigm shift in how we receive, process, and react to what happens to us and around us. This shift is not just a change but a transformation that will inspire us to live as Jesus lived. It is crucial to reinforce this in our behavior. If we truly die to ourselves and walk as Jesus walked, **we will not get offended.**

I have had people tell me they are not offended, but their actions indicate they are, even to the point of not being of one accord and not operating in unity. When we begin to process situations as a lesson plan from the Almighty, the time we waste retaking the same lessons can be significantly diminished.

We can see things from the Father's perspective when we step back from our flesh, world, and emotions. Then, we can react as our beloved Savior would have reacted. The enemy looks for two significant areas when he is like a lion seeking whom he may devour: evidence of pride or offense. Of course, there are many other areas, but these two are most effective in distracting us from being Christ-like. We must constantly, urgently be on guard for the slightest whiff of

such behavior. And instantly take all thoughts associated with it captive to the obedience of Christ.

Matthew 24:3-13 NKJV

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

As the Lord reinforces these Scriptures like an impenetrable fortress, we must understand the weight of our commitment to maintaining a Christlike posture at all times. A brief hiatus in our commitment to doing things His way could eventually lead to a Spiritual shipwreck if left unchecked. When the enemy senses offense in us, a nonstop barrage of thoughts will ensue, and if allowed, it will grow into a much more difficult thought cancer. That's why rooting these thoughts out before they metastasize into more and more thoughts is imperative. Our Lord Jesus tells us to take the log out of our eye before looking for the spec of our brothers.

Can you commit to the Lord that your days of being offended are over because you trust and believe the Holy Spirit can help you be an overcomer in this area?

Day 22 - Thankfulness

In our endeavor to love our Heavenly Father more, we should be inquisitive—there is no better place to satisfy this than Scripture. It is not a passive exercise but an active engagement that deepens our understanding. More profound things will be revealed as our love for the Lord and the building blocks of our foundation increase in strength and endurance. Recently, I have been studying the Pentateuch, the

first five books of the Bible. There are a lot of names, timelines, specific incidences, and numerous lessons that can be gleaned from this portion of the Word. There are a lot of details about sacrifice and the proper way to do it.

By faith, the Holy Spirit has been training me to understand that I can be in His presence continuously. Only in my disobedience or not fully trusting that He is the spirit of truth and is always 100% right can I potentially drift from His presence. Understanding this has taken me a lifetime, but it doesn't need to be that way for you. So, finally, I am starting to cherish it as the pearl of great price. I mention this because as I read Scripture, I am now being trained to be a doer, not just a hearer. I need the Holy Spirit's continuous presence to guide my understanding.

So I inquired why, Lord, I needed to know all these aspects of the sacrifices. Thankfulness was the first thing that came to me. First and foremost, Jesus, our Messiah, was and is the final sacrifice. Secondly, the continuous nature of sacrifices, which I'm sure seemed laborious at times, is no longer necessary. All these details in the precious Word serve a great purpose. Counting the number of people in all the tribes is another validation point of God's Word. When we have our homecoming to spend eternity in our Heavenly Father's presence, we

will understand more fully what we now see in part. So, in the meantime, let us have a continual sense of thankfulness for our beloved Savior!

Psalms 100 NKJV

Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Know that the LORD, He *is* God; *It is* He *who* has made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving *And* into His courts with praise.

Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name. For the LORD *is* good; His mercy *is* everlasting, And His truth *endures* to all generations.

1 Corinthians 13:12 NKJV

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

Do you allow the Holy Spirit to guide you to have a heart of thankfulness every day?

Day 23 - Do You Know Him By Name

My mother was an extraordinary woman. She was very humble and always thought of others before herself. She had a fantastic ability to make everyone feel like her favorite. Over many years, she housed 26 different foster children in addition to six of her own, and she also adopted 2 of the foster children. Everyone who interacted with her seemed always to have fond memories to share. In just a few short sentences, I have given you a glimpse of some of the characteristics that she possessed. I could give you more details because she blessed my existence for decades. I knew her intimately, and she was such a wonderful mother.

As we develop an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, we should be able to provide detailed information concerning our interaction with Him. This should be a commonality among believers that we can rejoice in and encourage one another. When we have a humble spirit and realize the Holy Spirit uses many other believers as second or third witnesses to us, this validates what we are being taught. Through this, we can exist in awe and wonder of His presence. The finite details of truth in our lives are a constant focus of the Holy Spirit. The truth about ourselves will be revealed continuously, allowing us to make corrections and become more Christlike in everything we say

and do. In addition to this, the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth. That's why we must be laser-focused on Scripture with no deviation.

John 14:15-18 NKJV

“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— **the Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; **but you know Him**, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

John 16:13 NKJV

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

There used to be an old saying, “ I know him well; we are on a first-name basis.” I don't believe this exists much in our current vocabulary. But it was meant to imply a more profound intimacy of understanding between two individuals.

Can you give intimate details about your relationship with the Holy Spirit to other believers? Are you willing to be a second or

third witness to someone else as they grow in their awareness of the Holy Spirit's significant purpose in their lives?

Day 24 - Counterfeit

On my personal journey as a follower of Jesus Christ, I've had moments when I could be seen as counterfeit. These instances weren't due to external influences, but rather my own actions. I found myself lacking a true reverence for the Lord and a genuine hunger for righteousness. The root cause was a significant lack of biblical knowledge and a void in my relationship with the Holy Spirit. This realization, which I'm sharing today, came to my consciousness with an intriguing connection.

Probably many of you have heard this before, but when federal agencies are trained to detect counterfeit money, they don't study counterfeit money. This seems a bit odd at face value, but as we dig a bit deeper, it won't. They are meticulous in every detail about what the authentic characteristics of the real are. By repeatedly studying them, over and over and over again, they gain a high level of discernment in detecting the counterfeit. Not because they studied counterfeits but because they are intimately associated with the real deal.

As faithful servants of our Savior, we also want to be able to detect anything counterfeit that leads us away from our Heavenly Father, our blessed Lord Jesus, and our wonderful Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. When our relationship with the Creator is operating as He intended, we are able to detect counterfeits with increasing ease. What a patient, loving Father we have that puts up with our ignorance for years if necessary. We must not use this fact to be lazy or unintentional in our actions to know Him more. Remember, we have a whole stack of lessons at the throne. They are there for us to utilize to perform the Father's will in our life, which He has determined.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 NKJV

The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

No one can say where we are on the timeline for the end of days. But regardless of when that will occur, being on the path of increasing discernment is imperative. Now, with the advent of AI, capable of

making deep fakes that are undistinguishable from what is real, we cannot rely on our own understanding.

Jesus says, " I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes unto the Father but through me." Do you rely on Him to reveal all counterfeits?

Day 25 - Through You To You

This may be a phrase that you need to become more familiar with. I just learned of it about six years ago. My daughter, who was around 17 years old at the time, questioned me about hearing from God. She said, " I read Scripture, I pray, meditate, and I try to seek after Him." but I don't seem to hear. Then, I believe the Holy Spirit stirred me to ask this question. When you talk to others about God, do you feel like sometimes the words flow not from your intellect but from the Spirit of the Lord? Immediately, she responded yes, knowing precisely what I was referring to. And amazingly, the very thing I was talking about happened instantly. I said back to her, God speaks through you to you. As soon as those words came into conscious verbal existence, the prompting of the Holy Spirit was, this is not only for her, but this is for you. Did you hear what you just said? This was an awe and wonder moment. Thank You, Lord Jesus!

The revelation the Lord gave us that day continues to yield increasing fruit. Many who have heard the story have begun to pay far greater attention to the words they speak and ask the Holy Spirit if a directive was given for themselves. Once we start training ourselves to listen to things we say and things that other people say as a possible portal of the Lord speaking to us, the Holy Spirit will expand our understanding in this area. I chose to talk about this now because I ran across Scripture that appears to support this narrative. In addition, anything we can do to enhance our relationship with the Lord is excellent.

Deuteronomy 30:14 NKJV

But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

I encourage you to read verses 14-20 and ask yourselves how much of this applies to me, considering what Jesus said: "If you love me, do my commands." I realize this was spoken under the old covenant. There are pronounced differences with the new covenant but also significant similarities. The importance I am trying to convey is not the differences between the old and new covenants. Instead, it's one of the most powerful ways the Holy Spirit does communicate with us.

Do you find yourself repeating specific phrases, such as, "I should read my Bible more, I should listen more carefully, I should stop doing this habit or that habit, I know I shouldn't be exposing myself to that worldly entertainment?" Evaluate these repetitive things that come out of your own mouth and ask the Holy Spirit if He is trying to speak to you. Then, most importantly, respond how the Holy Spirit wants you to respond. This is a powerful way to grow closer to the Lord.

Are you willing to inquire of the Holy Spirit concerning things that come out of your mouth, whether or not YOU are supposed to do them?

Day 26 - Rehabilitation

When I was aware that this title word became the centerpiece of today's discussion, many thoughts flooded in as if on cue. I resisted the urge to go down the variety of thought pathways because my desire is to convey what the Holy Spirit wants to convey, not me. I had never considered my de facto relationship with Jesus Christ as a rehabilitation. Even the slightest preponderance of this possibility seems to fit impeccably.

I have had many opportunities to participate in rehab services. I have learned that returning to my original state of health, well-being, physical fitness, use of body, flexibility, strength, endurance, plus a variety of other descriptive words would apply. If I didn't do the designated plan of action, my recovery would be significantly curtailed. Usually, the plan would consist of basic lightweight actions that led to ever-increasing difficult actions, which led to sometimes trying to complete impossible actions, which then led to possible. I think now you are beginning to understand the parallel to becoming Christlike. However, there is a significant difference. Instead of trying to restore youthful vigor and vitality into our body, or at least usefulness, we are trying to die to all things that inhibit our rehabilitation in Christ Jesus. Numerous verses indicate this. We will look at a few to strengthen our understanding.

Psalms 23 NKJV

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me
in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You
prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint

my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

Prior to this day, I wouldn't have considered the 23rd Psalm about rehabilitation. But yet, it seems riddled with indicators that point in that direction. In fact, this new realization lifts my soul. I believe you will sense what I'm talking about. I can't give you exact numbers, but it seems almost daily that the living Word reveals more of Himself through the Word.

Ephesians 4:22-24 NKJV that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and **be renewed** in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

We have a wonderful rehab plan called the Bible, and our instructor is Jesus Christ. Are you diligently following the Creator's instructions for rehabilitation?

Day 27 - Appointed

As servants in training, we must be careful not to allow ourselves to be self-appointed without the mark of approval from our Heavenly Father. I have fallen into this trap several times. But I must say what has caused me to fall into this trap would be my pride. We must constantly be on guard against that devouring beast. When we allow it to be demonstrated, we paint a bull's-eye on our back. I am so thankful the Lord, in His infinite patience, has been guiding me to understand that my usefulness to Him is based on the degree of true humility I have. And what is true humility? I can't do anything without Him.

Embracing the beauty of surrendering to God's will is a recurring theme that keeps us on guard against what causes most people to fall. Through my own mistakes, the Lord has made it clear that when He appoints us for specific tasks, there'll **always** be fruit. However, it may be a different variety of fruit than we anticipated. But that's the beauty of surrendering completely to Him. We are not trying to achieve our goals and aspirations but His alone. Our beloved Lord Jesus has given us such a great example, and we have no excuses. After years of trying to do things my way and now fully surrendering to His, there's a vast difference between the two. And the One that deserves it now gets all the glory, honor, and praise. I've been reading

the book of Joshua most recently and want to share these verses about being appointed.

Joshua 3:7 NKJV

And the Lord said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

Joshua 4:14 NKJV

On that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.

Imagine our Heavenly Father appointing us in this fashion. It would never have happened without deep humility. Even when Joshua knew the Lord would use the miracle of the Jordan River parting to show that He was with Joshua, Joshua did not speak of it to them. He let God's mighty hand reveal the authority he was stepping into. An outrageous number of people have become self-proclaimed prophets, apostles, healers, bishops, and other titles the Almighty never assigned. One of the most used servants by the Lord that I know refers to himself as a donkey. He will go and do whatever His master wants him to. This man gets used in mighty ways.

Are you willing to deny any self-proclaimed appointment of yourself or men so that you may receive what our Creator has appointed you to do?

Day 28 - Incorporate

The onset of this word as the starting point of today's devotional seemed a bit peculiar. This came to me when pondering before the Father. Before I share, there is a dictionary explanation of the word from Merriam-Webster.

a: to unite or work into something already existent so as to form an indistinguishable whole

b: to blend or combine thoroughly

With this description in mind, it becomes clear how awe-inspiring it is to strive to reflect the character of Jesus Christ in every aspect of our lives. This is not just a lofty goal but a divine desire of our Heavenly Father: that when He looks at us, He sees a reflection of His Son. This divine desire should inspire and motivate us to incorporate more of Christ's likeness in ourselves, knowing that it is a one-way street. If we surrender to His will, we will continually be transformed into His image;

never will He be transformed into ours. This one-way nature of the transformation process is crucial to understand.

There is a vast difference between understanding life's difficulties and condoning and accepting unbiblical behaviors. I had a close relative who claimed to be a follower of Christ, and he said that Jesus understood that little lies here or there were okay. The father of lies would absolutely want us to believe that's true. But I can say with a high level of assurance that our beloved Savior would never say He's okay with lying, no matter how small. I've had people use similar justifications when it comes to unforgiveness. The Lord knows and gets me he's okay with it. I can promise you He is not okay with unforgiveness. We are potentially in great danger of not being forgiven ourselves, and this should make us urgently confess and repent of any behavior that goes against being Christlike.

The Almighty will never change His character for our particular circumstances, no matter how much we want it to be true. I have tried these mental shenanigans with the Lord many times and realize how foolish I was. Fully surrendered servants to the Most High look like this: Jesus (then your name) blended and combined thoroughly. Do you think our Father would accept anything else?

Philippians 3:12-15 NKJV

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

Are you willing to confess and repent of any behavior against being Christlike because you believe you have an exceptional circumstance?

Day 29 - Soundness of Mind

Exploring Scripture when a direction is indicated is a journey of enlightenment. David's Psalms 38 suggests that the soundness of his flesh is greatly troubled. He offers us a profound learning opportunity. His body seems to be racked with pain, inflammation, and various ailments. But it doesn't stop there; it also includes turmoil in his heart.

Yet, there is a confession, as David knows the reason for his suffering. His foolishness in sin has caused his calamity.

It's easy to dismiss David's Psalms 38 as a history lesson from the Old Testament, no longer relevant in the New Covenant. But that would be a mistake. The message here is not of doom and gloom but of hope and promise. We must approach Scripture intentionally, not picking and choosing what to pay attention to. Our beloved Messiah made it simple: if you love me, do my commands. Here's a New Testament scripture that somewhat relates to David's predicament.

1 Corinthians 5:5-7 NKJV

deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

Do you think that only this sin could lead to being turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh? Or should the fear of the Lord reinforce our desire to be an overcomer of sins? I'm not talking about a perfect, sinless existence, but I am talking about a perfect

willingness to be sinless. Understanding this difference is crucial, and it is essential that we understand it. We should have a tremendous desire rooted in love and respect with intentions to demonstrate as much reverence towards our Savior as possible. As our reverence for our Lord Jesus increases, the Holy Spirit strengthens our perfect willingness, and we begin to bear more fruit. What is that fruit? More sinlessness. Here is the hope that we have.

Romans 8:16-17 NKJV

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Is your desire to have the mind of Christ (1 Peter 4:1-2) on active duty at all times in your conscious awareness?

Day 30 - Greater Purpose

How many times have we asked ourselves what our purpose is? Of course, this question is multifaceted and can be applied in many ways. What is my purpose in life, and how can I find it? Indeed, millions have pondered this question, and probably billions. Unfortunately, the

majority of us have been brainwashed by the beast system's way of thinking, i.e., the world. The framework of worldly thinking causes us to isolate ourselves from the truth of what greater purpose means.

Let's start by shifting our perspective. Instead of asking, 'What is my purpose in life? ', let's consider, 'How can I live a life with purpose? '. Imagine the fulfillment of hearing our Master, Lord Jesus, proclaim, "Well done, good and faithful servant, "as the pinnacle of our existence. But remember, this can only be achieved with a heart of humility, expecting nothing in return but the opportunity to serve Him.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 , 4:1-4 NKJV

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

4:1-4 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead]at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they

will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

When we finally realize that the Creator of all things granted us life to serve Him, instead of Him serving us. Then, we can begin to fulfill our assignment as followers of Jesus Christ.

Are you willing to serve our Messiah by loving Him with all of your heart, all of your mind, all of your soul, and all of your strength?

