

Day Nineteen *Friday*

Scripture: Acts 1:1-11

Focus Text: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses" (v. 8).

Listening to God: I pour out my power only on those who are willing to do my will. All too often you work your own agenda instead of mine. This behavior is rooted deep in fallen human nature. If you are not in close communion with me and filled with my Spirit, the work you do for me is of little value in my sight. Relationship must come before work, if the work is to have value. Before you do anything for me, spend some quality time with me. Keep in close touch throughout the day. Then even the smallest thing you do will be a witness to my presence in this world.

My Prayer:

Day Twenty *Saturday*

Scripture: John 11:17-44

Focus Text: "Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go'" (v. 44).

Listening to God: You are mine! My deepest delight is to set you free from everything that stunts and binds your life. The tentacles of envy, worry, self-will, and so many other things wrap themselves around your heart without your even realizing it. They steal your joy and make you less effective as my witness. You cannot rescue yourself, they are more powerful than you are. Come to me, and let me free you from the clutches of these spiritual predators. Let me unbind you and set you free!

My Prayer:

Sailing Begins With Daily Prayer, Week 3

This "Guide to Forty Days of Prayer" is from Sailboat Church by Joan S. Gray, WJK Press: 2014, p. 125-131. The book is available for purchase at Our Town Books.

Instructions:

Begin each day's exercise by asking God to open your mind and heart to what God wants to do in you. Read the scripture several times and think about what it says. Then read the section "Listening to God" and meditate on what God might be saying to you personally. Next, pray your response to God from your listening and meditation. Writing your prayer down will give you something to reflect on later. However you pray, make the prayer as honest and personal as you can. Trust God to meet you where you are and give you what you need. Let these readings and reflections lead you into deeper intimacy with God.

Day Fourteen *Sunday*

Scripture: 2 Samuel 6:1-7

Focus Text: "When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God for the oxen shook it" (v. 6).

Listening to God: I have called you to partner with me in my work in the world. But never forget that you are the junior partner. I do not have to have your help. Instead I invite you to join me because I love you. I am the God of the universe. I am in control! When you start thinking you need to fix things, you open yourself up to all kinds of trouble. Today, trust me to be the senior partner in what we are doing.

My Prayer:

Day Fifteen *Monday*

Scripture: Mark 6:30-44

Focus Text: "And he said to them, 'How many loaves have you? Go and see" (v. 38).

Listening to God: Miracles happen when you take what you have and put it in my hands. So often you refuse to give me what you have. Usually this is because you feel that it is small, insignificant, even ugly. But I want you exactly as you are. I want the real you. Don't wait until you have achieved some imagined level of perfection to come to me. Do you have fears, doubts, negative feelings, guilt, bad habits? No problem! Bring it on: I can take whatever you give me and transform you to be a blessing to others.

My Prayer:

Day Sixteen *Tuesday*

Scripture: Hebrews 4:1-11

Focus Text: "So then, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God, for those who enter God's rest also cease from their labors as God did from his" (vv. 9-10).

Listening to God: You were created to need down time. Sabbath is my gift to you. Here's a thought: give yourself one day a week when you do only things that feed you and give you joy, and do them with an awareness of my presence. Think it can't be done? Think you are too busy and important to rest? Just give it a try. Taking a Sabbath day every week will fill you with new energy so that the other six days are more productive and joyful.

My Prayer:

Day Seventeen *Wednesday*

Scripture: James 3:13-18

Focus Text: "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy" (v. 17).

Listening to God: Beware of being too sure you are right. Often an unwillingness to yield is linked with a selfish disposition. My wisdom does not push others around or refuse to listen to differing points of view. Human wisdom is often about winning. My wisdom is about healing, saving, and redeeming. Next time someone disagrees with you, be quiet. Put yourself in a listening posture and ask me to show you what is wise and true. This way of being with others bears a rich harvest of good fruit.

My Prayer:

Day Eighteen *Thursday*

Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

Focus Text: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask" (v. 13).

Listening to God: You think you have to understand everything before you can experience it. This misconception robs you of many blessings. There are some things you will never understand until you experience them. And there are some things you are not meant to understand this side of heaven. Instead of always demanding to understand my ways, experiment with trusting me. The best gift I can ever give you is the gift of my Spirit in your life. You don't have to understand it; just ask for the Spirit to come into your life and see what I do. Give me a tiny crack to operate in, and I will transform you.

My Prayer: