

Day Forty Friday

Scripture: Malachi 3:8-18

Focus Text: "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour down on you an overflowing blessing (v. 10).

Listening to God: If you are going to walk with me, I must own your possessions. If I do not own them, they will own you. I gave them all to you in the first place. Do you understand that? Or is there still a corner of your soul where you hide the idea that you got them for yourself? If you let go of these things, I can use them to bless you. If you hold on to them, they will strangle our relationship. Obey me in giving me one tenth of your income. If you can't do it all right now, start with one percent a year and work toward the tithe. Put my promise to the test: I dare you!

My Prayer:

After you have gone through the forty days, you can gather a small group of friends to go through it again together with you. This could be done in conjunction with reading Sailboat Church or discussing one of the books in the "Readings for Further Exploration" section of the book.

Sailing Begins With Daily Prayer, Week 6

This "Guide to Forty Days of Prayer" is from Sailboat Church by Joan S. Gray, WJK Press: 2014, p. 146-151. 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 Thirty-five Sunday

Scripture: Micah 6:6-8

Focus Text: "What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (v. 8)

Listening to God: I demand integrity from my disciples. You cannot walk humbly with me and walk in arrogance with your brothers and sisters. You cannot be a saint in prayer and a tyrant in your job or with your family. I have given you many things that I intend you to use for the good of those in need around you. The quality of your human relationships shows the true quality of your relationship with me. If you are truly walking with me, I bring you face to face with the needs of my other children. As you treat them, so you treat me.

My Prayer:

Day Thirty-six *Monday*

Scripture: Romans 5:1-11

Focus Text: "We also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us" (vv. 3-5).

Listening to God: You don't have to go looking for suffering. Life will bring it your way. And if you are faithful to my call, you may have even more suffering than those who are not faithful. Don't be afraid of it. I can do things for you in your suffering that I cannot do otherwise. Suffering strips you of your defenses, your pride, your ability to control things. I can do my best work in you when these things are taken away. I don't send suffering to you or enjoy watching you go through it. But I am able to use it for your good and your growth in grace. Trust me when suffering comes. I will never leave you or forsake you. I will give you gifts as you come through the fire.

My Prayer:

Day Thirty-seven *Tuesday*

Scripture: Acts 3:1-10

Focus Text: "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk" (v. 6).

Listening to God: Your lack is never the end of the story. When your resources run out, if you are in the flow of my will, all the resources of heaven are available to you. It grieves me when you forget that I am your source of supply. Praying in the name of Jesus is not magic. It means that you surrender yourself to my will and are willing to be used for my purposes. Let me work through you to do miracles in the lives of others! Together, we can do more than you could ever ask or imagine.

My Prayer:

Day Thirty-eight *Wednesday*

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-24

Focus Text: "No one can serve two masters" (v. 24).

Listening to God: You were created to have me at the center of your life. If I am in my proper place in your affection, everything else in your life will be in balance. If you allow any other thing (even good things such as family or church) to move to the center of your life, eventually everything will fall out of balance. You cannot be your own center of gravity. My will is the best thing that could ever happen to you and those around you. I always have your best interest at heart. Can you trust me for this?

My Prayer:

Day Thirty-nine *Thursday*

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:1-11

Focus Text: All of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (v. 5).

Listening to God: The way you deal with others is a window into your soul. If you are in right relationship with me, you will not need to elevate yourself on the one hand or feel inferior on the other. You will be at ease with others because your worth is rooted and grounded in what I think of you rather than what they think. You will not need to promote yourself if you know in the depths of your heart that I am working out my will for your life. Don't be afraid of people or circumstances that seem to put you at a disadvantage. In my economy, downward mobility is the way up.

My Prayer: