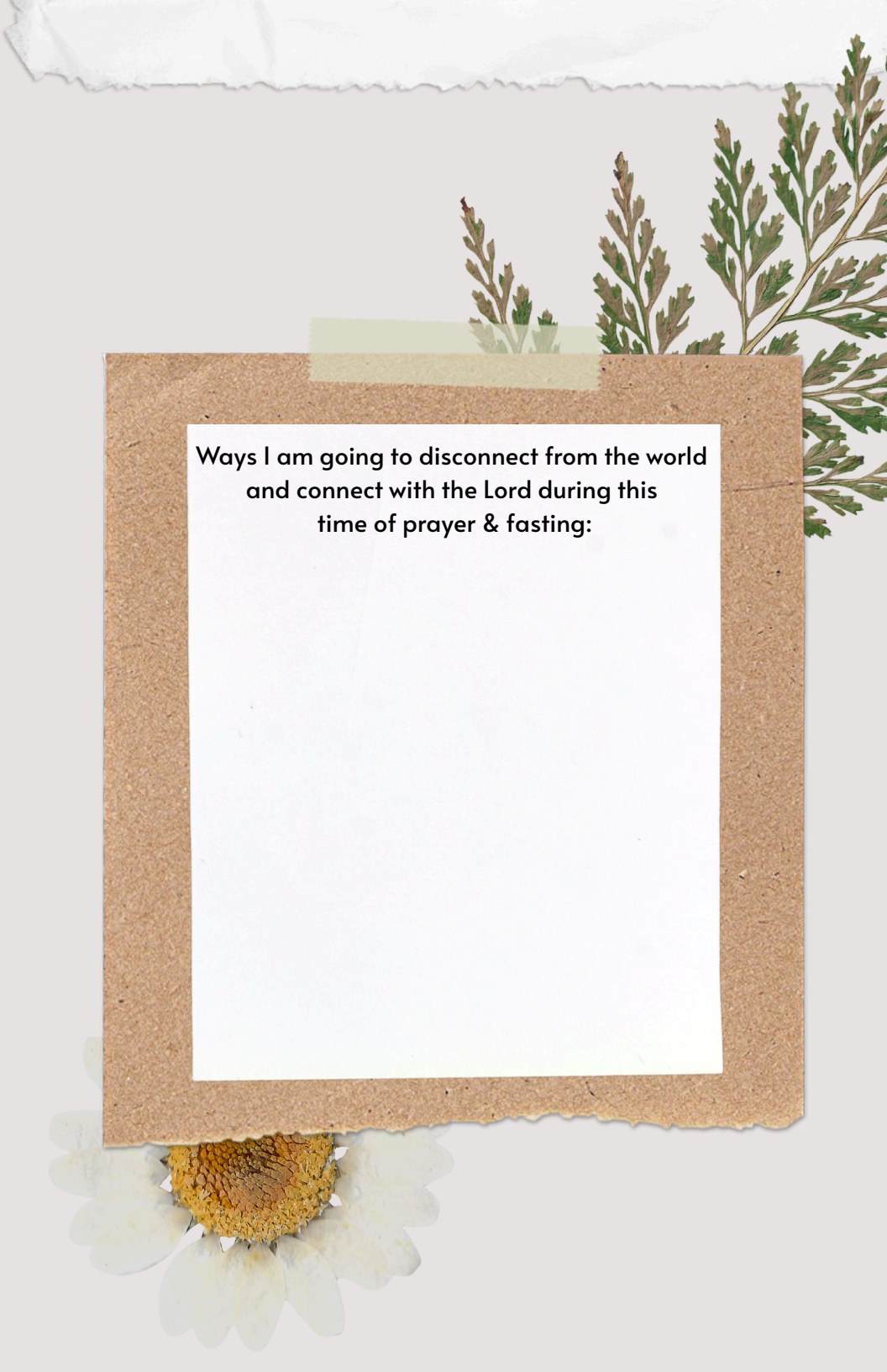


SPRING PRAYER & FASTING DEVOTIONAL



Cornerstone Chapel



**Ways I am going to disconnect from the world
and connect with the Lord during this
time of prayer & fasting:**



HOW TO USE THIS:

These Prayer & Fasting Devotionals will have a scripture focus, inspirational reading, a place for personal reflection and a closing prayer. So grab this book along with your Bible/pen and find a spot to sit alone with the Lord and see what He has for you!

