



21 days of **prayer and fasting**

2026

● **One Father**

● **One Saviour**

● **One Spirit**

21 days of prayer and fasting

Welcome to 21 Days of Prayer 2026!

This year our focus will be on who God is: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and on how his character affects us as followers of Jesus, in fellowship with each other and in our mission in the world.



Week one One Father

We will begin by looking at God the Father's qualities – including love, sovereignty and goodness – and how they impact us in fellowship and mission: Jesus called us to “be like our Father in Heaven”.



Week two One Saviour

In Week Two, we turn our hearts towards the Son, Jesus, beginning with the amazing truths that he is fully God and fully human. Following him makes us one body – with a story to tell.



Week three One Spirit

Finally, we think about who the Holy Spirit is and some of what he does; and we welcome his power for living together and being effective witnesses.

This year there are devotions for each of the 21 Days, to help us focus even on days when there is no gathering arranged for prayer.

The Way The Truth The Life

Bible based and
Spirit Led

Praying and
worshipping

Pastorally
grounded

Committed to
discipleship

Outward looking

Sacrificially
generous

Faith-driven
stewardship

Socially minded

Intentionally
hospitable

The whole three weeks tap into some of our Core Values so that they can be better seen in our lives.

How to use the notes on your own

There is a daily “Action” point this year. Some of these are reflective; some are more practical. Jesus never settled for theory: he said “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.” (John 13. 17 ESV). Prayerfully follow these through and see what God does.

Use the Journal pages to record challenges, encouragements, promises that you believe God may be giving you either for yourself or for the Church.

Try to join with others

There is a timetable of events in homes and at the Church centre, where we can learn, pray and grow together.

May you hear God's voice and know his touch in your life during these 21 Days of Prayer.

Aim to set aside time each day

If you already manage to read the Bible and talk to God every day, you may need to find a way to fit “21 Days” into your existing routine. If you don’t have a regular daily time with God, this would be a great way to kick-start a habit that will help you follow Jesus better. Either way, fasting either from food or from another indulgence (TV, social media, or whatever) might create the time you need. There are notes on “fasting” if this is something new to you or you need help with it.

Ask God to speak to you before you start

Read the Scripture portion carefully, and let God speak through it. Note anything that puzzles you, encourages you or challenges you. Pause briefly to reflect. Then read the “thought”. If another Scripture verse is mentioned, look it up! Again, note what you sense God may be saying to you or to the Church. If you are struggling to grasp either the reading or the thought, re-read them. If you’re stuck, bring your question to one of the group prayer times, or if you’re not able to, phone a friend.

Then pray

There is at least one short prayer for each day to help you pray into the theme for the day. You may want to move on from that to praying in your own words. Pray for yourself, and for the Church, to be able to apply the lesson for the day. You may also want to pray for friends and family or for other concerns in our world. As you pray, keep an open heart and spend a bit of time in silence, to allow God to talk back to you as you pray.

Safe Fasting tips and guidance

Fasting is a powerful spiritual discipline, with strong roots in the Bible. It was an expected spiritual discipline in both the Old and New Testament.

Jesus assumed that we would fast (Matthew 6:16-18) and the early church fasted to know the Holy Spirit's guidance (Acts 13:3-5). Through fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit can transform your life.

Most commonly, fasting is when you abstain from food or a certain type of food for a period of time. However, there are multiple ways to fast, all with the potential to help you grow spiritually.

The main types of Fast

Complete Fast

You drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option for a safe period of time or days. A complete fast should be very short; it should not last longer than a few days. (Please be aware of your medical needs, and your dietary requirements.)

Selective Fast

Removing certain elements from your diet. One example is known as the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, and bread from your diet, consume water and juice for fluids, and fruit and vegetables for food.

Partial Fast

Abstaining from eating any type of food in the morning and afternoon. This can either correlate to specific times of the day, such as 6.00am to 4.00pm, or from sunrise to sunset. This is one of the most common fasting practices found among Jewish and Christian communities.

Soul Fast

Give your soul a break! This option may help if you don't feel confident about fasting food or aren't allowed to because of health issues (including the need to eat to take medication) or need to refocus areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

Road map through Fasting

Reflect and Listen

It's important to ensure you're listening to both the Holy Spirit and your own body in the way you fast. We are not doing this to impress God nor attempting to twist his will to suit ours but to offer our earthly desires and time to him in order to partake in his divine nature.

Commit and Surrender

Once you know what you are fasting from and for how long, commit your fasting choice before God and finally surrender it to God so he might give you the grace you need to do it, not only for him but with him. Remember that Jesus was with the Holy Spirit in the desert while fasting and praying.

Believe For and In

Believe for a personal transformation in your spiritual life with Jesus. When God's people practice fasting and prayer, God hears from heaven and can heal our lives, our churches, our communities, our nations, and our world. Fasting and prayer can even bring about revival—a change in direction. Believe in Jesus who calls you to spend time with him.

Be sensible...

- A selective or partial fast is safer and more sustainable than a complete fast.
- You shouldn't try to commit to a complete fast for more than a few days.
- Be aware of how fasting may affect your ability to do your job.
- Do not abstain from drinking water: the effects of dehydration are serious to your health.
- Aim to make your fasting a journey of faith and transformation, not a chore!



Week one

21 days of **prayer**

Devotional Guide

God the Father...

Prayer journal

● Reading

The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. (Lamentations 3. 22-23)
See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3. 1)

● Pause

As a child of God, meditate on the faithful love of God for you that never ends and on his mercies that are new every morning.

● Thought

Jesus gave us a picture of God's love for us in the story of a father welcoming home his lost son. "While he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming and filled with love and compassion ran to his son and embraced him." (Luke 15. 20)

As children of God, what amazing love our Father has lavished on us in Jesus who he sent to die in our place so that through faith in him we might know the promise of eternal life. God's love for us is not based on us cleaning up our act, anything we have done or can offer Him, but on grace alone. It is while we were sinners that Christ died for us and as the old hymn reminds us –

Amazing love! How can it be that thou my God should die for me?

The greatest measure of our faith is a love that reflects the Father's love for us. We show unconditional sacrificial love because that is an expression of the character of God.

Jesus calls us to love people in a way that is not related to their attractiveness, merit or lovability. He had compassion on those in need, who were hurting and broken, to those who had lost hope and were outcasts. (That includes us!)

If we say that we are children of God, we should live our lives as Jesus did. As we keep our Father's commands and remain in his love, we will know true joy and reflect his character to those around us.

● Prayer

1 John 4. 9-11 says: God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other.

Pray that God's generous sacrificial love will fill your life and overflow in love to others.

● Action

What kind of difference would we make in our everyday lives if we were prepared to live out a Christ-like love in everyday and extraordinary ways? Today, show love to a neighbour, co-worker or family member in an everyday way: pay for their coffee, offer a lift, collect a prescription or...

● Reading

This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. (Ezekiel 37.5)

● Pause

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● Thought

Isn't it fascinating when you hear others pray? In particular I like to listen to how others refer to God. Many people have a favoured name or title they use when praying to God such as "Loving Heavenly Father" or "Dear Lord". If you were to go back to the 6th century BC and the land of Babylonia, and heard the prophet Ezekiel pray or preach, the name that would strike you as he referred to God again and again would be "Sovereign Lord".

The word "sovereign" is used about 300 times in the NIV version of the Bible. 210 of these occurrences come from the book of Ezekiel alone and are used with reference to God. God our Father, in Ezekiel's words, is the Sovereign Lord.

That word sovereign is best thought of as someone who possess supreme or ultimate power.

When we understand Ezekiel's situation, we perhaps understand why this was such a precious term to him.

Ezekiel lived and prophesied among the Jewish exiles in Babylon immediately after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC. This was a tragic time in Israel's history. God's promises to Abraham, including the promise that his descendants would live and flourish in the Promised Land, seemed to have been long forgotten. Where there had been promise, there now seemed hopelessness.

But God our Father is Sovereign! He is the one who possesses supreme and ultimate power.

Ezekiel 37 is a remarkable chapter, which shows us one aspect of God's sovereignty: the power to bring life. Here is a valley of bones. But at our Sovereign God's command there is life!

Maybe, that is an encouragement you need to hear today. Perhaps you are facing situations that seem hopeless. Perhaps you long to see spiritual life in loved-ones who seem currently like dry bones. Take heart, God is sovereign. The same power that gave life to those dry bones, that same power that raised Christ from the dead, is now living in you! (Romans 8.11).

● Prayer

Father God, thank you that you are sovereign. Help me, like Ezekiel to have confidence that you are the one who possesses supreme and ultimate power. May your sovereignty be precious to me.

● Action

Bring a situation, either personal or global, that seems hopeless and ask the Lord to breathe his life into it. Then encourage someone in the church family, by letting them know that you are praying for them today.

● Reading

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1. 5, ESVUK)

● Pause

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● Thought

Perhaps we have a casual relationship with light. In our homes, we can light up a room at the flick of a switch. Previous generations didn't enjoy that luxury, so light was important to them.

David Adam says,

The Celtic church had a great love for lights as a symbol. St Patrick lit the fire at Tara to show that the light of Christ had conquered the darkness and triumphed over death. The druids rightly warned the king that if he did not have this fire extinguished it would burn for ever in Ireland. At St Brigid's monastery the flame was never allowed to go out and it is said that the fire burned there for over a thousand years, a sign that 'Christ is the Light of the World. A Light that no darkness can quench'. (From "The Open Gate")

God's light is pure, holy, and good. But light is also revealing.

It is not easy to live in the light. The light makes us see many ugly things within us: vices, pride, the worldly spirit. (Pope Francis)

When we allow God's light to shine into our lives, into our hearts, it will reveal our sin, our failure, our indifference.

It will also show us the way forward - as a lamp to our feet - if we are prepared to follow where God leads us.

Jesus told us that we are 'the light of the world' . We are called to shine brightly, to proclaim boldly, and to live lovingly in a world that lacks such light.

As we proclaim to the world that God is light, let's ask ourselves:

Where are we lighting fires that will burn for a thousand years?

Where are we bringing the light into a dark world?

● Prayer

Father, we know that your light is pure, holy and true. Help us to remember this in our daily lives. Lord, let your light shine on the darkness in our lives. Show us where we need to repent and adjust our behaviour and attitudes so that we can serve as your representatives.

Father, be with us as we go into the world reflecting your light into the dark corners of our neighbourhood, city, and world.



Action

Light a candle... safely. (This will work best when it is dark outside.) Switch off all other lights in the room. Allow yourself to notice how the light spreads through the room. There will probably be dark corners. Focus on the candle and allow God to show you the dark corners in your life. Then pray through how you will tackle those things.

● **Reading**

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases: his mercies never come to an end: they are new every morning, great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3. 22-23, ESV)

● **Pause**

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● **Thought**

It is part of God's nature to be merciful, and just like his grace, mercy cannot be earned by us. One of the best-known stories of God's mercy is in Exodus 16, which describes the Israelites' wandering in the desert after being freed from Egypt. When they complained about running out of food, God promised to rain bread from heaven. The manna, described as small, white, and sweet like honey, was provided daily for the Israelites for 40 years as they wandered the desert. This is a great historical example of God's mercies being new each day. So how is mercy applied to us today?

God shows mercy through forgiveness, compassion, and unfailing love, withholding punishment that is deserved. He demonstrates this by offering salvation, healing, and redemption, and by providing ongoing blessings and protection. The mercy he shows us is part of who he is.

Bryan Stevenson is a young lawyer who works to help marginalised Americans unfairly and harshly punished by the U.S. criminal justice system, which disproportionately targets people of colour and poor people. One of those was Walter McMillian, a black man who was framed for the murder of a girl named Ronda Morrison, convicted, and sent to death row, and only cleared and released after Stevenson got involved. Ten years later, at Walter's funeral, Stevenson shared all he learned from him, particularly that we must extend mercy to everyone, even those who have not earned it. (The story is told in Stevenson's book "Just Mercy".)

God's mercy is not a passive emotion but an active force that responds to human suffering and need. So too, it is an active force in us which makes us overflow with God's loving kindness and pour out mercy as we live for Christ.

● **Prayer**

Loving God, thank you that we can be assured of your mercy and loving kindness to us, just as you showed to the Israelites long ago. May you grant us the compassion to extend the mercy you have shown us, outwardly in all areas of our lives.

● **Action**

As we go out each day into our own individual mission fields, can we imagine being more merciful to others? Intentionally show mercy to someone today: speak up for someone who is being bullied; or reach out (email or text message) to someone who hasn't spoken to you for a while.

● Reading

I keep my eyes always on the LORD.
With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. (Psalm 16. 8)

● Pause

Ponder and meditate on this unchanging and eternal truth – God the Father is present. Suggested song – “ Worthy” by Elevation Worship.
https://open.spotify.com/track/7qqtTPQIMXAfbamFBPHG5?si=W4_Vr8c-R8GYzC38ZbKETQ



● Thought

God is eternally present and is with you right now. He is with you in every breath. Every heartbeat. Every smile. Every tear. He has always been. He will always be. He is the great “I am”. In his presence is perfect love, perfect peace, perfect mercy and infinite grace in Jesus. He is worthy of the worship of every fibre of our being.

Thousands of years ago Jeremiah wrote ‘The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning ; great is your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” ‘ (Lamentations 3. 21-24 ESV)

Wherever you find yourself today look to him. In the darkest moments of your soul – look to him. On the highest mountain top moment of elation – look to him. Always look to him. Seek him. Know that he is present with you right now. Gaze upon his beauty and remember that he is all you need. It is ONLY in him that we find the soul deep satisfaction and healing that we long for. Everything else is fake and temporary.

Worship him for he is worthy. Make your life a living sacrifice to him (Romans 12. 1) and as you do, others will see the reality of God's presence in your life.

● Prayer

My God, my Lord and my Saviour. Worthy is your Name of every fibre of my being. It is only in you that I find the complete satisfaction that I long for. Help me gaze upon your beauty and feel the drenching of your love pour over me and heal me. I pray this for your Glory alone and in the name of Jesus my Lord. Amen.

● Action

Go and shine his love into the darkness of the world. Be kind. Show compassion. Show Jesus to this hurting, broken world. ‘Turn up’ – be there – for someone today.



● **Reading**

How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all. The earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number – living things both large and small. (Psalm 104. 24-25)

● **Pause**

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● **Thought**

As created beings in God's image, we are designed to pay attention to the world around us with a heavenly perspective. The wonder of God's unfathomable creation stuns us in moments of grandeur, on a high mountainside or watching the wonder of the Aurora Borealis.

But what about the everyday moments that don't necessarily knock us off our feet but have significance none the less? There has been a recent social trend to notice "glimmers." A movement to slow down and notice the little moments that bring joy, which can often get lost amidst the noise of life.

Christians can welcome these 'glimmers.' We are God's creation and the natural rhythms that shape our everyday lives, pave the way for us to notice God's gifts. And in turn, prompt us to praise and a desire to share this beauty and love with those around us. 'Glimmers' might include

- The walk by the riverside – noticing the constancy of the sound of running water
- The crema on top of a very good cup of coffee waiting to be savoured
- Frosted breath on a cold January morning
- The rhythm of your footsteps as you walk, the awareness of your heart beating
- The deep connection we feel with those we love, A hug, a held hand. Heart moments that create joy and hold pain simultaneously.

The way we think and in turn talk about our daily lives matters. When we see things through the lens of 'heavenly moments' or 'glimmers', we glimpse beyond our own circumstances and see God's better story. Those moments and that story are opportunities for conversation and connection:

- A chat with a neighbour over the garden fence to share the beauty of new life coming through as snowdrops pop up to say hello
- A listening ear, a held hand over a coffee with a friend having a hard time

Moments of worship/glimmers ...whatever we call them... They all point us to our creator. Let's take time to share them with those around us.

● **Prayer**

Father thank you for your daily reminders of how much you love your created world. So much so that you gave us the ultimate gift in sending your Son to save us. Thank you that your story of redemption is so beautifully told in creation. Help us to see your light glimmer in our everyday lives, that we may glimpse your goodness, your beauty and your love. Enable us to reflect your light in what we say and do with those around us.



Action

What glimmers can you note in your life today?

How can you reframe your thinking about daily tasks to note what God has gifted you today? Take time to linger a little longer in a conversation to share the beauty of God's creation and his better story with someone today.

● **Reading**

A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' (Luke 10. 30-35)

● **Pause**

Whatever your circumstances today, try to find something to thank God for.

● **Thought**

I wonder if, like me, you have ever doubted the goodness of God? It's easy to believe when life is going your way. But much more difficult in unexpected circumstances such as bereavement, redundancy, loneliness or health scares. However, scripture is peppered with promises that God is good and works all thing together for our good (See Romans 8. 28; Romans 12. 2; Genesis 50. 20; Psalm 23. 6; Psalm 25. 7-8; Psalm 86. 5; Psalm 100. 5). "All good gifts come from God" (James 1. 17). These promises may not remove our problems but can inspire hope in dark places.

In today's verses, a traveller was left for dead, with no hope of survival unless someone helped him. Where was his good God? Where were his good friends and neighbours? He was abandoned, alone, bleeding and hurt. We sometimes feel the same when in difficult circumstances physically, emotionally or both.

But, the parable tells how someone stops, binds his wounds and takes him to a place of safety. Our Good Shepherd (Psalm 23) leads us by still water and through the valley of death. He restores our soul. My hope is not that my worries, troubles and doubt will cease, but that my Shepherd's heart and will are for my good. Oswald Chambers said "Living a life of faith means never knowing where you are being led. But it does mean loving and knowing the One who is leading."

I have known the goodness of Christ himself stopping for me when I was in distress. I have seen his restoration in the past. Because I know that he never changes (Hebrews 13. 8), I have hope to see his goodness again in the future. So I can cling to the promise of his goodness in dark places or times of doubt: as we seek his face and trust him, we may in time be able to declare as the Psalmist does, that we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good (Psalm 34.8).

