



# 2025 PRAYER & FASTING GUIDE

*Twenty-One Days of Fasting and Prayer  
for Spiritual Renewal & Deep Change*

January 6, 2025 - January 26, 2025

*"Discipleship: Defending the Faith"*

Matthew 28:19-20 | 1 Peter 3:15

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*Ministry of Congregational Spirituality*

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## Connecting With The Second Calvary Baptist Church Prayer Line

Join us for In-Person and Online Prayer and Devotional

Telephone: **319-527-3544**

Alternate number for T-Mobile and Metro PCS subscribers:

**Text “Call Me” to 319-527-3544 and you will be connected to the call immediately.**

**Daily - 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.**

**Weekly - SCBC Corporate Day of Fasting and Prayer**

Thursdays, 12 Noon

In-person (Sanctuary) and Online

**First Friday Fervent Corporate Prayer**

7 PM – First Friday of each month

**Share Your Experience Online**

Use hashtag #SCBCNorfolk

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**NOTE:** Unless otherwise indicated, all selected devotionals are from *ReFrame Ministries/devotionals*. Please see links to the devotionals beginning on Page 34 of this guide.

## SCBC Theme for 2025

### “Discipleship: Defending the Faith” Matthew 28:19-20 | 1 Peter 3:15

Dr. Geoffrey V. Guns, Senior Pastor  
Second Calvary Baptist Church

#### **Defending the Faith: A Call to Prayer and Consecration**

“But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”  
(1 Peter 3:15 NASB)

In a world filled with uncertainty, skepticism, and spiritual battles, believers are called to stand firm in their faith and share the gospel with boldness and humility. As followers of Christ, we must not only believe but also “defend” the faith entrusted to us, giving reason for the hope that anchors our souls. This year’s theme, “Discipleship: Defending the Faith”, challenges us to deepen our understanding of God’s Word and live lives that testify to His transformative power (see Romans 12:1-2). God can change the life of anyone, including those we have given up on.

The Apostle Peter reminds us in 1 Peter 3:15 that defending the faith begins with sanctifying Christ as Lord in our hearts. This means surrendering fully to His authority, allowing His Word and Spirit to shape our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. Only when we are grounded in His truth can we give an effective and loving defense of the gospel to a watching world.

However, defending the faith is not just an intellectual exercise, it requires spiritual strength and discernment. This strength comes from prayer and consecration. Prayer aligns our hearts with God’s will, opens our eyes to His perspective, and fills us with the boldness of the Holy Spirit. Consecration, setting ourselves apart for God’s purposes, prepares us to serve as vessels of His grace and truth.

As we enter this season of prayer and fasting, let us commit ourselves to a deeper relationship with the Lord. Let us seek His wisdom to engage with others compassionately, even when their questions or objections seem challenging. Pray for the courage to speak the truth in love, for humility to admit when we don’t have all the answers, and for the Holy Spirit to work through us in every conversation.

As we fast and pray, let us also lift up those who are searching for hope and truth. May God use us as His ambassadors, shining His light into the darkness. Together, let us be equipped to defend the faith with lives that glorify Him and words that testify to the eternal hope we have in Christ.

*Pastor Guns*

## The Power of Prayer and Fasting

January is a special month for the Second Calvary Baptist Church Family. Not only is it the beginning of the New Year, but also the start of reaching or achieving a spiritual goal.

Fasting is deliberately not eating food and, in some cases, not drinking water for the purpose of reaching a spiritual goal or achieving a spiritual goal. The priority is not to be on food intake, but a God intake, thus submitting our wills to God and allowing Him to draw us into a place of heightened spiritual awareness. Sincere fasting cleanses the heart.

### Four Types of Fasts

Fasting reduces the amount of food or liquids consumed over a specified period. When one abstains from eating for medical reasons this is referred to as detoxification of the body through the limiting of food. However, fasting is one way we develop a deeper life and faith in God. During the period in which one is fasting, time is set aside for prayer, reading Scripture, and meditation. Sometimes people will engage in doing good deeds as a part of their time of consecration.

There are several types of fasts. The one you choose is between you and God. He will honor your best sacrifice for spiritual renewal and deep inner cleansing.

Type one—a **Full Fast**. Drink only liquids. This is a normal fast in which one may abstain from eating food, although one may drink liquids over a specific time.

Type two—a **Partial Fast** from 6:00 am to 12:00 pm, or from sunup to sundown. A partial fast is when one limits the amount of food or liquids for a specific time.

Type three—an **Absolute Fast** where one ceases to eat or drink for a specified time. You should consult your family physician before beginning a fast. If there are severe medical reasons that will limit your ability to fast from food or water, you should **not** attempt to do this. Rather, look for other ways that you can fast or participate, such as limiting how much time you spend watching television or surfing the Internet.

Type four—**The Daniel Fast**. Eat fruits and vegetables, and drink water and juice; **no** meats, sweets, or bread. The website <https://draxe.com/daniel-fast/> provides information about the benefits of implementing aspects, if not all, of The Daniel Fast during our time of prayer and fasting. Additional references are cited in the End Notes and the Resource section of this guide.

May you go forth with joy and be led by His peace during our time of Spiritual Renewal.

## The Daniel Fast

There are two references in the book of Daniel from which “The Daniel Fast” is drawn.

Chapter 1 describes how Daniel and his three friends ate only vegetables and drank only water. At the end of a 10-day trial period, Daniel and his friends appeared healthier than their peers who ate the rich foods from the royal table.

In Chapter 10, Daniel fasts abstaining from pleasant food, meat, and wine. You too can gain a healthier body and clearer mind by following this fast in moderation.

### Tips

- Engage in lots of prayer; we need God's strength and guidance.
- Keep your diet simple. Avoid highly processed foods in favor of simply prepared or raw vegetables.
- If for any reason you eat something you should not have during the fast, it is better to ask for forgiveness and continue than to stop the fast.
- If you are experiencing weakness or headaches, drink at least **8** glasses of water each day. Often, we do not understand just how much our body needs water, especially when fasting.
- Be careful not to drink too much water, because too much liquid can be as bad as not enough.
- Set a goal for how long you will fast. Ultimately, you may want to continue The Daniel Fast longer than first intended.
- Have a healthy stash of nuts on hand, especially at work, to avoid those co-workers who always want to feed you.
- You may want to supplement your diet with multivitamins.

## Warnings

- During the time of fasting you will face temptations; resist them in the name of Jesus Christ.
- When you have finished fasting, eat light meals and slowly build up to your normal diet.

## Things You Will Need

- A Bible
- A place and time(s) to pray
- A good variety of fruits and vegetables

### Scripture References for Fasting:

- Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 9:14-15; Luke 18:9-14

### Relation to Prayer and Reading of the Word:

- 1 Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18; Nehemiah 1:4; Daniel 9:3, 20; Joel 2:12; Luke 2:37; Acts 10:30; Acts 13:2

### Corporate Fasting:

- 1 Samuel 7:5-6; Ezra 8:21-23; Nehemiah 9:1-3; Joel 2:15-16; Jonah 3:5-10; Acts 27:33-37

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Remember, it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with a blessing (*Isaiah 58; Jeremiah 14:12; 1 Corinthians 8:8*).



## Times for Prayer and Fasting

Two time periods are suggested for fasting and prayer:

**First**—a partial fast of six hours (6 a.m. – 12 noon).

**Second**—a full day fast of twelve hours (6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.).

You can decide which fast works for you. Feel free to modify your fast according to your spiritual health and physical needs.

**Fasting will begin on Monday, January 6, 2025.**

**Regular meals may resume on Sunday, January 26, 2025, after 6 pm.**

### Using and Following the Prayer and Fasting Guide

Many people spend a great deal of their lives complaining and looking for reasons why other people are not what we believe they should be. Deep inner personal change is one of the most difficult things to do, yet if we are willing to embark upon the journey, our lives, families, marriages, professions, and ministries will become so much more vibrant.

During the next twenty-one days, we will embark together on a journey of spiritual renewal and growth. Here are the steps to follow to get the most out of this period:

1. Resolve to follow the plan for the full twenty-one days, even when it looks like you cannot fulfill it. **Try not to miss a single day.**
2. Read the daily readings and take notes or write down your observations from what you glean.
3. Resolve to participate in one of the daily fasts – 6 or 12 hours. If you cannot fast every day, resolve to fast every other day or every third day. Establish how you will proceed. Consider The Daniel Fast, which is a partial fast that consists of fruits, vegetables, and water only. Eliminate all meat, dairy, and sugar products from the diet. Good results are guaranteed.

# Twenty-One Days of Prayer and Fasting

## “Discipleship: Defending the Faith”

Embracing The Great Commission to “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you . . . ” (Matthew 28:19-20 NIV), disciples will encounter oppositions to the faith. Many will hear the gospel of the kingdom and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ but, sadly, will not receive it as Good News. What shall we say to the rebuttals or false narratives that challenges our Christian witness? When the tenets of the faith, our biblical worldview, and Christian conduct comes under scrutiny, how shall believers respond to those who question the eternal hope we have in Christ Jesus?

Scattered throughout Asia Minor, the Apostle Peter encourages suffering Jewish Christians living in an oppressive Roman society. Acknowledging the hostility they were enduring, Peter writes “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15 NIV). He exhorts believers to be knowledgeable and prepared. He reminds believers of Christ suffering. And as His followers, suffering for righteousness’ sake can be an effective Christian witness—opening a door to share one’s faith.

**Week One—Probing Questions** will make you think. Answering them requires knowing The Word of God. “We can be ready to give a defense if we have made ourselves ready in knowing the Bible. Peter knew the importance of providing a defense to everyone who asks you . . . .” In each point of testing, Peter relied on the power of the Holy Spirit and was able to give a defense” (Enduring Word Bible Commentary, 1 Peter Chapter 3). Disciples should be able to answer biblically to oppositional views.

**Week Two—Holy living and Righteous Suffering** lends this week’s devotionals to a contextual overview of 1 Peter 2:11 through 1 Peter 3:15. Not all suffering is for the witness of Christ nor is it a defense that demonstrates one’s Christian faith. David Jeremiah stated it best, “*The most powerful apologetic is the faithful lives of God’s people, demonstrating love, faith, and hope in the midst of a hostile world.*” One may surmise that in adversity, godly living may serve as a witness to lead others to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

**Week Three—Give a Ready Answer.** How should we respond when challenged about the hope that lies within us? We will conclude our time together by giving diligence to 1 Peter 3:15, our thematic focus for 2025. May the Holy Spirit grant us His wisdom and boldness in our discipleship, mission, and evangelistic outreach—exhorting one another in “defending the faith.”

*Ministry of Congregational Spirituality*

## DAY 1: MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025

**Scripture:** “What about you?” [Jesus] asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”— **Matthew 16:15-16**

**Devotional Title:** *What About You?* by Evan Heerema

**Study:** **Matthew 16:13-20**

### **Meditate:**

A trip to Israel, to visit places where Jesus walked, may include a stop at Banias in the northern part of the country. Banias was a settlement at the foot of Mount Hermon, and a spring from there makes a river that flows into the Jordan River. At the time of Jesus’ ministry, Banias was called Pania and was dedicated to the worship of the Greek god Pan.

So, it is not surprising that as Jesus and His disciples went into that area, He asked them a defining question: “Who do you say I am?” In other words, “Do you recognize me for who I really am, or am I just another object of worship like you see here? How do you discern my person, my teaching, and my miracles?”

Peter, inspired by God, responded by saying, “You are the Messiah”—that is, the Christ (“Anointed One”). Peter declared that Jesus was the anointed Son of God who came to bring the kingdom of God. Jesus came to restore all that is broken by sin.

Decidedly different from false Greek gods and the worship they were known for, Jesus is the true “Son of the living God.” Jesus is the real thing.

### **Pray:**

Loving God, you sent Jesus into this world to provide freedom for everyone held captive by sin, suffocating under the lies of spiritual darkness. Thank you for guiding us to know Jesus for who he really is. For Jesus’ sake, draw many more to him today. Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Who do you say Jesus is?

## DAY 2: TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025

**Scripture:** “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus,”— **1 Timothy 2:5**

**Devotional Title:** *The Jesus Question* (Excerpt) by Josh McDowell Ministry

**Study:** 1 Timothy 2:1-6

**Meditate:**

SO, WHO IS Jesus Christ?

People through the ages have fought over that question often with words, sometimes even with weapons. Why so much conflict over one individual? Why is it that His name, more than the name of any other religious leader, causes irritation? Why is it that you can talk about “God,” and nobody minds, but as soon as you say “Jesus,” people often want to stop the conversation or get defensive?

How is Jesus different from the other religious leaders? Why don’t the names of Buddha, Muhammad, or Confucius upset people? Because the others didn’t claim to be God, but Jesus did.

It didn’t take long for people who knew Jesus to realize that He was making some astounding claims about Himself. He claimed to be more than just a prophet or teacher. He obviously claimed to be God Himself. He presented himself as the only way to a relationship with God the Father, the only source of forgiveness for sins, and the only way of salvation.

For many people, that’s too exclusive and too narrow to believe. Yet the issue isn’t what we think or believe, but rather who Jesus claimed to be.

**Pray:**

You can enjoy Jesus, relate to Jesus, learn from Jesus, but don’t forget to worship Jesus as God. Do that now as you pray in Jesus. Amen.

**Prayer Focus:**

How would you explain to a non-Christian friend: Who is Jesus?

## DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2025

**Scripture:** “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”— **John 8:32**

**Devotional Title:** “*Close Your Eyes to Blind Faith*” (Excerpt) by Josh McDowell Ministry

**Study:** John 8:31-36

**Meditate:**

THE PROFESSOR strokes his beard with an air of superiority. “So, you’re a Christian, are you?” he says to the student standing in front of him. Luis, a first-year college student, swallows hard.

“Tell me,” the professor continues, “can you prove with 100 percent certainty that Jesus rose from the dead?” Luis’s answer comes out in a mousy squeak. “Umm, no.”

“You, see?” the professor pronounces. “Blind faith. Ignorant, irrational, unreasonable faith.”

That professor has the idea that if you can’t prove something with 100 percent certainty, it’s useless or untrue. He also figures that the Christian faith is a blind faith since things like the Resurrection and Jesus’ deity can’t be proven with 100 percent certainty. That’s a myth. We live in a contingent universe. That means exceedingly few things can be proven with 100 percent certainty, except maybe in the field of mathematics.

Car manufacturers, for example, can’t totally prove that their new models are safe. But the evidence from tough, repeated safety tests is conclusive. A jury can’t prove conclusively that a suspect committed a crime. Even if they possess a confession, there are contingencies. He may be lying to protect someone. He might have been forced to confess. But the jury will weigh the evidence to form a conclusion “beyond a reasonable doubt.”

Similarly, neither the resurrection of Christ nor His deity can be proven with 100 percent certainty. But that doesn’t mean the Christian faith is a blind faith. ...The apostle John wrote, “Jesus’ disciples saw him do many other miraculous signs besides the ones recorded in this book” (John 20:30). He is saying that Jesus did many other things that confirmed him as the Son of God that weren’t recorded. The evidence John provides isn’t exhaustive. “But” he writes in the next verse, “these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life” (verse 31).

**Pray:**

Ask God for opportunities to share with your friends (loved ones) what you know about Christ.  
Amen.

**Prayer Focus:**

Trust the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth to them.

## DAY 4: THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2025

**Scripture:** “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”— **Luke 16:31**

**Devotional Title:** *Sight Unseen* by Tim Gustafson

**Study:** Luke 16:19–31

**Meditate:**

After Yuri Gagarin became the first man in space, he parachuted into the Russian countryside. A farm woman spotted the orange-clad cosmonaut, still wearing his helmet and dragging two parachutes. “Can it be that you have come from outer space?” she asked in surprise. “As a matter of fact, I have,” he said.

Soviet leaders sadly turned the historic flight into antireligious propaganda. “Gagarin went into space, but he didn’t see any god there,” their premier declared. (Gagarin himself never said such a thing.) As C. S. Lewis observed, “Those who do not find [God] on earth are unlikely to find Him in space.”

Jesus warned us about ignoring God in this life. He told a story of two men who died—a rich man who had no time for God, and Lazarus, a destitute man rich in faith (Luke 16:19–31). In torment, the rich man pleaded with Abraham for his brothers still on earth. “Send Lazarus,” he begged Abraham. “If someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent” (vv. 27, 30). Abraham got to the heart of the problem: “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead” (v. 31).

“Seeing is never believing,” wrote Oswald Chambers. “We interpret what we see in the light of what we believe.”

**Pray:**

Father, I pray today for those who don't yet believe in You. Draw them by the gentle power and love of Your Holy Spirit. Amen

**Prayer Focus:**

What do you believe about the existence of God and the reality of Christ’s resurrection?  
How do your beliefs affect your day-to-day choices?

## DAY 5: FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 2025

**Scripture:** “You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”  
— Mark 7:8

**Devotional Title:** *Rejecting Rationalization* by Tim Gustafson

**Study:** Mark 7:6–13

### **Meditate:**

An Atlanta police officer asked a driver if she knew why he’d stopped her. “No idea!” she said in bewilderment. “Ma’am, you were texting while driving,” the officer gently told her. “No, no!” she protested, holding up her cell phone as evidence. “It’s an email.”

Using a cell phone to send an email doesn’t grant us a loophole from a law that prohibits texting while driving! The point of the law isn’t to prevent texting; it’s to prevent distracted driving.

Jesus accused the religious leaders of His day of creating far worse loopholes. “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God,” He said, quoting the command to “Honor your father and mother” as evidence (Mark 7:9–10). Under the hypocritical cloak of religious devotion, these wealthy leaders neglected their families. They simply declared their money as “devoted to God,” and voila, no need to help Mom and Dad in their old age. Jesus quickly got to the heart of the problem. “You nullify the word of God by your tradition,” He said (v. 13). They weren’t honoring God; they were dishonoring their parents.

Rationalization can be so subtle. With it we avoid responsibilities, explain away selfish behavior, and reject God’s direct commands. If that describes our behavior, we’re merely deceiving ourselves. Jesus offers us the opportunity to exchange our selfish tendencies for the guidance of the Spirit behind His Father’s good instructions

### **Pray:**

God, I need Your wise discernment. Rescue me from my denial of my own guilt. Help me live in step with Your Spirit. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

In what areas of your life do you find yourself rationalizing? How do these rationalizations square with the wisdom of the Bible?

