



21 DAYS OF  
**PRAYER &  
FASTING**

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

There is no specific formula for how to pray. Prayer is simply talking to God. Praying Scripture, God's words, back to Him, and reminding yourself of His promises is a great way to connect with Him and know His will and direction for your life.

The goal of using this guide is not to add pressure or to overwhelm you but to help you get comfortable talking to God and provide structure for your prayers. Use this prayer guide as a tool to pray intentionally. If your mind wanders, use the prayer prompts to restore your focus. Feel free to add your own personal prayers as well.

As you pray, be sure to take time to listen. Print out the notes sheet from our website or use a journal at home to write down what God may be speaking to you. To make your prayer time even more meaningful, you can write notes or prayer requests and play worship music in the background. The most important step is committing to regularly entering God's presence through prayer.

This guide was written to help you find a new level of purpose, effectiveness, and enjoyment in your prayer life. While prayer does take commitment and can require discipline to develop into a daily habit, we also want to remember that it's a "get to," not a "got to." It's a privilege to be able to come to God in prayer.





## SCRIPTURE: MATT. 7:7-8

"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks,

receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."

If we are not careful we can begin to treat prayer like a religious duty. That's not what God desires for it to be. Prayer is continual communication with our Father. In today's passage Jesus commands His followers to continue asking, seeking, and knocking. Prayer is not something that we do once and move on from. In today's message we look deeper at what it means to keep praying.

## PRAYER:

God may your spirit be evident in our worship services today. Help us to be a church and a people that continue to ask, seek, and knock until you answer.





## SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 5:1-5

"Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father loves his children, too. We know we love God's children if we love God and obey his commandments. Loving God means

keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome. For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith. And who can win this battle against the world? Only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God."

When we become Christians we become a child of God and we can be sure of our eternity. We also become part of a family. This family is composed of other "brothers and sisters" who have placed their faith in Jesus.

John says that as we live in this family our love for God will be proven in two ways. First, we will love the other members of our spiritual family. Second, we will keep the commands that God has given in His Word, The Bible. Being faithful to both of these commands requires a choice. Are you choosing to love other believers and follow the commands of God?

## PRAYER:

Father, thank you for saving me and allowing me to be a part of your family. Help me to love the other members of my spiritual family and to remain faithful to your commands.





## SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 5:6-12

"And Jesus Christ was revealed as God's Son by his baptism in water and by shedding his blood on the cross—not by water only, but by water and blood. And the Spirit, who is truth, confirms it with his testimony. So we have these three

witnesses—the Spirit, the water, and the blood—and all three agree. Since we believe human testimony, surely we can believe the greater testimony that comes from God. And God has testified about his Son. All who believe in the Son of God know in their hearts that this testimony is true. Those who don't believe this are actually calling God a liar because they don't believe what God has testified about his Son. And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God's Son does not have life."

At the time that John wrote his letter there was a false teaching about Jesus being spread by false teachers. They were teaching that Jesus was merely a human before he was baptized. They taught that at the time of His baptism the Son descended on Him and that the Son ascended off of Jesus shortly before His crucifixion. This would have meant that Jesus dies as merely a man. John reminds his readers that this is a lie. Jesus has always been completely God and completely man.

God himself has testified to the authenticity of His Son. He alone is the way to eternal life. In John 14:6 Jesus declared, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

## PRAYER:

Jesus thank you that true life is found in you alone.



# DAY 18

## SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 5:13-15

We are reaching the conclusion of the epistle of 1 John and John gives the overall purpose for the letter: "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life."

As a follower of Jesus we can "know" or be certain of our salvation and identity. We are children of God. No one is greater or more powerful than Him! This should result in great confidence as we live out this life. This is not a prideful, arrogant confidence through which we become judgemental and look down on others. Instead, it is a confidence in our relationship with the Father. This confidence is something the world does not have.

- In this confidence we can approach God in prayer as sons and daughters knowing that if we "ask according to His will", He hears our prayers (1 John 5:14).
- In this confidence we can live out His commands assured that what He tells us is good and right even when culture around us tells us we are wrong (1 Corinthians 16:13).
- In this confidence we can know that God is working all things for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28)
- In this confidence we can live boldly through difficult times (Acts 4:29-31).
- In this confidence we can trust that no matter what may happen to us, we will spend eternity with Him for no one can change who we are (John 10:29).

The list could go on and on! The point is this:

We can be certain of who we are, and if we are God's, let us confidently live like it!

