



Bishop Kevin K. Dickerson

STRONGER THAN EVER!
Prayer and Fasting Journal



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Prayer & Fasting Journal

Bishop Kevin K. Dickerson

Prayer and Fasting

Bible Study

The Right Way To Fast

Matthew 6:16-18

Fasting

- Fasting is more than not eating for a period of time
- Fasting is abstaining from natural food for a **spiritual purpose**
- The issue is so **consuming** that it becomes more important than food
- I'm willing to deny myself the "daily bread" I need
- Set food aside to **concentrate** on seeking God about the matter
- The objective of fasting is to concentrate upon God and **His answer** about a matter
- Jesus expects believers to fast
- Any ordinance or spiritual discipline can be abused or done with the wrong motive or spirit

Fasting The Wrong Way

16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

- Fasting without God as the center of the fast is hypocritical ***Isaiah 58:5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes, and an acceptable day to the LORD?***
- Fasting for recognition
 - We want others to think we are **"super spiritual"**
 - We want others to think this is the look of those who fast
 - We take the **glory** that belong to God and shine it on ourselves
 - We want to share our fasting experiences with others so they can be in awe of us
 - We change how we behave and look so others will know it's "fast day"
- Fasting the wrong way has its own rewards
- All you get is the **applause** and **recognition** of men
- You may even gain control and discipline of your body, but the prideful show before men will cost you your reward that **only God** can give ***Hosea 4:7 As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore, will I change their glory into shame.***

Fasting The Right Way

But thou, when thou fastest, ...

- We are expected to fast
- Fasting is a duty of all disciples
- The objective of our fasting as disciples of Christ is seeking His presence
- There is no prescribed **frequency** of fasting

- But we fast when:
 - o There is a **special pull** of the Spirit to be alone with God
 - o Special **needs** arise
 - o We want to **humble** ourselves before God
 - o Before making **major decisions**
- o Fasting the right way makes the disciple “dead” to the:
 - o **Applause** of men
 - o **Criticism** of men

Fast without drawing attention to yourself

...anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast,

- Keep your physical appearance up
- You should look like you always look
- Your **behavior** should not change
- Your **attitude** should not change
- No one should know you are on a fast
- You don't want people to notice you, your fast is unto God
- Remember you are on a **private** fast, but you operate in a **public** world

Fasting is between you and God alone

...but unto thy Father which is in secret:

- God is the object of the fast
- Your fast is between you and God
- All your **attention** is toward God
- It is a secret, and secrets are not discussed because:
 1. What God has said or shown you is for you
 2. That's your reward
 3. God may not be finished “talking” to you
- Desiring to fast is to get in the presence of the Lord regarding a special issue

Benefits of Fasting the Right Way

...and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

- Fasting the right way has its rewards, God rewards our “secret time” openly
- His rewards are always greater than recognition of men
- God honors proper and sincere motives
- Fasting keeps us in the presence of the Lord
- Fasting **humbles** us before the Lord
- Fasting teaches us to be **dependent** on God for the answer
- Fasting teaches us **discipline** and **control** over our bodies
- Fasting keeps us from being a **slave** to any food or habit
- Fasting has **health benefits**

Prayer and Fasting

Daily Lessons

Day 1

Oaks of Righteousness

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for the clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: "... that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified." Isaiah 61:3 KJV

Reflection: The Bible is filled with beautiful imagery of who we are as believers. An example is Isaiah's description where he calls believers, *oaks of righteousness*. Why "oaks"? Oak trees are known for their deep roots, the root system is what keeps the oak tree anchored in the ground and keeps it standing despite strong wind and weather. It can handle many seasons of harsh weather and not be affected. The oak wood is hard and solid making it strong and able to withstand disease and predators. If we apply these characteristics to our lives as oaks of righteousness our righteousness is not our own, it comes from Jesus Himself. We are able to stand and withstand the storm of life because we are rooted and grounded in Jesus. Our roots run deep to reach the living water so that we are properly feed. And like the oak tree, we are not exempt from the contrary winds of life, but we were created with storms in mind. Now that you know you're one of God's oaks of righteousness, how does it change or effect your view of trials, suffering, and temptation?

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 2

By My Spirit

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6 KJV

Reflection: Many people believe that to accomplish anything in this world, we must push our way. Many think they must be tough, strong, and unyielding to get ahead. In fact, we “celebrate” people with power and strength, be it financial, political, academic, etc. But with God, it’s completely the opposite. It’s not about our power, force, or strength, it’s by His Spirit. God does not want us to trust in what we know, our skills and abilities or our strength. God wants us to depend on Him and the power of the Holy Spirit! What has been the difference in your life when you relied on your own strength and when you relied on the power of the Holy Spirit?

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 3

The Joy of the Lord

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10 KJV

Reflection: The walls of Jerusalem have been rebuilt in record time and many Israelites are moving back to Jerusalem. Ezra and Nehemiah gathered the people together for worship and the reading of God’s Word. The Word of God did its work, it convicted the Israelites of sin. The Israelites wept openly as they heard the Word of God. Ezra and Nehemiah did not want the people to mourn. If the sense of conviction appears greater than the sense of God doing a great and holy thing in their lives, then the tears are not good. Our knowledge and awareness of our sin should never be greater than our knowledge of Jesus as our Savior. Therefore, the joy of the Lord is your strength - even when you are being convicted of sin. When we are convicted of sin, we know that God is doing a work in us, so we can be glad and take joy. In what ways can you express your joy when you are convicted by the Word of God?

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 4

The Lord Is....

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; My father's God, and I will exalt him.” Exodus 15:2 KJV

Reflection: Moses wrote a song of praise after he and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. It is not about anything he did, it's all about the greatness of God. Allow Moses' response to the greatness of God to become our personal praise. The Lord is...

- *My strength* – God strengthens us to face any trial, problem, sickness, suffering, temptation, etc. We are weak in our ourselves, but we are victorious because of the strength of God
- *My song* - Regardless of what we face in life, God comforts us and gives us His peace and security through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we can rejoice in trials and be joyful despite sufferings
- *My salvation* – No matter what enemies we face, God is our salvation, our deliverer. We could never save ourselves, God has to be our salvation
- *My father's God* – Moses' forefathers taught him to believe in the promises of God and they came to pass. We must share God with future generations so that they can trust, believe, and expect the promises of God to come to pass.

When Moses considered all that God had done for him, he had to give God the praise He deserved! What *Red Sea* has God helped you cross? Take a moment and write a *personal praise* about what God has done in your life.

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 5

My Inheritance

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “My flesh and my heart faileth: But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” Psalm 73:26 KJV

Reflection: One of the things we can't stop or avoid is getting older. As the years pass, we begin to show signs of getting older, that was the case with Asaph, the writer of Psalm 73. Asaph was one of the leaders of David's Levitical choirs. Even though he was getting older, and his health was failing, Asaph found strength in God. He knew God would sustain him through any physical ailments and afflictions. Death had no power over him because God was his portion (his inheritance) forever. As a Levite, Asaph owned no land and had no inheritance, but he had the Lord as his inheritance (Numbers 18:20). As believers, we too, have an inheritance to spend eternity with Jesus. How does it make you feel knowing you have an inheritance in heaven? How does knowing that affect how you live now?

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 6
The Weaker I Am, The Stronger I Become

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. 9 Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. 10 That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 NLT

Reflection: When our lives are free of difficulties, we have a tendency to try and navigate life in our own strength. However, life’s challenges seem to have a way of sapping our strength until we are weak. Paul discovered by allowing God to fill him with His power, he was stronger than he could ever be on his own. God did not always remove the problem, but He infused Paul with the strength to stand, endure, and go through it. We must remind ourselves that in trying times we have access to the power of God. When you are at your weakest you are strong through the power of Jesus Christ. How willing are you to acknowledge your weaknesses to God? When have you seen the power of God strengthen you when you were weak?

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 7

The Lord is Faithful

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.” 2 Thessalonians 3:3 KJV

Reflection: People have been known to let us down at times. They may not be there when we need them, or encourage us when we’re having problems, or speak kindly to us, etc. But Jesus is faithful, whenever we need Him, He is there. Jesus is reliable, and dependable, we can count on Him. The Lord promises to stablish or strengthen us so that we are still standing regardless of what we face in life. Jesus will also keep or guard us from evil no matter what the evil is. Jesus will not allow the trials and temptations we face to be too great for us (read 1 Corinthians 10:13). What are some examples of how the Lord has strengthened you and kept you from evil?

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 8

No Need to Fear

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Psalm 27:1 KJV

Reflection: One of the most powerful emotions is fear. Many people are afraid of failure, rejection, sickness, and even death. Many people are imprisoned by fear, even believers. When we know Jesus as our Lord and Savior, there is no need to fear. It’s impossible to live in faith and fear at the same time. In this passage, David gives us three reasons why we should not live in fear. 1) The Lord is our light; He is a light to show us the way He desires for us to go. It is in His light that we walk in now and it keeps us from stumbling. 2) The Lord is our salvation; He is our deliverer. In God we are safe and by God we are saved. 3) The Lord is our strength; this is not physical might, but a place of shelter, safety, and protection. God is our fortress that protects us from our enemies. When we trust Jesus as our light, our salvation, and our strength, there’s no need to fear! What fears has the Lord delivered you from? What fears do you need to release to the Lord now?