## DAY 6: SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2025

**Scripture:** “Anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.” — **Revelation 20:15**

**Devotional Title:** *Love and Hell Don't Mix, Do They?* by Josh McDowell Ministry

**Study:** Luke 16:19-31

### **Meditate:**

“You can't say that word!” yelled Micah's friend. Micah looked puzzled. “What word? Hell? I was just explaining how the Bible says that hell is . . .” “Don't say that word!” his friend interrupted. “How come?” Micah asked. “I wasn't using it as a swearword.”

Your friends may not mind joking about hell. But if you start talking about it the way the Bible does, explaining that there really is a hell, your friends may get upset. Hey, if God is so totally loving, your friends want to know why He made a place where people will be separated from Him forever. And why does He send people to such a terrible place?

Good questions. The Bible says that Jesus—who loved the world enough to die for it—will one day bring “judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power” (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). That's the place we know as hell. Hell can be hard to understand and even harder to explain, but here's the most important thing we can know about it: **Hell is a choice.**

We choose to love or not to love God. His plan for saving people through Jesus is to do everything within His loving power to invite us to love Him. Yet when people totally refuse to accept God's welcoming love, He doesn't take away their freedom. He won't force people into heaven if they don't choose to hang out with Him for eternity.

**Hell is a choice**, but the Bible leaves no doubt about how bad it will be. It's a place far away from God, his people, and everything good. Hell is a choice nonbelievers will have to live with forever. That's why God gives us the task of talking to people around us who don't believe in him. He wants us to help them know that Jesus is God's Son, and he came to be their Savior and King!

### **Pray:**

Lord don't let us miss an opportunity to share the love of Christ with our unbelieving friends, so they can enjoy heaven with us. Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

How you can wisely explain to someone who hasn't trusted Jesus why there needs to be a place like hell.



## DAY 7: SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2025

**Scripture:** The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”—**Acts 16:29-30**

**Devotional Title:** *What Must I Do to be Saved?* by Norman F. Brown

**Study:** Acts 16:22-34

### **Meditate:**

In Philippi, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into jail after some angry slaveowners brought false charges against them (Acts 16:16-21). Despite such treatment, they took the opportunity to pray and sing to the Lord, and the other prisoners listened to them.

Then a sudden earthquake opened all the cells and loosened all the prisoners’ chains. The jailer thought everyone had escaped—and if they had, he would have been executed. Panicking, he drew his sword to kill himself—but Paul stopped him.

In desperation the jailer asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Never missing an opportunity to share the good news, Paul and Silas said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” And that night, as Paul and Silas shared “the word of the Lord,” salvation came to that jailer’s household.

What a stunning turnaround! That prison guard went from a quiet night’s duty to a hair-raising emergency—to the amazing security and serenity of new life in Christ. No wonder “he and his whole household” were “filled with joy” upon hearing the good news.

Some people grow up hearing the good news and experiencing God’s love in their home and family life. Others come to believe in God through other experiences—and even during crises, like the jailer. No matter how it happens, faith in Christ is God’s gift. What must we do? Believe!

### **Pray:**

Jesus, help us to believe in you and enjoy new life forever in Your name! Amen.

### **Prayer Focus**

Often, our response to mistreatment from others can hinder our witness. What offense suffered for the sake of the gospel—has been an obstacle to sharing the plan of salvation?

## DAY 8: MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025

**Scripture:** “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”

— 1 Peter 2:12

**Devotional Title:** *Christians in a Hostile World* by John Kuperus

**Study:** 1 Peter 2:9-12

**Meditate:**

In the first century A.D. there were many persecutions of Christians—and persecution has continued to follow believers in Christ at many times and in many places ever since. Today, we still hear of persecution, especially in societies where it is seen as unacceptable or even illegal to confess your faith in Jesus Christ.

The apostle Peter wrote a letter to persecuted believers in the Roman Empire around A.D. 60-64, and these words still ring true for us today: “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”

Christians march to a different beat than {do} people who do not follow Christ. In the first century, Christians confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord, not Caesar. Husbands treated their wives with dignity, respect, and faithfulness. Baby girls were not abandoned (as was the Roman custom), and Christians took in abandoned babies as their own. When epidemics struck, believers stayed in the cities to help care for their own families and others, at the risk of their own lives. God was glorified. Believers made God look good, and the world noticed.

The world needs this testimony today as well.

**Pray:**

Father, we want to reflect You in all we do. Thank You for sending Your Son into this sin-broken world to give us life. Use our lives to continue to reflect Your heart. Amen.

### Prayer Focus

Does your behavior make God look good?

## DAY 9: TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025

**Scripture:** “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority,”— **1 Peter 2:13**

**Devotional Title:** *Submission to Authority?* by Dr. Bradley Baurain

**Study:** John 14:21-26

### **Meditate:**

Today’s passage focuses on our submission to civil authority (vv. 13– 14). By “human authority,” Peter meant legitimate government institutions at various levels. Their larger purpose is justice and the common good, which we should support. In any case, their authority has been established by God and we should submit “for the Lord’s sake” (Romans 13:1–7). What about Peter’s statement, “We must obey God rather than human beings!” (Acts 5:29)? This is true, but it’s the exception rather than the rule. Too often, we use this excuse when it’s not really about obedience to God but when we are focused on our personal rights and opinions. It’s worth remembering that the emperor at this time was Nero (54–68 A.D.) who persecuted Christians.

Peter reminded his readers that spiritual freedom is not an excuse for license, throwing aside restraint and responsibility (v.16; Gal. 5:13). As Christ-followers, we’re in but not of this world. The gospel’s reputation shouldn’t be tarnished by the “ignorant talk of foolish people” (vv. 15, 16). Paradoxically, freedom in Christ means we should “live as God’s slaves” (v. 16).

### **Pray:**

Father, please convict us of ways we fail to behave biblically toward authorities in our lives. Don’t let us deceive ourselves by justifying ungodly attitudes. Our goal is not to protect ourselves, but to honor You in Jesus’ name, Amen.

### **Prayer Focus**

Today, think about the people God has placed in positions of authority over you, whether at home, at work, or in your community. How can you honor them?

Praying for them is one way to start.

## DAY 10: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025

**Scripture:** “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you.” — **1 Peter 2:21**

**Devotional Title:** *Submission and Suffering* by Dr. Bradley Baurain

**Study:** 1 Peter 2:18–21

### **Meditate:**

First-century slavery in the Roman Empire was temporary, that is, most slaves could expect to purchase their freedom within 10–15 years. By contrast, American slavery was typically for life. Slaves were regarded as property, without social status or human rights.

Slavery has always been an unjust social institution, but knowing this cultural distinction helps us better understand Peter’s command that slaves submit to their masters, even harsh ones (v. 18). This follows his command to all Christians to “live as God’s slaves” (v. 16). For slaves to submit to their masters was this command’s highest degree of difficulty. Such submission is also taught in the other household codes of the New Testament (Ephesians 6:5–8). The motive is the same— “reverent fear of God” (v. 18).

Make no mistake. This does not mean God endorses slavery! Since it was possible at that time to be a slave and live as a Christian—questions of justice were left in God’s hands. Believers were to live out the gospel before a watching world. If slaves could gain their freedom, they should, but Peter makes it clear that they were already free in God’s eyes (1 Cor. 7:21–22). Peter’s words turn the understanding of slavery upside down. Christian masters were to treat their slaves right and told they would be held accountable before God for doing so (Eph. 6:9). And who ever heard of a slave who’d been promised an eternal inheritance (Col. 3:22–24)?

Any believer who suffers for doing good, including slaves, is following in Christ’s steps and earning God’s commendation (vv. 19–21). Jesus also suffered unjustly. He was ranked not among the privileged and the powerful but among the slaves and the lowly (Mark 10:42–45).

### **Pray:**

Your Son, whom we worship, is the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53). We are called to be like Him, and You promised us we would have trouble (John 16:33). Give us humility and strength to endure the trials You have ordained in Jesus’ name, Amen.

### **Prayer Focus**

In a world focused on asserting our own rights with goals of attaining wealth, power, and social status, Peter’s words may seem challenging. As we follow Christ’s example of humility, we might need to rethink our personal goals!

## DAY 11: THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2025

**Scripture:** For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”— **1 Peter 2:25**

**Devotional Title:** *Following Jesus* by Dr. Bradley Baurain

**Study:** 1 Peter 2:22–25

### **Meditate:**

Who are you following? The great American preacher Gardner Taylor encouraged his listeners: “If you are in Jesus Christ, you are on the right road. Don’t let anybody turn you around. I am as certain as I stand here that there is no other way to life, life radiant, life glorious, life triumphant, except in Jesus Christ . . . if you are in Christ, you’re on the right road.”

Following in Christ’s footsteps is always the right choice (v. 21). But like the original disciples, we may be tempted to think following Him will lead us to places of privilege and power. Not so! Peter targeted that assumption by describing how Christ lived: He never sinned. Neither deceit nor lying was ever found in His mouth (v. 22). When insulted, He didn’t retaliate. When suffering, He didn’t respond with threats, even though He could easily have taken revenge on His persecutors. Instead, He entrusted Himself to His Father’s love and care (v. 23). For Christians who were likely starting to be persecuted by Nero at this time, and for slaves with harsh masters, it was particularly important to trust God for justice.

Following in Christ’s steps means pursuing holiness and enduring suffering. Why should we do these things? Why did Christ? For the sake of our redemption and the gospel (v. 24; Mark 8:34–35). Because He “bore our sins in his body on the cross,” we are to die to sin and live for righteousness. This had always been God’s plan, as we can also see from the allusions to Isaiah 53 in today’s passage. Instead of being lost sheep trying to run our own lives, we live by faith in our Good Shepherd (v. 25).

### **Pray:**

Lord, any faith, endurance, or patience we have comes from You. We ask for meekness also. Thank You for the way suffering pushes us closer to You and helps us identify with our suffering Savior.

### **Prayer Focus**

We don’t hear the word “meekness” much these days. Christ’s attitude in verse 23 demonstrates this virtue. What does it mean to be meek?

## DAY 12: FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2025

**Scripture:** “Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes.” — **1 Peter 3:3**

**Devotional Title:** *What Does 1 Peter 3:3 Mean?* Retrieved from Knowing-Jesus.com

**Study:** 1 Peter 3:1–7

### **Meditate:**

In this passage, Peter has built up the picture of a believer whose life is honoring to God. We are to grow in grace through the nourishment of the Word of God and, as living stones, are to be built up into a holy nation, a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood that is honoring to God. Our lives are not to mimic the unruly behaviors of evildoers but to be a light to glorify the Father and to point others to our Lord Jesus Christ.

In His life, Christ submitted to the leading of the Holy Spirit and did only those things that pleased and honored the Father. In the same way, rulers and subjects, servants and masters, children and parents, husbands and wives, are all to conduct themselves in a manner that is well-pleasing to God in thought, word, and deed – with patient endurance and a graciousness of spirit.

It is specifically to women that Peter exposes the dangers of an over-emphasis on external adornments, fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes – greater attention should rather be placed on the inner clothing of humility, purity, gentleness, and grace, which is of far greater worth in the sight of God. **But whether married or single, male or female, let us never forget that God looks on the heart.** The Lord Jesus is the most wonderful example of the Man that radiates the inner beauty of God, and we are called, as members of His Body, to be clothed with His inner loveliness, to show forth a gentle and quiet spirit and to reflect His everlasting beauty, for such qualities can never fade and such graciousness of character will never perish.

### **Pray:**

Loving Father, let me not be swayed by the vanity of the world, but may I clothe myself in humility of heart and gentleness of spirit. May I reflect the beauty of the Lord Jesus in all I say and do, to His praise and glory. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

### **Prayer Focus**

May our strongest defense of the Christian faith illuminate the inner beauty of our Savior to a hostile world.