Prayer & Fasting Devotionals

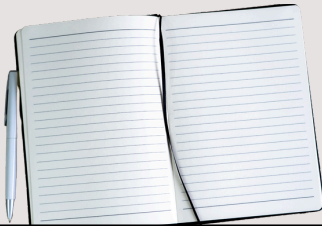
Thank you to the Cornerstone Chapel church attendees who wrote the following devotionals.

LETTER FROM PASTOR MARK

I want to personally thank you for committing with others from our church for the upcoming time of prayer and fasting. I believe that God is going to use this time to do two big things. First, he is going to use your prayers and fasting to make a difference in every single area you are targeting... our families, schools, community, church, government, etc. I believe we are going to see the hand of God move mightily as a result of this congregation coming together in repentance and humility. Secondly, I believe God is going to use this time of prayer and fasting to do a major work in you. I know God is going to grow us closer to him, take us deeper, speak to us, and just do an amazing work. Get ready for the journey!

Pastor Mark

7 Days of Prayer & Fasting



COMMUNION

By: Mike Carswell

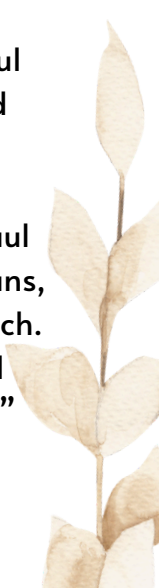
DAY ONE

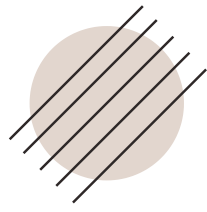
Here at Cornerstone Chapel, we partake in communion as a church family together on the first Sunday of every month. I thought I had a pretty good grasp of this tradition, and the reasons why we take the time to participate in this holy act on a regular basis. However, in our study of I Corinthians, I found more than I had realized surrounding the practice of communing together. Let's absorb this passage together:

I Corinthians 11:27-29 "So anyone who eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily is guilty of sinning against the body and the blood of the Lord. That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking the cup. For if you eat of the bread or drink of the cup without honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself."

Paul explains here that if we come into communion without careful examination, we are eating and drinking consequences upon our lives. Even more interestingly, Paul takes care to mention two specific aspects that we should consider before we partake of the bread and the cup:

Sinning against the Body— Echoing Jesus' own words, Paul explains in many of his epistles (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians) that the body of Christ is the church. We have responsibility to one another. Seems like a good place to ask some questions of ourselves... Are we "good" with our brothers and sisters in the church?

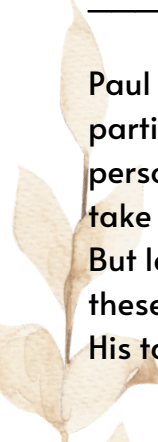




Day One cont'd

Do we seek to help them where we can and connect with them in meaningful ways? Do we earnestly seek their hearts? Are we in fellowship with them consistently, growing together and spurring one another on in love?

Sinning against the Blood— if we are sinning without repentance, we are openly mocking what Jesus did for us on the cross. That is certainly not a place where I want to be! The believer's freedom has been granted and guaranteed only through the redemptive power of the blood that our Lord and Savior, the God of the universe, willingly spilt to bring salvation to us. Are we surrendering to him with thanksgiving? Are we accepting our freedom and living in the grace of the New Covenant that his shed blood on Calvary represents?



Paul explained previously in I Corinthians that we need to participate daily in self-examination before the Lord. This personal reflection need not, and really should not, exclusively take place when we enter into the act of communion together. But let's face it, it must be pretty important for Paul to make these points about our posture when coming to commune at His table.