Knowing the goodness of God, our call is to go out to the bruised and beaten and help bind their wounds so that his goodness might be seen in us. (Galatians 6.9)

● **Prayer**

Lord, there will be an end to these troubles. But until that day comes, Still I will praise you!

● **Action**

Today, if you are struggling to understand the goodness of God, talk to him; and ask someone you can trust to sit with you, listen and pray. Or be that neighbour for someone who is having a bad time. Find a way to get alongside and show God's love.



Week two

21 days of **prayer**

Devotional Guide

Jesus, God the Son...

Prayer journal



● Reading

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. (Hebrews 1. 3)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. (John 1. 1-2)

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. (Colossians 1. 15)

● Pause

Take a few moments to worship Jesus, "the Lamb of God". Perhaps use the words of Revelation 5.11-14 in your praise.

● Thought

Where is Jesus now? Many think of the incarnation, the baby of Bethlehem, the image which dominates Christmas. But he's no longer a helpless baby. Others think of the dusty streets of Galilee, but he's no longer there either. Crucifixes picture him on the cross; but Christ is no longer dying there. Other artists have painted images of the risen Christ. Each part of that story is essential for our salvation, but doesn't present us with an up-to-date vision of Christ. In Revelation, John saw into heaven. He wrote, 'the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; 'he will lead them to springs of living water.' 'And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.' (Rev 7. 17) Jesus is still the Lamb. In glory he carries the marks of sacrifice, the wounds by which we are healed. Jesus is our only Saviour (Phil 3. 20), and scripture says that our only saviour is God. (Jude 25). When we meet Jesus, he is the Lamb 'at the centre of the throne' being worshipped in heaven, which is a delight to the Father! The Bible's 'world-view' draws a distinction between creator and creation. It says that Jesus is the creator (Col 1. 15-19) and 'in very nature God' (Phil 2. 6), and that 'Every knee will bow before him' (Phil 2. 10).

If Jesus is fully God, then when he saves us, we are fully saved. Likewise, his words to us are not mere advice, wise counsel or life-coaching. They are absolutely authoritative, the very words of Almighty God. When he says "love your enemies", likens lust to adultery, and anger to murder, and says "Follow me": Listen Up!

Equally when he sends us out on mission, he does so on the basis that "All authority on heaven and earth is given to me, therefore go". (Matt 28. 18-19)

Joshua stood before the Israelites and said, "Choose this day whom you will serve!" (Josh 24. 15) As the New Testament people of God, we choose Christ.

● Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Lamb of God, we worship you, because you alone are worthy of our praise!

Lord Jesus Christ, we fear being like those of whom you said, "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me" (Matt 15. 8). We long to worship you with all our hearts, in Spirit and in truth. Help us we pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living God. Forgive us when we have disobeyed your voice. Help us to live lives of radical holiness, selfless love and extreme generosity in obedience to your commands. Send us out in mission, empowered with the eternal authority that is yours. Amen.



Action

If Jesus really is Lord, then do we obey his words? Identify one area that you need to bring under the Lordship of Christ. If Jesus really is Lord, are we telling the world? Tell one person this week about the wonderful Lord you serve. **Worship the Lord using the songs overleaf.**



Worship the Lord using these songs:

YouTube



Lamb of God

youtu.be/k0Hvc3HKnT8?si=pA9BeC1xaAQEwnB

Spotify



open.spotify.com/track/3Qh7WTXJYgxVG0lr2TUK6o?si=GwVNb6NmSEqxNkQHaFHWRA

Behold Him Now



youtu.be/uv5ytqRyNUg?si=AuqwRMhHdgTC07qe



open.spotify.com/track/1YolKoJR1QkLTS7grOAdCo?si=QQyJ58cRY2UmrssiGIJ3Vw

Worthy of It All



youtu.be/kQ0bV2t3tUw?si=RSocRKVhMa8PTpdN



open.spotify.com/track/0adk2kXGdxRVLjoFUUeX4?si=mdUoJTp mR3m2Hb5xul5Vpw



● **Reading**

For this reason [Jesus] had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2. 17)

"That's why he had to enter into every detail of human life" (Hebrews 2. 17, The Message)

● **Pause**

Love is a verb: it always looks like something. Give God thanks for the way God in Christ has loved you.

● **Thought**

Jesus was and still is the face of God: he shows us what God is like. "In him all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" (Colossians 2. 9). Wonderful as it is to contemplate this, do we also grasp the significance of Jesus being fully human?

Jesus laid aside his majesty, and put on human flesh and entered this dark world as a vulnerable baby, dependent on two human parents.

Jesus showed us God's original blueprint for humanity. He did this fully, and he alone did it perfectly. He fully engaged with the world and people around him. Wherever people were hurting or marginalised, he was right there, healing and speaking life. He experienced the full range of human emotion: righteous anger, compassion, gratitude and anguish. 'He was a man of sorrows and familiar with grief' (Isaiah 53. 3). He also shared friendship, celebrations and fellowship, often with unlikely people.

However, Jesus did not use his humanity as an excuse to sin. Instead, he surrendered to his Father's will, even if this meant enduring the cross and dying. We couldn't save ourselves. But Jesus could – because he is fully God and fully, sinlessly, human.

How does this apply to us?

We are mortal, fragile as flowers that the wind blows away (Psalm 103. 15). Though flawed, we still carry the image of God and have, in Jesus, a great High Priest who is able to forgive our sins. Jesus, who 'entered into every detail of human life' can empathise with our weaknesses.

We need to be filled daily with the Holy Spirit, carrying the light of Christ in our humanity like treasures in jars of clay, becoming conformed to Jesus' image – to be his hands and his feet in this world.

While being fully in the world as human beings, let us also not live for the world which is passing away. Don't just let Jesus be a part of your story. Be part of God's story, "Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering." Romans 12. 1-2 (The Message)

● **Prayer**

Lord I offer you my everyday, ordinary life; help me to live for you, so that others can see a bit of what your love looks like.