## PRAYER:

Father God, thank You for Your word. Thank You for making it available to me. Thank You for what it teaches me about the confidence I can have in & through You. Help me to live the life You have called me to live with boldness, trusting in You. Help me in the areas where I may struggle to live out Your commands. Help me to tell others about You and how You love them. Thank you for making me one of Your children. I love You and pray these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



# DAY 19

## SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 5:16-21

In this passage, John makes two interesting statements. First, John writes, "But there is a sin that leads to death, and I am not saying you should pray for those who commit it. All wicked actions are sin, but not every sin leads to death." Perhaps you are thinking, "but I thought all sin is equally

bad, how can there be one that leads to death?" It is true that all sin is equal in the sense that there is no sin greater in "badness" than another. However, all sin does not bear the same consequences. When John writes that there is a sin that leads to death, he is more than likely referring to the rejection of the Holy Spirit. The person who rejects the Holy Spirit, chooses to reject salvation and dooms him or herself to eternal life separated from God.

Secondly, John writes "We know that God's children do not make a practice of sinning, for God's Son holds them securely, and the evil one cannot touch them." Again, as we learned in 1 John 3:4-10 we can and will sin after salvation, but because we have the Holy Spirit living in us, we feel conviction for sin which leads us to repentance. With this statement John is reaffirming the fact that a believer who is walking in obedience cannot at the same time walk or live in sin. John is also reminding us of something else, something amazing: As a child of God, we are held secure in the Father's hands, Satan no longer has any control over us. In Romans 6 Paul illustrated this by way of slavery. Paul explains that prior to salvation we were slaves to sin, we were dominated and controlled by the devil, we had no choice but to sin. But when the Holy Spirit comes into us, God frees us from slavery to sin. Now sin is a choice we make, not a practice we have no control over. Now we have the Holy Spirit living in us, empowering us, guiding us, comforting us, speaking to us primarily through scripture but in other ways also. We have all the weapons we need to fight victoriously against sin and live a life of faith and obedience.

## PRAYER:

Thank you Jesus for your sacrifice for my sin. Thank you for filling me with the Holy Spirit and for giving me spiritual weapons to fight victoriously against sin. Father, help me to walk in faith and obedience with you today.





# SCRIPTURE: 2 JOHN

Truth and love are the focus of many conversations in our world today. As we enter the beginning of an election year we will hear even more conversations around these two topics. There will be arguments about what is true and what it looks like to love those around us. To answer these two questions we need to look to Jesus. He is both complete truth and complete love.

John commends the “chosen lady and her children” for living in the truth. Notice that John does not commend them for living their truth. He points to absolute truth that is found in the person of Jesus. He is the standard for what is true.

John also reminds the readers to love one another. Truth with hatred is useless. It must always be followed with love that shows itself in our actions toward one another.

## PRAYER:

Lord Jesus help me to know you, the truth, so well that I am not led astray by the lies of the enemy.





# SCRIPTURE: 3 JOHN

In this letter, John is commending his good friend Gaius for being faithful in speaking the truth of Jesus Christ, and for being hospitable to those that were sent by God to continue the spreading of the gospel. Teachers had reported back to John of Gaius' love and support shown to them. We should be reminded by this letter of the importance of the church supporting those in the mission field. Missionaries seldom receive much of anything in the form of compensation from the people they are sent to

reach. In fact in most cases, they receive nothing financially. Most missionaries are supported by the local church and missions organizations.

Here's a couple questions that we can take away from 3 John to ensure that we are walking in faithfulness like Gaius:

## **1. Are we helping others grow in love and in the truth?**

At Cross Church, our goal is to see the Gospel of Jesus Christ shared locally, regionally, and globally. We want to see people come to know God, find freedom, discover their purpose, and to ultimately make a difference. We want them to know the love of Jesus & have a personal relationship with Him. This is the DNA of Cross Church. It's WHO we are. To be successful in this, we need to have patterns in our lives that help us grow in our relationship with the Lord, and help others grow in love and truth. Be mindful that we each have a circle of influence. Pray for those around you and help them to walk in the truth.

## **2. How many things in our lives are we dwelling on that just aren't good?**

John also reminds us in verse 11 to not imitate evil, but rather to imitate good. If we are not careful, we sometimes let our thoughts and opinions dictate how we treat others. Diotrephes was mentioned in this letter as someone in the church who was not hospitable and always put himself first. He put those who were sent to teach out on the street rather than welcoming and supporting them in their mission. In any church, there are many leaders like Gaius, and unfortunately, there can also be leaders like Diotrephes. **Which type of leader are you?** To be the church God has called us to be, we must be imitators of good and focus our energy on helping those around us come to know God. Be like Gaius.

## **PRAYER:**

Father, help me to see beyond myself. Help me to see others the way that You see them. Break my heart for what breaks Yours, and if there are any evil things in my life that are causing me to be less effective, please reveal those to me. Help me to be supportive & welcoming to all who you send in my path. All for Your glory. Amen.