Day One cont'd

Communion is a call to, right now, look at ourselves and our lives. It is a moment of reflection, reverence, and repentance — Are we doing our part within the church body, utilizing our spiritual gifts to lift up our family? Have we genuinely asked the Holy Spirit to help us identify those spiritual gifts within us that God wants to use to love our brothers and sisters in the church, and to advance his kingdom outside of it?

Are we picturing the nails in His holy hands and feet? The crown of mocking thorns upon his head? The lashes in his flesh that spilled the redemptive gift of the blood of our salvation? Do we have sins that we're holding on to because we haven't brought them to Him? Are we earnestly asking for Him to show us a way out from the temptations that we seemingly give into over and over again? Do we have the guts to open our hearts and souls fully to our creator, our redeemer, and our savior, to say "Search me, O God, and know my heart?" (Psalm. 139:23a)

Paul makes it clear that if we are not truly examining ourselves, especially when coming into the symbolic act of communion with our brothers and sisters, that we are opening ourselves up to judgment and calamity here on earth. Think about the Israelites, fresh out of slavery after God delivered them from Egypt. It didn't take long before they were unkind to one another and unrepentant for their sins, and they paid dearly for their hard hearts and disobedience. But our God is, was, and always will be a loving God full of mercy and grace!

Day One cont'd

Just as He forgave and delivered on His promise to Israel, He will continually shed His mercy on us if we honor Him and honor His Church. Church family, let's love on one another as Christ loves us, and let us honor our great God with reverence and thanksgiving!

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you so much for the gift of communion you have given to me and to Your church. Thank you for Jesus' words in the Greatest Commandment, and the flawless connection it makes to how I am to enter into communion at Your table. When I love You with all my heart, soul, and mind, I am able to humble myself before you, repent of my sin, and thank you for the gift of salvation that Jesus' sacrifice on the cross granted me. And when I love others, especially my church family, more than I love myself, I am living within Your holy and perfect will. Please allow this posture I take into the act of communion to spill out into all areas of my life. Please show me how I can utilize my spiritual gifts to edify and build up my brothers and sisters in the church. Help me to bring glory to your holy name in all that I think, say, and do. Amen.

Day One cont'd

Ask God to reveal the names or faces of three people at church that He wants you to connect with. Then do it!

Can you identify some aspect or type of event in your life that causes you to sin that you just can't seem to escape? As you pray, ask God to help you identify these moments now, so that when they come again, He can show you a way out that will lead you to Him and away from sin.

DAY TWO

By: Ray Allen

Matthew chapter 25:14-30 is the Parable of the Talents. In this passage, the master went on a trip, but before leaving, he gave a large sum of money, or talents, to each of his servants. To one servant he gave five talents, to another he gave two, and to the third servant he gave one, and then the master left for his journey. Two of the servants immediately put the money to work by making investments. These two doubled their money. The third servant, who was given one talent, went and hid the money in the ground (or modern day, he put it in his safe in his basement) and didn't touch it until the master returned. When the master returned, he discovered the servant who was given five turned it into ten and the one given two turned it into four, and was very delighted and rewarded these two servants. The master was very upset with the last servant because he did nothing with the talent except hide it away.

Matthew 25:27, "Well, you should at least have put my money into the bank so I could have some interest. Take the money from this servant and give it to the one with the ten bags of gold."

For purposes of this explanation, consider the word "talent" as an actual talent – as in an ability - not as money. Define that word, "talent" to mean "an ability to sing, or play an instrument, or teach, or administration, or cooking, or greeting, or security". Define this word as something you have the ability to do right now.

Day Two cont'd

God is telling us that he entrusted us with an ability, and expects us to do something with it. He entrusts us with a talent – or multiple talents (like someone who can play and sing or play and teach) and then expects us to use these talents. If we do not use them in the world (you can play and sing but you're not a rock star), then we can certainly invest and develop them in the church.

