

Week 12 Daily Devotional

I. Prayer to enter the Lord's presence:

Be still for a moment. "Lord, I give the day that is now past to you. It is yours. I give the day that is to come to you; help me to see where you are working and to join you there. Speak to me during these moments. I commit them and myself to you."

II. Prayer of Confession:

"Lord, you are faithful to forgive me and cleanse me of my sin when I confess it to you. I confess my sin(s) of _____. Thank you for forgiveness." (1 John 1:9)

III. Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Choose to be thankful, speak out loud of what God has done.

"Thank you, Father, for _____. Fill my heart and my mouth with gratitude throughout this day."

IV. Scripture Reflection

Day 1

Read:

Rev. 1:1-11 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ² who testifies to everything he saw — that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near. John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father — to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. ⁷ Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰ On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, ¹¹ which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

Reflect:

The word translated "revelation" is a word that means "disclosure" or "manifestation." John was given a vision or visions of human history from heaven's perspective. John wrote from a small island off the west coast of modern Turkey to seven actual churches in the region. This letter is not supposed to make us miss today because we are focused on the future. It is intended to give us perspective on today based on a certain future. John was suffering for his faith and he was writing to a church that was suffering for its faith. The encouragement of this perspective applied to their situation then and it continues to apply to the church until the end of this current manifestation of human history. Look at verse nine and you will see the key theme very clearly in three words...suffering, kingdom, endurance.

Respond:

Contemplate those three words; suffering, kingdom, and endurance. "Suffering" is a promised reality for the follower of Christ, it is not something you should expect to escape. "Kingdom" is the realm the follower of Christ lives in now...Jesus is king, we live for his glory and by his power. "Endurance" is the necessary requirement to experience life in his Kingdom and a life that includes suffering. Ask God for help you to suffer with perspective, experience his Kingdom now, and to endure faithfully.

Day 2

Read:

Rev. 5:1 Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. ² And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" ³ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. ⁴ I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Reflect:

The scrolls God holds in his hand contain information that is of vital importance for humanity, namely "how will things turn out in the end for all of humanity?" John is distressed because no one is worthy to open the scrolls but then he is told that "The Lion of Judah" is worthy and when he looks he sees no lion but rather a "lamb looking as if it had been slain." This was a vision so images can "jump around" or merge. The point here is that Christ, the promised Messiah from the line of David is also the promised sacrifice who pays for the sins of the world by his death. He alone is worthy as the executor of God's purpose to open this scroll...his life and death hold the keys to the fate of all humanity.

Respond:

Jesus is your shepherd you need not live in fear. You do not have to fear illness or death or the future. You do not have to fear loss of any kind because your future, if you have believed the gospel, is a settled fact. Stop and close your eyes. Tell the Lord that you trust him with your future and you trust him with this day. Breathe slowly and deeply...relax your muscles and your mind. It is his breath that fills your lungs. Rest in him, your future is not in doubt.

Day 3

Read:

Rev. 13:1 And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. ² The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. ³ One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast. ⁴ Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. ⁵ He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. ⁶ He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. ⁷ All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast — all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. He who has an ear, let him hear. ⁸ If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints. Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. ⁹ He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹⁰ And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. ¹¹ Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. ¹² He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. ¹³ He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, ¹⁴ so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.

Reflect

The dragon is a symbol for Satan, the beasts are symbolic of governments (human rulers) who are animated by Satan but try to take the place of God in the lives of people. The "mark of the beast" is a symbol of the demands these human rulers will make on people under their oppressive rules. The demands are that the lies of corrupt human culture be believed and acted upon rather than the truth of God. This "mark" is the opposite of what God requires in his word written in Deuteronomy 6. There God's people are to write God's word on their foreheads and hands signifying the need for God's truth to direct our thoughts and our actions. The beast demands that his lies shape our thoughts and actions. He demands must be rejected at any cost.

Respond

What does the culture around you demand of you? What does it say must shape your thoughts and direct your actions? What price are you paying and what price are you willing to pay to reject culture's demands that run counter to God's demands? What price would you have to pay if you truly made Jesus king of your life in every way?

Day 4

Rev. 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵ If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Reflect

The Bible says that a final judgment is coming for all of humanity. All of our sin will have to be accounted for. Our sin will either be covered by the death and life of Christ or it will be held to our account. This is a terrible truth to contemplate. It is, in many ways, beyond our ability to get our minds around. Every person you see today will live forever in God's presence or forever cast out of his presence.

Respond

Ask God to help you go through the day in front of you seeing people as eternally lost or eternally found. When this day is over ask yourself these questions:

1. Why is it so hard to see people as "lost" or "found"?
2. Do I truly believe this is true?
3. If I do, why doesn't it impact my actions more than it does?

Day 5

Read

Rev. 21:15 The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. ¹⁶ The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. ¹⁷ He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using. ¹⁸ The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass. I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Reflect

This great city of God is a perfect cube. There is another perfect cube in Scripture, the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was the traveling tent-like structure where God's presence was made known to the people in the wilderness. This city of God is a symbol of the Tabernacle...however it is spectacular and "fixed" unlike the small, mobile Tabernacle because God's presence is permanent there. Notice also in verse 21 that there is no Temple there, also symbolizing that God was again directly and personally dwelling with his people. This is God's final "wrap-up" of human history. He has finally and fully restored things to their original status. God is again dwelling with his people.

Respond

Are you learning now to love God and to see life with him as your greatest treasure? Do you see that all of your longings and desires point to him? Do you practice thinking of him as the "joy of your desiring?" Practice thinking this way. Do the mental work to shape your thoughts in the right direction.

V. Prayer for others:

Pray specifically for the concerns of your life and the lives of others.

VI. Prayer of commitment:

“Lord God, I commit to love you with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my strength and with all my mind and to love my neighbor as myself. Empower me today to love you and others with everything that I am.” (Luke 10:27)

This Month's Scripture Memory:

Matthew 6:9-13

“This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.