## DAY 13: SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 2025

**Scripture:** “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.”— **1 Peter 3:9**

**Devotional Title:** *Love, Compassion, Humility* by Dr. Bradley Baurain

**Study:** 1 Peter 3:8–14

### **Meditate:**

What would it look like to live such a Christian life that others couldn’t help but notice? Peter gives us some helpful instructions on how to shine our light before others, by living with love, compassion, and humility.

The word “finally” at the start of today’s reading is important. Peter is completing a “thought unit” on how to live as God’s chosen people, a section that began in chapter 2, verse 9. Love, compassion, and humility are essential Christian virtues. Obeying the series of commands in verses 8–9 will help us follow in Christ’s footsteps. Believers should be like-minded, living in unity and harmony (Phil. 2:2), as well as sympathetic, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who rejoice (Rom. 12:15). We’re to love one another (1:22; John 13:34–35). We’re to be compassionate and humble, as Peter had learned from experience. We’re not to repay evil with evil but with blessing. When we do this, we’ll inherit a blessing—the eternal blessing of salvation.

Peter goes on to describe what a righteous person looks like by quoting Psalm 34:12–16 (vv. 10–12). Christ-followers should speak truth in loving ways. We’re to pursue righteousness, and when necessary, repent of evil and turn to good instead. We’re also to seek peace and reconciliation with others. As we live this way, God hears our prayers and His face shines on us in both the present and the future. Living righteously has benefits. It usually helps us get along with others (vv. 13–14). But even if following Jesus’ example does lead to suffering, we’ll continue to experience God’s grace and favor.

### **Pray:**

Give us love that fears no rebuff, compassion that can’t be exhausted, and humility that magnifies Your greatness. As Your representatives, we ask You to equip us abundantly to proclaim Your goodness.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Ask God to give you opportunities to follow Him by exhibiting this quality to others—“love,” “compassion,” and “humility.”

## DAY 14: SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2025

**Scripture:** “Some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So, Paul left them.” — **Acts 19:9**

**Devotional Title:** *A Divided City* by Julius T. Medenblik

**Study:** Acts 19

### **Meditate:**

Today’s Bible reading shows that the gospel does not always unite people. There are times when it deeply divides. Maybe you have experienced that too.

In Ephesus, Paul worked tirelessly so that the Word of God went out to all who lived in the region around this bustling center of trade and travel. Handkerchiefs and aprons touched by Paul became precious because of their use in healing people. Seven sons of a Jewish high priest tried to deal with evil spirits by using Jesus’ name without really knowing Jesus, and they were beaten severely. Even so, the name of Jesus became highly honored. Knowing Jesus makes all the difference.

While there are ministry highlights in Ephesus, opposition is still present. Jews who reject Jesus want to keep their old religious practices. Unbelieving Gentiles want to protect their businesses. Some silversmiths stir up a mob and try to stop Paul and his fellow workers. A riot is averted and the uproar quiets down, but it’s clear that deep divisions remain.

We often like stories to close with a sense of resolution and peace, but the Bible reflects everyday life. Today’s passage does not give answers. It does show that we are not alone. God is with us in our struggles wherever we may be.

### **Pray:**

Dear God, we pray for people who live in divided families because of the gospel. Protect Your believing children and help them to show Your love to everyone. Encourage and sustain them in keeping with Your promises. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for families. Pray for the faithful witness of believers. Pray for the unbelieving spouse, child(ren) or a family member to come to saving faith in Jesus.



## DAY 15: MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2025

**Scripture:** “Always being prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”—**1 Peter 3:15**

**Devotional Title:** *From Saul to Paul* by Dr. Chris Rappazini

**Study:** Acts 26:1–29

### **Meditate:**

Every Moody Bible Institute student is required to take a class called Apologetics. In this class, students learn reasoned arguments for Christianity and how to defend the gospel against false religions. One of the strongest arguments for the validity of the gospel and Jesus’ resurrection is the evidence of changed lives. Today’s text documents the testimony of a transformed life.

A Pharisee named Saul was a persecutor of Christians. By his own admission he opposed Jesus, put believers in prison, and sentenced some to death (vv. 9–10). In his obsession to stop them, he forced them to blaspheme and oppressed them (v. 11). But everything changed when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus (vv. 12–18).

After his encounter with the Lord, he was transformed from Saul the persecutor to Paul the preacher. When Paul would share his testimony, he often began by clearly describing his resistance to Jesus and followers of Christ. He then moved to a very specific encounter with Jesus. As seen in our text today, he would explain in detail where he was and what he was thinking. Finally, he described what his life had been like ever since. Clearly, his priorities had changed, and his life was transformed.

Paul’s testimony gives us a model of the way to share with others how knowing Jesus changed our lives and gave us another chance. It is important to articulate what our “Saul” days were like, the time before following Christ. What preoccupied our lives and what sin entangled us? Then, like Paul, we should detail a special time, event, or conversation we had that began to change everything. Finally, describe how your life has changed since you met Jesus and how your priorities are different.

### **Pray:**

Lord, You have told us to tell the world what You have taught us and what You have done for us. Give us discernment to recognize opportunities to proclaim the gospel. Renew our own wonder as we revisit the past that You have saved us from. Amen

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for the salvation of an unbelieving friend and for an opportunity to share the hope we have in Christ.

## DAY 16: TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025

**Scripture:** “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”—**1 Peter 3:15**

**Devotional Title:** *Sharing Our Hope* by Brad Baurain

**Study:** 1 Peter 3:15–17

### **Meditate:**

How does having hope in our eternal future help us live for Christ today? In *Evangelism as Exiles*, Elliot Clark wrote about 1 Peter 3:15: “Peter wrote to encourage Asian believers with the hope of future glory, but he also expected that such hope would have an influence on those around them. He expected that their evident hope amid suffering would be the catalyst for many unbelievers to inquire about their faith.”

The “hope” in this verse is the same as earlier in the epistle—salvation (1:3, 13, 21). Believers are to be always ready “to give the reason for the hope that [we] have” (v. 15). Notice that evangelism and apologetics here are envisioned as answers to questions. We’re not told to shove the gospel down people’s throats or to debate anyone into agreement. Peter specified that we’re to share the hope that we have in Christ “with gentleness and respect.”