Consider the church as “the bank” in this parable. The master said, “why didn't you deposit your talent in the bank”. This would be the same as saying, “why didn't you use your talent in the church on Sunday morning?” There really is no excuse. If you have a talent and you hide it away, the Lord will not be “rewarding” you for it. He did not give you a talent so that you could hide it away. No, he gave it to you so that you could multiply it. So that you could use it – and at minimum – “gain interest” by using it in the church.

Matthew 25:29, “To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they shall have an abundance.” Let us “use well” what the Lord has given us. Here is an example: there is a man who came to our church and could play the bass guitar. Later, he learned the acoustic guitar, and then later learned how to play the drums. His talents are increasing because he is investing them into God's “bank” – the church. There are many ways you can invest yourself in church too. If you do, things will only get better and better.



Day Two cont'd

Do you believe that the Lord is interested in using you in some capacity?

What are some talents or abilities that you have right now? Is there a possibility that this talent can be utilized at the church?

Will you commit to truly praying this prayer and accepting God's answer?

Prayer:

Lord, you know my heart. You know my abilities. You know what I can and cannot do. Lord, please reveal to me what I can do to invest in the church. Lord, I say I want more of you, and I say I want you to do more in my life. Please show me the areas in which I can invest and show me how I can multiply my

Day Two cont'd

talents and grow. Lord, I want to grow in Christ, and I see now that the only way to do that is to be used by you. The best way to grow is to put myself into positions where I must rely on you to use my gifts and talents and abilities. I pray that you will reveal this to me and provide the avenue in which I can be used. Lord, I am not one who will “hide it away”, but I am one who will go and multiply my talents. Lord, use me and use my talents for your Glory. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

DAY THREE

By: Lori Sexton

This past week as I was driving, I couldn't help but notice the bare, sparse trees in the area. It all looked so bleak on that rainy day and the trees looked – well, dead to me! Where my kids live, it's already up to 100 degrees! I love spring and especially summer, but this in-between time is hard not being able to get out in the yard and garden. We know it's coming, but we don't know when we will see those first signs of life with buds on the trees! That anticipation!

As I considered that, I was thinking of the Scripture in Isaiah 43:18-20:

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! It springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

Have you ever felt you are in the wasteland or wilderness? I'm sure you have – we all have! Where things just seem dead! Dreams unseen. Prayers unanswered. Hope diminished. It is a season of grieving! But that Scripture reminds us to quit looking back! Just as that vegetation all looks dead right now, I can assure you it is not. Just as God has ordered the seasons when to change, those trees will spring forth a new life in due time! A tiny bud unseen now, was already set up last year when things were dying off! Something new was already forming! Friends, God sees your heart's desires! Things you have poured over in tears and prayers that you have given up on or that



Day Three cont'd

look irreparable and damaged beyond any hope of return, He can make new again! And, even if that tree or dream is dead and doesn't return the way you wanted or prayed for, there is a NEW thing that will be even better than we could hope for when we surrender it to Him- completely! We can't go by what we see! He has promised that if He can care for the flowers and birds, how much more will He care for you? Don't let that dead wood fool you! He is doing abundantly more than you could ever hope, dream, or visualize! There is new life coming!

What is something you have nearly lost all hope in seeing happen?

How does that make you feel?

Have you surrendered the situation completely to God?

Day Three cont'd

Prayer:

Lord, I humbly seek your face and wisdom in my circumstances every day! Help me to remember your desire is to provide for your children! When things seem bleak or dismal, I know I serve a God mightier than that situation! You, Lord already have the situation taken care of better than I could hope or imagine! I will choose to remember your faithfulness in my past and that goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life! In your name! Amen!

A HILL AND A CREEK

by: Lauren Testor

DAY FOUR

I bought a book of hikes in Ohio that details each trail, including the distance, terrain, and difficulty rating. I've had this book for many years, and when I first bought it, I set a goal to complete every hike listed. Over the years, I've completed many of them, jotting notes in the margins about each adventure—how the hike went, how long it took, and memorable moments. For example: “Beautiful waterfall halfway through the hike, took 3 hours.”