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 9

Strength to Stand

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” Ephesians 6:10-11 KJV

Reflection: The Christian life is not a day at the beach, it’s a battle, it’s war! This warfare is not with people, it’s against evil spiritual forces in the heavens. To win our spiritual battles, we need strength of God. Our physical strength is not enough. Our strength comes from God. He is the source of our strength. There is no other source that can give us the strength we need to overcome the plots and schemes of the devil. We must put on the armor of God. But God’s armor will do little good if we don’t have the heart to fight and withstand the attack of the enemy. God’s armor does not prevent spiritual warfare, but it does give us the strength to remain standing despite the enemy’s attacks. Ephesians 6:10-18 describes our spiritual armor. Are you wearing your armor? If not, why not? If you are wearing your armor, how is it helping you have the strength to stand in spiritual battles?

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 10

Finding Strength

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “David was now in great danger because all his men were very bitter about losing their sons and daughters, and they began to talk of stoning him. But David found strength in the LORD his God.” 1 Samuel 30:6
NLT

Reflection: Have you ever felt like your world was closing in on you? That’s how David must have felt when he and his soldiers returned home to Ziklag only to find it was destroyed, looted, and all their wives and children were taken. David and his men wept until they had no more strength to weep, but David’s men’s sorrow soon turned to anger and they talked of stoning David. While standing in the ruins of Ziklag, David strengthened himself in the Lord. David was emotionally weak, but his faith was strong. Despite all his losses, David had not lost his connection to God. David found strength in God. David could find strength in recalling how God delivered him from lions and bears or how God saved him many times from the wrath of Saul. What has God done for you in the past that strengthened you in difficult times? What are some other ways you can find strength in God?

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 11

Strength in Numbers

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. 10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. 11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? 12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (KJV)

Reflection: Many people live in isolation, they live without friends, without help, and without accountability. Life is meant to be lived in fellowship and communion with others. We are here not to serve only ourselves, but to serve God and to serve others. We are strengthened through the relationships we have and maintain. Two are better than one. If you fall there are others to pick you up. If you're cold, there are others to keep you warm. If you're attacked, others are there to help you resist. A cord of three strands is not easily broken. There is strength in numbers. List the people in your life that you are accountable to that help you stay spiritually strong.

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 12

Without Strength

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Romans 5:6 KJV

Reflection: Before we came to know Jesus as our Savior we were without *strength*. We were weak, hopeless, destitute, helpless, and powerless. Our lives had no purpose or direction. We needed help; we could do nothing on our own to save ourselves. We were *ungodly*, we were not like God. Our lives were the polar opposite of God. God is holy, we were not, God is righteous, we were not, God is perfect, and we were not. Despite all of the sins, faults, and failures, in *due time*, the opportune time, Jesus died for the ungodly. Jesus died for us. Jesus died for our benefit, for our sake, on our behalf, in our stead, as our substitute. Jesus took our place because He loves us with an everlasting love. What can you do to express your appreciation for what Jesus did for you at Calvary?

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 13

Strength, But No Power

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him.” Judges 16:20 KJV

Reflection: Samson was dedicated to God at birth to be a Nazarite, person set apart to do God’s work. God anointed Samson with His Spirit and began to use Samson as a deliverer of the Israelites from the oppression of the Philistines. He was even a judge in Israel. Samson was a man of amazing physical strength. Great strength in one area of life does not compensate for great weaknesses in other areas of life. Samson allowed his relationship with Delilah to supersede his relationship with God. When Samson needed his supernatural strength to defeat the enemy, he was unaware the Spirit of God had departed from him. What are the lessons to be learned from Samson’s story?

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 14

Inner Strength

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.;" Ephesians 3:16 NLT

Reflection: When we pray, our prayers are often focused on the physical issues of life such as family, healing, financial increase, the physical needs of others, etc. There's nothing wrong with praying about physical things, but it should not be at the expense of spiritual things. The spiritual side of us should not be neglected. Apostle Paul's prayer for the Ephesian church was that they would be strengthened with might by His Spirit in their inner being. *Inner strength* refers to our soul, our heart, our spirit that has been renewed by God. Our inner being must be empowered by the Holy Spirit so that we have the strength to *endure, resist, and respond* to spiritual challenges. Our spirit needs the infusion of power from the Holy Spirit to be all God wants us to be and to do all God wants us to do. We know God will hear and answer this prayer because His supply of spiritual power is unlimited! Take a moment and write a personal prayer for inner strength.

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 15

God Promises Victory

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.” Joshua 1:5 KJV

Reflection: Starting a new job often comes with new challenges. Joshua is now the leader of the Israelites after the death of Moses. God commands Joshua to rise up and lead the Israelites across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. But there’s a problem, the Promised Land is not vacant, it’s occupied by the Canaanites, and they have elite armies. This is Joshua’s first assignment as leader, and we only imagine how he may have felt. To calm Joshua, God made three important promises to him. 1) God promised no one would be able to stand against him all his life. It doesn’t mean there won’t be opposition, it does mean God will ensure his victory. 2) God promised His presence to be with Joshua. Joshua would never be without the guiding presence of God as he entered the Promised Land. 3) God promised Joshua that He would never leave him. God will not abandon us when the challenges of life come. We may not be called to conquer nations like Joshua, but every day we face challenging situations. We face trials, troubles and temptations, but God promises to be with us. Describe at least three instances where God helped you face challenging times

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 16

Strength to Be Content

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:12-13 KJV

Reflection: We all probably wish we had more. We desire more things, we want to make more money, we wish we had more friends, and the list goes on. Have you ever thought about being content with where you are and what you have? Contentment is not automatic, it’s a learned behavior. Contentment is learning to be satisfied and happy right where you are. True contentment comes from being at peace with where you are and who you are in Christ Jesus. You can’t find true contentment apart from Jesus Christ. The secret to contentment is not more things, it is knowing that Jesus Christ gives us the strength we need to do whatever He wants us to do. No matter the situation you face, Jesus will supply enough of whatever you need to do whatever is needed at that moment. God is saying although the conditions of our lives may not improve, I’ll make you strong enough to handle it. When have you seen God give you the strength to be content?

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 17

Renew My Strength

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40:31 KJV

Reflection: Even strong believers can get tired sometimes. We’re believing God, but our change, our deliverance, our healing has not come. Our strength is renewed by waiting upon the Lord, not waiting for the Lord. Waiting is *active*, not *passive*. How should we wait upon the Lord? We must wait with *expectation* that God will do what He promises. We must wait *faithfully* because God is our answer, and we refuse to waver in our trust in God. We must wait *patiently* believing God controls the calendar, and His timing is always perfect. We must wait on God by *servicing* others. We must wait on God *vocally* with our praise. Despite how I’m feeling, praise will continually be in my mouth. The *renewing* of our strength comes from the *waiting* on God. They that wait upon the Lord will be renewed in strength as they *continue* to trust, seek and serve the Lord while expecting His deliverance, knowing that the time will come that everything the Lord has promised in His Word will come to pass. Give an example of how God renewed your strength as you waited.

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen..

Day 18

Praise is My Response

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “Blessed be the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications. 7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.” Psalm 28:6-7 KJV

Reflection: David praises God for hearing and answering his earnest prayer. We don't know the details of the issue David was facing, but we do know his situation was dire because he was literally begging God's help. David's petitions turn into praise. David praised God for being his *strength* that kept him from falling apart and his *shield* that protected him during this ordeal. Even though David was crying out to God over this dilemma, he remained full of faith and did not allow doubt and unbelief to creep in. We pray because we trust the *person* and the *promises* of God. David believes praise is the *appropriate response* to what God has done in his life and does not hesitate in giving God praise! List prayers God and has answered for you over the past year and praise Him for it.

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 19

A Very Present Help

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.” Psalm 46:1-3 KJV

Reflection: We are living in very troubled times. We’re living in a global pandemic that is continually resurging. School systems are struggling to educate our children. Brush fires destroying entire neighborhoods. The cost of living is rising almost daily. Our government is struggling to find answers. What do we do? In times of crisis, we must remind ourselves that God is our *refuge* and our *strength*. He is a refuge, our shelter, place of safety, our hiding place. God is our strength; He possesses the power to help us overcome any issue or adversary. But that’s not all! God is a *very present help* in trouble. When we need God’s help, He is there ready and available to meet our needs. God does not abandon us when trouble comes, He stays with us to guide us through the tight and difficult season of life. What difficult times have you experienced recently and how did God show up to help you through it?

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 20

I Am Strong and Courageous

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” Joshua 1:9 KJV

Reflection: Three times in Joshua 1 God has to encourage Joshua to be strong and courageous. To lead the Israelites into the Promised Land Joshua needed *strength and courage* to follow through on God’s commands. Strength is the boldness to act. Courage is an inner quality that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, and pain without fear. It’s the mental and moral strength to venture out of your comfort zone, to persevere, and withstand danger, adversaries, and fear. It’s intestinal fortitude, it’s guts. God does not tell Joshua “get” strong and courageous, but *be* strong and courageous. What’s the difference? If you get strong and courageous, then the strength and courage depends on what *you* can do. It is depending on self. To be strong and courageous, the strength and courage is not in you, it’s in God. It’s not “self-confidence”, it’s *God confidence*. It’s realizing you can’t do God’s work in your own strength. Strength and courage are not the *absence* of fear, it’s the *presence* of God! To encourage and assure Joshua, God gave Joshua the promise of His continued, unbroken presence. We have that promise, too. What has God told you to do that you have not done yet? What are you afraid of?

My Action Steps:

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Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

Day 21

Stronger than Ever!

Daily Prayer: Thank you God for clarity, revelation and understanding of your Word I will receive today.

Scripture Reading: “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” 1 Peter 5:10 KJV

Reflection: No one likes suffering. The world we live in often opposes, criticizes, and persecutes us for our stand for Jesus Christ. We oftentimes feel out of place, we wonder why are we opposed for being Christian, why do we suffer? Before we can experience God’s eternal glory, we must experience suffering. However, we will discover that suffering is not working *against us*; it’s working *for us*. Peter uses four builder’s terms to describe present *and* eternal benefits of suffering. God is using suffering to do four great things in our lives. Suffering will:

1. *Perfect us* – It literally refers to the mending or repairing a net. It sets right what has gone wrong. It helps you grow and equips you for the future
2. *Establish us* – We become steady and firm in what we believe through knowing the Word of God. We’re no longer swayed by persecution, lies, or led astray by false doctrine. We’ve made up our minds to live for Jesus regardless of personal cost.
3. *Strengthen us* – You gain more courage to do what’s right no matter what the situation or circumstance is. This strength is not yours, it’s God’s strength working in you to meet and over come the demands of life
4. *Settle us* – You are being built up on a rock a firm foundation, making you immovable regardless of the storm

How have you seen God use your suffering to make you stronger?

My Action Steps:

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

Closing Prayer: Thank you God for the wisdom I received from studying your Word today. I commit to apply your Word to my life, starting right now! Amen.

How You Can Receive Jesus Christ As Your Savior And Lord

If you would like to welcome Jesus Christ into your life, you can do so at anytime, anywhere. Consider these important facts:

God loves you and seeks a personal relationship with you!
Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him, and he with Me. Revelation 3:20

The problem is: Everyone has been born into this world spiritually dead because of sin.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

Jesus will forgive us of all sin, assuring us of eternity in Heaven!

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9

To receive Jesus, pray in this manner:

*Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner. Please come into my life and forgive me of all sin. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Now, fill me with Your Holy Spirit and guide me from this day forward. Thank You, Lord, for loving me!
Amen.*



Bishop Kevin and Pastor Sonjia Dickerson are the *Shepherds* of the Dayspring Family Church located at 618 N. Belt Line Road in Irving, Texas. Since 1994, they have dedicated themselves to leading families to Jesus Christ, equipping them to be available for service in the work of the Lord.

Bishop Dickerson walks under a strong apostolic mantle as he fervently pursues the will of God. He preaches a message that is relevant and applicable to the issues that the world faces today. His ministry assignment is worship, leading others into the presence of the Lord, and teaching God's Word.

Bishop Dickerson also mentors pastors in building spiritually and financially strong churches to accomplish their God-given visions. In 2007 he founded the Vision Fellowship of Churches, a network of pastors working together to do the work of the Lord.

Pastor Sonjia Dickerson is a woman of foresight and capability, accompanied by a great love for the people of God. She serves on various community boards and coordinates the Outpouring Women's Conferences, which continue to impact the lives of many women each year. Pastor Sonjia is the Founder and Executive Director of C.L.A.S.S. Inc., (Cultivating Leaders Achieving Scholastic Success). She established C.L.A.S.S. to address the dropout rate in the state of Texas by annually applauding the accomplishments of students graduating from High School. The program provides students with leadership development training and awards a monetary scholarship to each graduate.

Pastor Sonjia ministers with enthusiasm and captures the heart and mind of the hearer. She speaks a sound word with a lively style that allows for the move of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Kevin and Pastor Sonjia Dickerson have been married for 38 years and God has blessed their marriage with three wonderful children; Kevin II (Dr. Chante), Cherese (Pastor Rodney) Carter, Jr., and Faith.

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