When we witness, both content (what we say) and method (how we say it) are important. We should give unbelievers no legitimate reason to criticize or slander us or the gospel (v. 16; 2:12). We can expect opposition, but we should keep a “clean conscience” and not sink to their level. After all, it’s better “to suffer for doing good than for doing evil” (v. 17). It’s worth being a victim of injustice for the sake of the gospel, just as Christ was (v. 18).

Our outward witness is based on our inner commitment to revering Christ as Lord (v. 15). Evangelism is not optional. Witness must be part of the Christian life. If it isn’t, we’re failing to revere Christ as Lord or to honor Him as holy.

### **Pray:**

Father, please distill in our minds the reasons we confidently place our hope in You. Give us an opportunity today to explain this hope to an unbeliever. Embolden us to speak freely. Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Pray for an opportunity to share your conversion story with someone. Then, when the timing is right, be bold and tell that person how God transformed your life.

## DAY 17: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025

**Scripture:** “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” — **1 Peter 3:15**

**Devotional Title:** *A Ready Testimony* by Allen & Lynn Likkell

**Study:** 1 Peter 3:8-22

### **Meditate:**

One of life’s hard-learned lessons is the importance of preparation. Whether it is for a test at school, training for athletic activities, readying for a job interview, or sharing the good news of life in Jesus Christ—preparation is huge.

Preparation for engaging in Jesus’ daily mission begins with Peter’s wise counsel: “In your hearts revere Christ as Lord.” Our effectiveness depends on a deep and intimate relationship with Jesus. We must be fully devoted followers of Jesus.

In the surrounding context of this verse, Peter emphasizes godly living. He calls us to “be compassionate and humble,” “do good; seek peace and pursue it,” and keep “a clear conscience.” Practicing godly behavior each day is part of the preparation that will yield fruitful opportunities to share the good news with others.

Peter reveals the key to evangelism. When Jesus is at the center of our lives, others will see a difference. They will see a joy and hopefulness about life and may eventually ask why. If we are prepared, we can give the reason for our hope and joy.

Prayerfully surrender to the Lord. As you put Jesus first in your life, pray that you will be sensitive, prepared by His Spirit to “get it” when someone asks you that key question.

### **Pray:**

Lord, may I be a living testimony to Your goodness and grace. By Your Spirit. Prepare me to hear and answer people’s key questions about faith. Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Be prepared to give the reason for your faith, hope, and joy.

## DAY 18: THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025

**Scripture:** “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” — **1 Peter 3:15**

**Devotional Title:** *Living Witness* by Calvin Hoogendoorn

**Study:** 1 Peter 3:13-22

### **Meditate:**

The Christian’s great privilege is to be a living witness of Jesus Christ! But each of us must ask, “Why would I ‘revere Christ as Lord’ and place hope in Him?”

Here are my reasons.

First, consider Christ’s care over us, His children. The gentleness and respect I am called to exercise is itself a testimony of Jesus. When He saw crowds, He was filled with compassion (Matthew 9:36).

Second, consider Christ’s cleansing. Just as the flood in Noah’s day symbolized the cleansing and renewal of creation (Genesis 6-9), baptism in Christ symbolizes the cleansing and renewal of life through his death and resurrection (Romans 6:111). Christ’s caring forgiveness renews life and stirs hope.

Finally, consider Christ’s call. He rules all creation and will set it free from the dehumanizing effects of sin and evil. In fact, judgment involves His care and cleansing that invites all to live in the full beauty and blessing of true life!

Some may resist or ridicule our witness to Christ as the world’s one true hope. That alone is reason to “always be prepared.” Is there any better answer than to share Him who is able to help us because He suffered the same betrayal, abuse, temptations, and fear we daily experience (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15)?

### **Pray:**

Lord Jesus, equip us to be living witnesses for You. Help us to care as You cared, to forgive as You forgave, and to wisely hope in Your return. In Your name, Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Are you a prepared witness?

## DAY 19: FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025

**Scripture:** “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” — **1 Peter 3:15**

**Devotional Title:** *Two Ways to Share Our Faith* by Ron Vanderwell

**Study:** 1 Peter 3:13-18

### **Meditate:**

It’s normal for most Christians to want to share their faith. And I’ve learned that there are two ways to do that: prescriptively and descriptively.

Prescriptive sharing of faith involves offering advice about what people should do to deal with difficulties they may be having. This is like what a doctor does when writing a prescription for medication to help with a problem. Prescriptive sharing usually sounds something like “Here’s what you should do about your situation.” It often results in a lot of defensiveness because, frankly, most people don’t want to be told what to do.

Descriptive sharing of faith can often be more helpful. It involves telling someone what worked for you. Instead of saying, “Here’s what you should do,” you’re simply saying, “Here’s what helped me.”

Most people find it less threatening to hear you describe your own faith experience. Instead of sounding like a salesperson, you’re more like a friend with a story. No one can argue with your experience about how God is working in your life.

### **Pray:**

Lord, show us people who need to hear what You are doing in our lives, and help us to share honestly and with Your love. We ask this for Your sake. Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

Do you know anyone who might want to hear about how God has worked in your life? Ask God to help you sense an opportunity to do so. Can you share your story? Ask God to help you say the right words at the right time.

## DAY 20: SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025

**Scripture:** “Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats<sup>[a]</sup>; do not be frightened.” But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

— **Peter 3:13-17**

**Devotional Title:** *Together in Christ: Ready to Share Our Hope!* by Heartlight.org

**Study:** Matthew 5:43-48

### **Meditate:**

Jesus demonstrated His commitment to the redemptive principles He had taught when He prayed the following to the Father as He was crucified: Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice (Luke 23:34).

As Jesus' disciples, our goal is to follow Him and become increasingly more like Him by the power of the Holy Spirit. This means that we are a people of forgiveness and grace. Our hearts align with Jesus' great desire to reach the world with the Good News of grace. So, like the apostle Paul, we do all we can to reach those who do not know Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

Peter reminded disciples in Asia Minor, in our verses today, about being willing to suffer for the cause of Christ. He called them — and us along with them — to follow Jesus' example and teaching. Our character and behavior under trial and suffering allow us to share our hope in Jesus. We want the world to know that Jesus is the reason for our good deeds under criticism, grace under fire, and mercy toward those who abuse and oppress us. Our goal is to save those who mistreat us, not defeat them in an argument or see them defeated by death. Our response to their criticism and hostility is to share our hope "in a gentle and respectful way." This orientation toward our enemies and oppressors has great power to redeem and allows us to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, who was God's "Suffering Servant" Who redeemed the world.