As time went on, my hikes became longer and more challenging. With each trek, my confidence grew; me and my lime green backpack, a bottle of water, some random crackers from the cabinet, and my trusty book.

One sweltering summer day, I set out on a hike near Boston Mills. Typically, the trails are marked on the trees, making them easy to follow. As I strolled along, enjoying the day, I suddenly realized the markings had disappeared. Undeterred, I kept following the faint path until it began to vanish altogether. Certain I would soon find my way again, I pressed on.

Eventually, I reached a creek. Across the water was a large hill, and I thought I could see a path at its crest. “I guess I'm going up that hill,” I decided. Wading through the cold water, I welcomed the brief relief from the heat. My climb started easily enough, but soon—like something out of a horror movie—the ground began to crumble beneath me. It was too late to turn around, so I grabbed desperately at tree roots and rocks, frightened I might slide back down. I scrambled upward, heart pounding.

Day Four cont'd

At last, I made it to the top. I was proud of my effort, but when looked around, all I saw was the empty summit—no path, just the top of the hill.

After all that hard work, I had no choice but to get back down. I decided the best way was to sit and slide—and I slid much faster than I expected or wanted. I crashed into the creek, muddy, soaked, and—most importantly—lost.

I remembered hearing that you should follow a creek if you're lost, so that's what I did. Eventually, I found a road and, at last, my way back to the car. The book said the hike would take three hours. It took me six.

As I climbed into my car, caked in dried mud with soggy shoes, I felt both angry and humbled. I had lost my way, despite thinking I knew exactly what to do. The Bible is like my book of Ohio hikes—it provides direction. The path is there when I pay attention and don't rely solely on my own understanding.

God was with me as I clawed my way up the hill and still with me as I slid down into the water. He guided me home, even when I felt defeated.

Isaiah 41:10 says, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand.”

When I struggle in life, God whispers in my ear, “Hold on, my daughter—I've got you.”

Day Four cont'd

I couldn't see or understand where I was or where I was going, but God knew the whole time. He set my course. God's presence removes my need for fear. I just need to open my book and follow the directions.

Are you clawing up a hill with no directions?

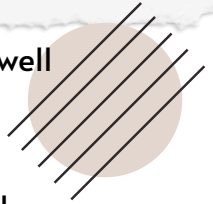
Have you ever felt alone laying muddy in a creek?

How do you use your book of directions (Bible)?

Prayer:

Lord, I come to You with a humble and aching heart. I know I cannot control the twists and turns of my life, and that truth often leaves me feeling small and overwhelmed. As I walk this uncertain path, please guide each step I take. When I feel lost, lead me back to You. Hold my hand tightly so I can rest in the safety of Your presence. Give me strength for the steep climbs and courage for the waters I must cross. Help me recognize Your voice above all others, so I may follow You to a place of peace and refuge. Amen.

by: Sierra Carswell



DAY FIVE

Scripture is not disputed because it is unclear, but because we are limited. We are human, trying to understand what is eternal. At times, our own ideas, processes, and preferences interfere, leading us to misinterpret the purpose behind what has been spoken. Yet Scripture is full of wonder—like seeds laid out, waiting to be planted. I am reminded daily to lay myself aside, my plans and my agenda, so that I may be led into clarity and stillness. It is there that He lights my path, allowing me to see each word through His eyes and letting Him write it upon my heart.

Psalm 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Like a garden, the inner man is a sacred space that must be tended daily. We are called to steward the grounds, ensuring the roots of what God has planted take hold and grow deep. This daily tending is how the grace we have been given becomes established and unshakeable.

2 Corinthians 4:16 “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though our outer man is wasting away, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.”

However, we were never intended to grow in isolation. While growth may happen in solitude, abundance requires neighbors. Consider the tomatillo: it may grow tall, receive water, and even blossom with many flowers in solitude, but it cannot produce fruit without its neighbors planted near it.