Action

How in the next week can you be the reason for someone else seeing God's love in action? Today, do something human for one person in the church. Make a phone call, send a text, take a gift, make a visit.



● Reading

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1. 15)

● Pause

Take a moment to thank Jesus for bringing God's Kingdom near — into your life, our church, and the world.

● Thought

When Jesus began his ministry, he announced something bold: "The Kingdom of God has come near." Those words weren't just spiritual poetry, they were a declaration that everything was about to change.

Since Old Testament times, God's people had longed for a Messiah – a King chosen by God – to come. The prophets had promised that the Messiah would set them free and restore God's reign on earth. So people expected a warrior who would overthrow Rome, but instead, Jesus came as a servant King, healing the broken, forgiving sinners, and welcoming outsiders.

Through Jesus, God's Kingdom broke into the world not through power or violence, but through love, justice, and mercy. Every time Jesus healed the sick, lifted up the poor, or forgave the guilty, he was showing us what God's reign looks like.

Today, as his followers, we're called to live as citizens of that Kingdom. That means our church community isn't just a group that meets on Sundays — we are a glimpse of what life looks like when Jesus is King. When we forgive one another, share with those in need, stand up for the voiceless, and love our neighbours, we're showing the world a different kind of kingdom.

And that's what mission really is: not just telling people about Jesus, but living in a way that reveals his rule and his goodness. In every act of kindness, every prayer for the hurting, every time we choose peace over pride, we're saying: "Jesus is King — and his Kingdom is here."

● Prayer

Jesus, Messiah and King,

Thank you for bringing God's Kingdom close — for showing us a new way to live.

Help our church family to reflect your Kingdom values:

 Love instead of hate,

 Generosity instead of greed,

 Peace instead of division.

Reign in our hearts and in our community,

 so that people around us might see your goodness and come to know you.

Amen.



Action

- Take a moment to pray, "Jesus, be King in my life — in my words, in my relationships, and in how I serve others.
- Do one small thing today that brings God's Kingdom closer to someone who's not yet a Christian — it could be an act of generosity, encouragement, or standing up for someone in need.

● Reading

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honour your father and mother.'" "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy." Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. (Mark 10. 17-22)

● Pause

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● Thought

A teacher is a qualified professional who educates others by imparting knowledge, skills, and virtues, acting as a guide and mentor within a structured learning environment to help students acquire new understanding. Jesus is often called Teacher (Rabbi), and in this passage he teaches not through a sermon, but through a very personal encounter.

A rich young man comes to Jesus with what sounds like the perfect teachable attitude: he runs to him, kneels respectfully, and asks an earnest question: "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus begins by reminding him of God's commandments—a familiar lesson. The young man confidently answers that he has kept them all. Up to this point, it feels like a good classroom moment: knowledge, obedience, enthusiasm.

Then comes the deeper lesson: "Jesus looked at him and loved him."

And out of that love, he gives a teaching designed specifically for his heart: "One thing you lack. Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor... then come, follow me."

Jesus the Teacher does something unexpected: he hears the student's question and he sees beneath the surface to the heart of the matter (1 Sam 16. 7). He exposes the true issue—not intellect, but attachment and then invites him beyond rule-keeping into discipleship.

The reality of the Christian life is that we will never be finished in working to be more like Christ in our actions and our attitudes. Jesus through his teaching always invites us into transformation by shining a light on where we must learn and grow. And as we grow, we become mentors to others in the church family.

As Jesus continues to encourage us to be more like him today, he still asks, and wants to reveal to us: "What is the 'one thing' that keeps you from fully following?"

● Prayer

Lord Jesus, my Teacher, thank you that you know me fully and teach me with love. Open my heart to your lessons. Show me what I am clinging to. Help me to follow you more freely. Amen.

● Action

- Ask: If Jesus, the Teacher, looked at my life today, what lesson might he lovingly point out?
- Identify one step of obedience or surrender that would help you grow more as his disciple this week.



● **Reading**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father (Galatians 1.3-4)

● **Pause**

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● **Thought**

In these verses, Paul reminds the Galatians that God's love is what sent Jesus to die for their sins, offering them grace, peace, and freedom from evil. Salvation is not something we earn; it is a beautiful gift freely given by our loving Father. Grace is the unearned favour and boundless love of God, while peace is the deep harmony we experience when we walk closely with him.

Jesus revealed the greatest act of grace when he willingly sacrificed himself on the cross — a painful, undeserved death — so that we could be saved and made whole. Because Christ rescued us from the present evil age, we no longer must live in fear of tomorrow — our hope is secure in him.

We are his children; chosen to reflect his heart in everything we do. His sacrifice changes how we see mission; it reminds us that sharing his message is not just about words, but about love, compassion, and unity lived out daily. As followers of Christ, we are called to be peacemakers, carrying his message into the world with grace and peace.

God longs for our words and actions to mirror Jesus' example. Jesus spoke truth with compassion, forgave those who hurt him, and brought peace wherever he went. When we show grace and peace to others — forgiving, serving, and loving without condition — we reveal the transforming power of his message. Through Christ, people can find forgiveness, restoration, and unity with God and one another.

● **Prayer**

Thank you, Lord, for your sacrifice — a sacrifice greater than any we could ever offer. Thank you for your endless grace and the peace that fills our hearts because of you. Help us to be reflections of your love so that others may see your grace shining through us. Amen.



Action

As Christians, we can share God's message and demonstrate his grace and peace by serving others with love and kindness. Take time today to reach out to someone who may need to experience God's grace and peace — listen to them, offer encouragement, and remind them that they are valued and deeply loved by God.

● **Reading**

As you come to him, the living Stone — rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him — you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." (1 Peter 2. 4-6, NIV)

● **Pause**

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● **Thought**

This week I have been on a dry stone walling course. It was amazing to see uneven stones, big and small, being placed in their perfect position. Sometimes stones needed a little jostling, sometimes stones needed a number of others to support them. Occasionally stones needed to be moved into a different bit of the wall from where they were first placed. No matter what or where, every stone had a purpose, and the wall was stronger as a result.

If we carry this analogy on we see, as Christians, Christ dwelling inside of us making us useful as a stone in Christ's wall, the Church. Christ saw the wall before it started, and in his victory knows the Church in its completion with himself as the cornerstone. This gives us the assurance that we all live under Christ's victory over death and destruction.

Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ the head and cornerstone.

Chosen of the Lord and precious, binding all the church as one.

Therefore we all live as part of the missional purpose of the Church: that is, to allow him to build his Church. However, Christ doesn't intend us all to look the same, talk the same or even have the same experiences. Rather his plan is that we all use the life experiences we have, to shine Christ's love and compassion into the lives of those around us; and as we do that, to pray that Christ will reveal himself through us.

The final thing about dry stone walling is that when the foundation is solid the wall becomes stronger over time as all the stones settle into their positions. We may not feel fully settled now but if we remain in the wall we will rest into our missional purpose.

● **Prayer**

Give thanks the Christ came, died and rose with victory over death so that we can be built together with Christ as our foundation.

Pray for wisdom to understand and live out your purpose as a living stone in Christ's Church.

● **Action**

Take action this week to encourage someone within the church so that we may all become a stronger missional 'wall', secure in Christ.



● Reading

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." (John 20. 19-21)

● Thought 1

I love what Jesus says to the disciples in this passage. I imagine this is the perfect time for Jesus to task the disciples with what they've got to do now the resurrection has happened, but what does Jesus say?

He says to the disciples "Peace be with you" and then again "Peace be with you".

Jesus knows his disciples so well. He knows they are full of fear (they have locked themselves in a room for a start). He knows they have just seen their leader belittled and killed; they are scared for their lives.

And Jesus, here with us, knows we're equally able to lock ourselves away and hide from what is going on around us and yet he says to us now "Peace be with you".

● Pause

Perhaps sit with open hands and hear Jesus say to you "Peace be with you".

As you sit in his presence give to him:

- The worries of your day
- The business that demands your attention
- Those mundane things that just need to be done
- Big issues that are looming over you just now.

● Thought 2

The disciples really knew Jesus very well. They knew his passion for the Father and for spending time with him. They knew his miraculous powers, they had seen him heal the woman who was bleeding and the man who could not work and earn a living except by begging. They knew he valued children, the poor and others shunned by society. The disciples knew how deep was his understanding of each of them: so deep that he even knew one of them would betray him before his death.

And now, in this passage we see Jesus standing among them. Risen from the dead, making sense of everything he ever told them.

So he only needs to say once to them "As the Father has sent me so I am sending you". And the great joy is that Jesus – the one who lived the revolutionary life, valuing the poor, healing the sick, spending time with God the Father – says today to each of us, "As the Father has sent me so I am sending you."

● Prayer

Lord Jesus thank you for all you have taught us about your life on earth. We are humbled that as the Father sent you we are also being sent every day.

Please help us to share your acceptance, your love and your truth with our friends,



Action

Think of one person you could show God's love to this week maybe by inviting them to your home or offering to help with something. Tell someone in your Growth Group / Microchurch / main church what you plan so they will hold you to account for reaching out to this person.

21 days of **prayer**



Week three

Devotional Guide

God, the Holy Spirit...

Prayer journal



● **Reading**

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him — the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11. 2); the Spirit of truth (John 14. 17); the Spirit of holiness (Romans 1. 4); the Spirit of glory (1 Peter 4. 14).

● **Pause**

Jesus promised us his presence, as the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us. Welcome him, call on him, invite him in, honour him, worship him. Are we living in all that the bible promises and anticipates for life with God?

● **Thought**

We encounter the Spirit of God almost from the start of scripture. When the Father created the world in and through the Son, (Gen 1; Col 1. 16), the Spirit brooded over the waters of the deep. He was the active presence of God in creation. We see him when Mary became pregnant with Christ 'by the Holy Spirit'. Every knee will bow before Christ, 'to the glory of God the Father' (Phil 2. 11) and, 'no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit!' (1Cor 12. 3). In Isaiah 42. 8 we see that glory alone belongs to God (I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other); this same Spirit is the 'Spirit of Glory' (1 Peter 4. 14). So when Jesus is baptised and affirmed by the Father, the Spirit descended upon him (Matt 3. 13-17). We were baptised into "the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28. 18-20). The Spirit guided the writing of scripture (2 Peter 1. 21), which is his 'sword'! (Eph 6. 17): so there is no tension between, 'the Word' and 'the Spirit'!

This Spirit is no impersonal 'force' like some holy version of Star Wars! He is personal, he 'speaks' (Acts 8. 29), and reacts personally (Eph 4. 30). He's not an anonymous life-force, who we can take or leave as we fancy. He is God whom we must obey. Have you any idea who you are dealing with?!

The gospel is sometimes truncated as: 'believe in Jesus while you are alive so that you can go to heaven when you're dead'. But in Acts the Apostolic emphasis included: "and receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2. 38-9) – while you are alive! The Spirit's presence within is a 'foretaste of glory divine', the 'life of God in the soul of man' which will be fulfilled in eternity when we will be fully in God's very presence. So the Spirit's presence – God himself living in us – is part of the Good News, and imparts the power we need to proclaim the Good News.

● **Prayer 1**

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us.

● **Prayer 2**

Lord, forgive us when we have grieved or quenched your precious Spirit. Seeing that the Spirit is fully God, we repent of our sins, and insensitivity to his direction. We ask for a renewed sense of awe that you would make your dwelling place in us. Open our hearts to you this day that we would delight in your dwelling with us, 'full of glory and with inexpressible joy'.

● **Prayer 3**

Come, Holy Spirit.



Action

Pray for each other so that we are delivered from anything that would prevent us from knowing, honouring and welcoming the Holy Spirit. If you're not able to meet today, phone someone.



Use these songs to worship the Lord:

YouTube



**Holy
Spirit Come**

<https://youtu.be/nShf6aMfjh8?si=r8dM6508Qdj5oTWX>

Spotify



<https://open.spotify.com/track/0PoemVEQBD6AjW0NsR95cD?si=s9VUBmYQQauz7rOOkREAGA>

**Rest on
Us**



<https://youtu.be/1p5ADO7NTWw?si=e2-dZ7q8SrsMmghA>



https://open.spotify.com/track/0A402ZdxwQzaVdyH5Zav5X?si=qwo9Fi6wQT2iuAu1_7aEPg



● **Reading**

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (John 14. 26)

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you." (John 16. 13-15)

● **Pause**

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● **Thought**

Have you ever had to represent someone else? Perhaps speaking on behalf of your work, or for a friend? Did you feel prepared? Did you feel the responsibility of doing a good job and want the best for them? The Holy Spirit represents Jesus. He speaks for him, directs attention to him and knows him so well, therefore all he says is true.

Where is your focus most of the time? On family, on work, on social media or TV, on yourself? Everything the Spirit does is entirely Jesus focussed. The Holy Spirit works like a magnifying glass to help us to see Jesus in a bigger way in our lives.

The scriptures are the Holy Spirit's chief instrument in renewing our minds and his primary focus is Jesus – glorifying Jesus to us.

Paraclete (paraklētos) is a Greek word meaning 'called alongside'. In Christian theology, it refers to the Holy Spirit, promised by Jesus as an advocate, helper, or comforter for his disciples (John 14. 16). It carries the nuance of someone actively supporting and interceding on our behalf.

John 14. 12 says "they (you and me!) will do even greater things than these [things Jesus had been doing]". We as a church family of believers, are connected by our love of Jesus and therefore our service of Jesus. We gather in large and small groups throughout the week just as ordinary people. We often don't have much in common other than our faith in Jesus, but we have been transformed by the power of the cross. Our focus and witness should be on Jesus. We should be pointing others to Jesus just as the Holy Spirit does. Our mission, as followers of Jesus, is to be outward looking, not preoccupied by ourselves and how things suit us. Instead, we need to keep our eyes on him and be open to let the Holy Spirit lead us through scripture and through his quiet nudges in our heart.

● **Prayer**

Lord help me to turn my eyes upon Jesus and look full in his wonderful face. Holy Spirit thank you for giving me reminders, because I am slow to learn and quick to forget.

● **Action**

Try to identify when you are more preoccupied with self than with others and what you are called to do. We have a mission to share Jesus. Praise God for those that pointed us to Jesus: say something that points someone to Jesus today.



● Reading

God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! (1 Cor 12. 4-6, The Message)

● Pause

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● Thought

"We've prayed our prayers, we've made our plans, but if you're not in it we don't want it, Oh God would you move? Only you can heal our land. Holy Spirit, come and fill us, Oh God would you move?" (from the Rich di Castiglione song "O God would you move?")

I often think about these lyrics as they plead discernment for God's will, purposes and presence in our lives. Sometimes the presence of the Holy Spirit is tangible, perhaps during personal prayer time, or during a gathering creating a moment of community, purpose and unity. At other times or seasons the Holy Spirit is harder to find; as the church scatters the power and presence of the Holy Spirit manifests and sheds wider as we seek to help and minister to those around us. We sometimes find ourselves using spiritual gifts, or find the Holy Spirit, in unexpected places.

Several years ago I was struck by the Holy Spirit's presence in a work training course. I heard powerful testimony of acute crisis and need from "Greg" (not the person's real name). Through a set of God-ordained events, members of a local church community were able to help, provide hospitality, wisdom, reassurance and be the beginnings of Greg's support network to lead to healing and restoration. In a secular context, a very strong testimony was shared through openness and vulnerability. This has immense power in any context, demonstrating how God can use people and communities for his glory.

Community building has many facets including hospitality and fellowship. With the Holy Spirit at the centre:

- Community building seeks to first listen and understand.
- Community building encourages the vulnerable to "dare greatly" (in Brené Brown's words), providing stories of restoration, hope and peace.
- Community building values inclusion over exclusion, connection over isolation, interdependence over independence, vulnerability over power, sacrifice over gain.
- Community building is Kingdom building.

● Prayer

Holy Spirit, please come and fill me with your power; help me to use my gifts in the lives of others. Holy Spirit, come and move amongst us at PBC and in our wider communities.



Action

Listen to the song: O God, would you move?

https://youtu.be/DXu_Os9-jbk?si=bCWSvY9ARRfTeLaA

Think about those in your community or our church community.

Today, "dare greatly" to build community by being vulnerable and asking for prayer; by encouraging someone; or by reaching out to someone who seems on the edges of church life.





● **Reading**

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you... But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. (John 14. 16-17, and 26)

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. (Acts 4. 31)

● **Pause**

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● **Thought**

God has sent the Holy Spirit to live inside everyone that believes; the Spirit reminds us of the truth that Jesus is our saviour; when we embrace him, we can proclaim God's word with courage, conviction and clarity. God within us. What a gift for us to receive!

Jesus knew that we would have moments of doubt, weakness, and uncertainty so, when we trust him, we have the Spirit to lean on. We are told in Proverbs 3. 5 not to lean on our own understanding, and we don't have to. The Spirit is not passive; he actively engages with our hearts and minds, speaking truth, bringing comfort, providing direction.

The Spirit doesn't just inform – he stirs courage and conviction and that can release us into bold action, touching those who need to hear God's word, to feel the comfort of his love or the surety of his salvation. In Acts, the disciples were in a willing state of mind to listen, speak and act. No wonder! The place where they met had just been shaken!

What is the equivalent for us? How might the Spirit shake this place? What would it take for us to listen to the Spirit and take a bold step to reach out to someone or share our testimony with someone?

Today, let us be attentive to the Spirit's voice. The Spirit is ever-present with us—teaching us, reminding us of truth, and empowering us to live as witnesses of Christ. Make space today to sit quietly and hear what he has to say.

● **Prayer**

Holy Spirit, speak to our hearts and minds. Help give us the courage to speak to those around and boldly proclaim your love for them.

Let our faith show in words and actions – kindness, courage, empathy.

● **Action**

Find a short quiet period and just sit, open to the Holy Spirit speaking to you. Be open to directed action – the words of faith that might be spoken to someone in your life. If the Spirit tells you to do something – do it!



● Reading

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1. 8)

● Pause

To still your heart and mind. Call on the Holy Spirit to rest on you and reveal his presence. Take as much time as you need.

● Thought

Recall a time when the Spirit spoke to you and moved your thinking and response into a different place. What were the circumstances and what was the outcome?

The Holy Spirit is our comforter, counsellor, helper, advocate, intercessor, warrior, strength, teacher.

God's word reminds us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139. 14). The Holy Spirit is God living in us. Yet, life can be bruising and often we carry the scars as a result. The work of the Spirit is to bring about God's Kingdom within us. He gently takes us on a journey of healing, restoration and transformation that slowly but surely works out God's plan in us and for us. As we heal, we grow stronger. As we grow closer to God, the Spirit empowers us to fulfil the purpose God made us for.

To effect deep, lasting change as Christians, we need the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to speak to us, heal us, change our outlook on life and on ourselves, and move our hearts to a right place.

Our past does not define us. Jesus does! Our identity is in him.

'For I am about to do something new.

See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?

I will make a pathway through the wilderness.

I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.' (Isaiah 43. 19)

With God, nothing is ever wasted. Every experience, every transformation, becomes a testament to his presence in our lives. We're given opportunities to share what he is working out within us — moments that can offer others encouragement and hope. Even in our imperfections, God chooses to use us. We are like jars of clay (2 Corinthians 4. 7–9) — fragile, flawed, yet filled with his glory. And still, he calls us to bear witness to his goodness.

● Prayer

Holy Spirit, make me aware of any burdens I carry that I need to lay down and ask for your healing and blessing. I ask you to intervene within any difficult circumstance I'm currently facing. Help me to find a way through this and move my mind and heart to a place of peace. Help me to share your work in my life with others – to offer love and hope.

● Action

Identify something that affects how you feel about yourself or a set of circumstances you're dealing with. Pray and ask the Spirit to show you what to do. Ask him for peace. Encourage someone today by sharing what God is doing for you.



● **Reading**

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor (Helper) to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." (John 14. 15 - 17)

● **Pause**

to give the Holy Spirit thanks for who he is, for living in you and for being your helper.

● **Thought**

Jesus is speaking during his final Passover meal with his disciples, pointing to his relationship with his Father and how that works out. He then promises that the Holy Spirit, the Helper and Counsellor, will come and live in them, drawing them further into that relationship with God.

The Spirit of Truth lives in us! That's mind-blowing! As we co-operate with the Holy Spirit we grow and become members of his family, co-workers in the family business whose actions and attitudes reflect those of our Father.

So, are we paying attention to the Holy Spirit who lives in us? Our modern, materialistic Western society wraps us in relative comfort but also throws many challenges, distractions and competing messages at us. The busyness, pressures, and attractions, pull our gaze away from our inner life. John Ortberg in his book, "The Life You've Always Wanted", points to our "spiritual mindlessness". We need to develop "spiritual mindfulness", learning to listen to the Holy Spirit as we go through our daily activities, interact with people, seek guidance and make decisions.

We can organise our thoughts and develop the habit of thinking and listening on two different levels at once. For example, when you talk with someone, in your mind you can ask the Spirit, "Is there anything you want to say or do for this person through me?". When you find you have some time on your hands you can ask, "Is there something you want me to do just now?" When we are facing a tricky situation or a big decision, we can ask for guidance. And we can know and trust in the Spirit of Truth who is living and working in us and through us.

I work with children who often find it hard to do many things, including playing. I experience joy when they get to where they are "in the flow of play". Here they are totally absorbed in the play; they are relaxed, their imaginations spark, they are having fun and the effort falls away. May we learn to live in "the flow of the Spirit" in our everyday lives.

● **Prayer**

Father God, Lord Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, we thank you so much that you are the God of Love, and relationship is at the heart of who you are. We thank you that you draw us into relationship with you, and Holy Spirit that you live in us. Help us to live with spiritual mindfulness, looking and listening for you, our Helper.

● **Action**

Write the word "listen" on a small piece of paper and stick it by the kitchen sink or on the car dashboard or on your computer screen to remind you to turn your attention inward and listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying.



● **Reading**

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1. 8)

● **Pause**

To give God thanks for who he is, either in silence, in spoken prayer or in song.

● **Thought**

For us, 'Mission' means being sent by Jesus to do the Father's work on earth. Jesus was sent, and now he is sending us. God gives us people to reach and purposes to achieve, which could be sharing him with our children, carers, colleagues, friends, strangers, challenging people or family. It could be living out his ways when we shop, work, travel about or relax.

Being sent and carrying out God's purposes – these involve movement and energy. A car is going nowhere without fuel! The energy for the mission (sending) which God gives each of us comes from an anointing and empowering by the Holy Spirit. Jesus makes it clear that the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential to his mission through us.

In John 20. 21-22, immediately after announcing that he's sending them, Jesus invites his disciples to receive the Holy Spirit. In Luke 24. 47-49 and Acts 1. 8, he tells his disciples they are to be his witnesses and that the gospel will be preached from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth – but they're to wait right there in Jerusalem before they can start. Why? Because they need the Holy Spirit for this mission.

The Father promised the Holy Spirit (Luke 24. 49 and Acts 1. 4), and Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit on them in Jerusalem, when they will be clothed with the highest power. Until the Holy Spirit has come, they're not even witnessing where they are in the city. But when the Holy Spirit does come, there's no holding them back (Acts 2). The power that sparked the creation of the universe is causing the good news to spread like wildfire to the tribes of the earth gathered in Jerusalem. These ordinary people are empowered for God's mission through the Holy Spirit. We are disciples; Jesus gives the same sending and the same Spirit to us.

● **Prayer**

Lord of all, send us out by the power of your Spirit, to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

● **Action**

When refuelling your car or paying for a bus journey, remember God promises us the Holy Spirit for the energy we need to achieve the life journeys, words and actions (mission) that he asks of us. Ask him to fill you again. Be ready to share him with someone today.

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