### **Pray:**

Father, I need Your strength to live with the kind of grace toward my adversaries and oppressors that Jesus demonstrated, and the early disciples practiced. Strengthen me through the Holy Spirit so that others can see my faith and grace when I am under trial and allow me to share my hope in Jesus. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

### **Prayer Focus:**

We are the people of God. As we follow in the steps of our Savior, we live into this role in the world to redeem the world.

## DAY 21: SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2025

**Scripture:** “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”—**1 Peter 3:15**

**Devotional Title:** *Defending the Faith* by Kylie Voight

**Study:** 2 Timothy 4:1–5

### **Meditate:**

Last weekend, my family went to an apologetics conference. Apologetics is the approach of defending Christian beliefs against objections.

In 1 Peter 3:15, God tells us through Paul, “If someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it.” It can be scary to tell people about Jesus, especially for students. You never know how people will respond to what you have to say. They could reject God, and they could reject you. They could shut you out completely, simply because of your belief in God.

But Jesus says in John 16:33, “...take heart, because I have overcome the world.” He also says in Luke 10:16, “The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me.” It’s comforting knowing that no one can overcome God and God is on our side.

As Peter ends in 1 Peter 3:15, “But do this with gentleness and respect,” make sure to do everything in a loving way because, ultimately, we want to show the world Jesus’ love. We can’t do that if aren’t acting in a loving way to others. I hope and pray that each and every one of us will get challenged on why we believe in God and why we trust Him. I believe that when you defend something you believe, it only makes you stronger, especially when it comes to sharing Jesus with others.

### **Pray:**

“Father, Jesus tells us that we, as His disciples, are the light of the world. You don’t intend for us to hide. Lord, send Your Holy Spirit to guide us in being a light that shines in the darkness of this world. We pray that others will see Your works and pray that they give glory to You. Amen.”

### **Prayer Focus**

Would you rather be rejected for sharing the Gospel or miss an opportunity to be a part of God’s mission by introducing a friend to eternal life?

## CONCLUSION

### Discipleship: Defending the Faith

Earnest questions evoke thought. A prepared answer requires sound biblical knowledge. Understanding the deity of Christ is to know Him who is fully God and fully human. Experiencing Jesus in the pardon of your sins and in the power of His resurrection is personal. An intimate relationship with The Father in Christ Jesus will enhance our discipleship efforts toward spiritual maturity among the saints. When does this occur? When the corporate body gathers in the teaching of scriptures. One cannot give a defense of the Christian faith without knowing the God of the Bible and His Son revealed in the Word of God. Then how does faith increase? Well, “. . . *faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ*” (Romans 10:17 NIV).

Holy living and righteous suffering lend creditability to your testimony. Why? Because it is proof of your authentic faith. In troubling times, the disciples’ conduct bears witness that believers are to be in the world but not of it. Our Christian conduct speaks of our commitment to Him who has called us to be set apart. Paul left this word with Timothy, his son in the ministry: “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:12-13 NIV). Now, does this sound like the age in which we are living?

Be prepared to give a ready answer. A part of discipleship is encouraging believers in the faith and to prepare them to stand for what they believe about our Christian faith and why they believe it, and to teach them all that Christ has commanded as Matthew 28:20 mandates. The world is subject to scoff at believers who are willing to suffer in defense of The Faith. May we respond with gentleness and respect while holding fast to The Spirit of Truth. Amen.





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[Two Ways to Share Our Faith — Today Daily Devotional \(todaydevotional.com\)](#)

**Day 20 – Together in Christ: 'Ready to Share Our Hope!'** by Heartlight.org  
["Ready to Share Our Hope!" — 1 Peter 3:13-17 \(Together in Christ\) \(heartlight.org\)](#)

**Day 21 – Defending the Faith** by Kylie Voight  
[Defending the Faith | FCA Resources](#)

**Conclusion – “Discipleship: Defending the Faith”**

## Endnotes and Additional Resources

For additional study material about The Daniel Fast cited in this guide, please refer to the following websites and resources:

1. <http://draxe.com/daniel-fast>
2. **Honoring God Through the Daniel Fast** by Terrance Day, published in 2009  
<http://www.danielfast.net>
3. **Daniel Fast 21 Days of Prayer & Fasting**, New Life Worship Center  
[www.newlifealtoona.org](http://www.newlifealtoona.org)

**Tips for Family Resources Fasting: How do I include my young children and teens?**

1. <http://www.crosswalk.com/family/parenting/fasting-as-a-family.html>
2. <https://danielfast.wordpress.com/2008/08/11/teens-on-the-daniel-fast/>
3. <https://danielplan.com/faith/>

### Website Resources

[The Most Powerful Apologetic - Bible Apologetics - A DAILY DEVOTIONAL](#)

[Enduring Word Bible Commentary 1 Peter Chapter 3](#)

[New International Version \(NIV\)](#)

[Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.](#)

<https://www.revealedapologetics.com/post/apologetics-devotional>

## Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, God of Grace and Mercy, thank You for The Living Word, The Rock upon which we stand. In this life, we shall have trouble, but we remain joyful because our Lord, Jesus, declared that He has overcome the world. Therefore, we will praise You even in these uncertain and turbulent times. We are reminded that You have won the victory over sin, death, and the grave.

Forgive us for shying away from missed opportunities to be Your witness. Shed light from heaven upon the areas of our lives which do not reflect Your Holiness as the chosen people, a royal priesthood whom You have called us to be. As we repent, our eyes are on You. Holy Spirit, teach us, guide us, and help us to fight the good fight of faith.

When we, Your people, face challenges from those who do not believe or from those who have fallen away, help us to remember Your Love for them, to pray for those who persecute us and speak all manner of evil against us, and to respond with gentleness and respect in reverence to You. We pray that the remainder of the year and the days following will be dedicated to service that will bring You glory, honor, and praise. It is in the mighty name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth we pray. Amen.

*Ministry of Congregational Spirituality*