Day Five cont'd

No matter how healthy the individual plant may be, it only becomes fruitful when it receives what is carried from another. Psalm 92:13 “Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish.”

When many plants grow together, they strengthen the whole. In the Body of Christ, our different roots and leaves cover what others lack, creating a canopy of protection where life can truly flourish. What one lacks, another supplies; we are not just planted in Christ; we are strategically planted among one another. Hebrews 10:24 “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.”

Ephesians 4:16 “From whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.” Aligning our gifts with His purpose means choosing the labor of love over the ease of judgment. We honor the Master’s design when we stay present through the discomfort of our differences, recognizing that our own fruitfulness depends on how we nurture the neighbors He has planted beside us.

I Corinthians 12:18 “But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be.”

We cannot rightly tend the garden around us until we allow the Master to search the soil within us, trading our pride for His covering and our judgment for His purpose. John 15:5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

Day Five cont'd

With a heart desperate for His will to be fulfilled in us, invite the Lord into your thoughts as you reflect on these questions:

1. Am I selective in who I tend to by limiting my care to the "comfortable," or do I honor the Gardener's hand by tending to every soul He has placed near me?

2. Do I view every person gathered in the Body as someone God has called—even those who have yet to take root or show visible fruit?

3. Am I willing to sit in the discomfort of another's struggle, or do I wait for them to "get healthy" before I offer them my seat at the table?

4. Am I waiting for someone else to "heed the call" to tend a struggling soul, or am I willing to be the one who breaks the soil and pours the water today?

Day Five cont'd

5. Jesus prioritized the unrooted and the shamed. Does loving like Him make me uncomfortable? If so, am I protecting my own peace or His garden?

Prayer

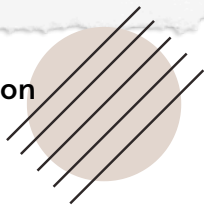
Father, You delight in Your garden, for it is a garden of many kinds; every plant placed by Your design. Let me sit with You in that delight. Break my heart for those around me. Teach me to walk through the rows as You do, looking for those who require Your love. Give me eyes to see the broken, the ones hiding in shame, for they are the ones ready for Your grace. Help me remember that You don't plant mistakes; instead, You take joy in revealing Yourself through weathered lives, so that we might witness the fruit they bear. Lord, don't let me delay You. Correct my reliance on others to tend to the seeds You have planted. Don't let me wait for obvious growth to notice a soul, but let every glimmer of life catch my eye. Lead me to be the one who breaks the soil and pours the water, even when the ground looks bare. If they suffer, let me suffer with them, as Christ suffered for me. If they are dormant, let me wait on them, as You have waited for me. This is my prayer: Let me be like You, relentless in love, unwilling that any should walk away without it. Amen.

Ref. Ephesians 3:16–17, Romans 7:22, Ecclesiastes 3:11, Psalm 42:1–2, Hebrews 11:13–16, Philippians 3:20, 2 Cor 4:17, Proverbs 4:23, Matthew 6:6, Hebrews 10:24–25, Psalm 139:23–24, Genesis 3:9, Luke 19:10, Romans 15:, Luke 7:36, Luke 11:37, Luke 14:1, 1 Corinthians 3:6

BLUEBIRD HOUSE

DAY SIX

by: Sandy Anderson



A couple of years ago, we did some research and purchased a birdhouse and a feeder to specifically attract bluebirds. As soon as we set up the birdhouse and feeder, the bluebirds came.

In our research, we learned that we needed to keep watch over the birdhouse to protect the bluebirds from predators. As exciting as it was to see the bluebirds making their home in their little house, we weren't prepared for what came next—the battle to protect it and keep predators away. Those cute little sparrows.....who knew they have such an evil agenda! They will enter the house and destroy everything in it. They are relentless!

The bluebird house is like our hearts. When we give our hearts to Jesus, we are so excited to live for Him and follow Him. BUT, just like the bluebird house, we have to protect our hearts from our predator—the enemy, Satan. He wants to come and disrupt our lives. He wants to steal our joy. He wants to destroy our trust, our faith and our relationships.



Day Six cont'd

Sometimes, the attempts of the enemy to invade our hearts and lives are not so obvious. He will use any little thing that may seem harmless to distract us. Just like cute sparrows look harmless, but left alone, they will take over the house and destroy whatever is in it.

If we don't keep our eyes fixed on Jesus by spending time every day in prayer and in the Word, we are leaving our hearts open to the attacks of the enemy and his attempts to destroy our faith.

Just like bluebird enthusiasts have a 'society', we as believers need to come together as Jesus 'enthusiasts' to encourage each other and pray for each other so that we can stand strong against the attacks of the enemy.

1 Peter 5:8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Proverbs 4: 23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Questions:

Have you made spending quality time with God each day a priority?

Day Six cont'd

Do you think small groups are a valuable resource for spiritual growth? Why or why not?

What are other ways you can keep your eyes on God throughout your day?

PRAYER:

Holy Father, we love You so much and we need You so much to continue to grow us and draw us closer to You. Give us wisdom to recognize the lies of the enemy and his attempts to trip us up. Give us strength to overcome his schemes. Please guard our hearts and help us to keep our eyes on You each and every day. Amen.

DAY SEVEN

by: Barb White



Ecclesiastes 1:1-2 The words of the teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: “Meaningless, Meaningless!” says the teacher. Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”

It used to be very special, fun, and unexpected to have a “snow day” when we were young...time to properly fit inside our boots (with bread bags, of course), to find matching gloves, to slither into our snow pants (we called them leggings), and to find a warm hand-me-down coat and hat before heading outside.

During winter days, we often have plenty of time to think, and to reminisce about those cold days of the past. I am learning a lot in solitude on these blustery days.



Day Seven cont'd

It is in these still moments, that I have garnered a new appreciation for my beloved parents and grandparents! How hard they worked, often without thanks to ensure my siblings and I had enough funds to secure a college degree without owing any debt after graduation.

I ponder and search myself when the life-changing realization came to me that “things are things” - that caring and loving each other is much more important than acquiring “things” in life.

With genuine humility, I contemplate ALL we DO have is or never has been ours. The “things” we enjoy are simply “on loan” to us from Almighty God.

As I close, please remember, as I often do when the snow flies, that life can be found indeed in the beautiful world we share. The uniqueness and temporary life span of each snowflake reminds me of the winter season of our lives. Delicate, yet stronger together, intricately made in design and temporary on earth - that is life.

Winter comes and winter goes.

May OUR tracks we leave in the snow represent hope, gratitude, and love for all who follow.

Day Seven cont'd

Solomon is heralded as the “wisest man” in creation and is searching for the meaning of life. I relate well to his messages in the book of Ecclesiastes. Frequently he uses the word “meaningless” in his inquisitive journey to solve the meaning of life and often can fill us with confusion and sometimes despair. But by God’s mercy Solomon’s quest does not end there! Let’s look together at Solomon’s “conclusion of the matter” in Chapter 12:9-14. Read verse 13 again: “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” These words are enlightening. Here, Solomon’s chosen word “fear” does not denote being afraid or terrified, but to have loving reverence for our Lord and his life-changing directives. Loving reverence for our Lord – a far cry from “meaningless”!

It is with love for God and love for each of you, that I share my thoughts and my heart with you this (and every) day! Love to all!

Prayer:

Heavenly and blessed Father. We come in loving reverence to thank you for all you share with us. We know each heartbeat and each breath we take comes from you! We love you and thank you! We pray in the only name by which we can be saved, the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

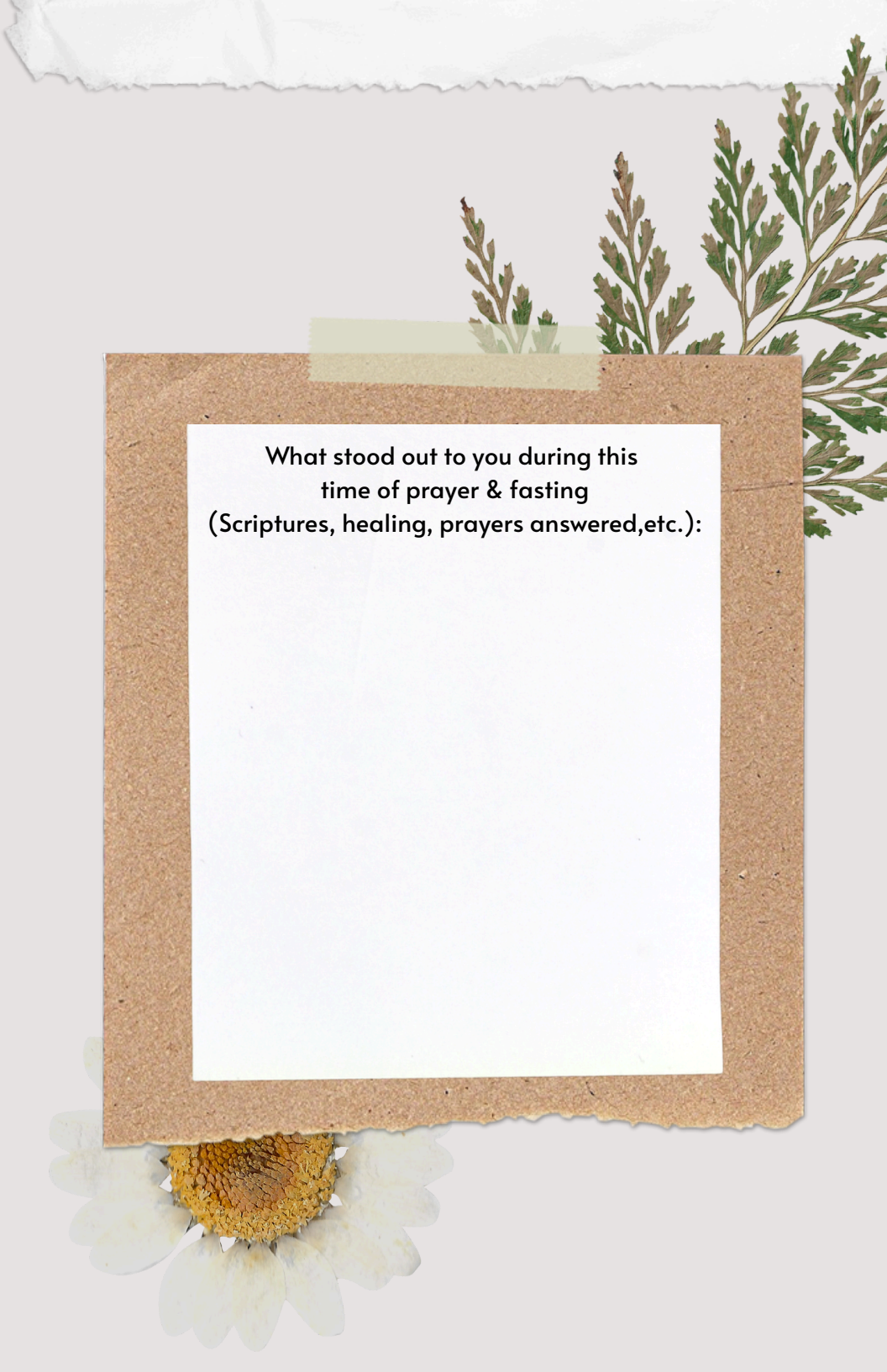
Day Seven cont'd

Thoughts to ponder....

What do you like to think about when the house is quiet, and you are in your thoughts?

Could King Solomon have added anything in addition to his “conclusion of the matter” to make it more meaningful to you or to others?

Has quiet time alone brought you special memories or thoughts about your life? Would you want to share some of them?



**What stood out to you during this
time of prayer & fasting
(Scriptures, healing, prayers answered, etc.):**

