

Three minutes

Unrealistic expectations can really frustrate us; they stop us ever getting started on a journey of knowing God and studying the truths that will enrich our lives.

So three minutes, that's all. Set a timer for five so you don't over-run. Read the verse, let it sink in, maybe read it again. Then follow the pattern of thankfulness and prayer. Later in the day at home, journey or work, let the verse pop back in to your mind.

Monday

“Nothing can separate us from the love of God”

The barriers between us and God come from others; what stops us knowing God more closely and hearing his message of love, truth and compassion?

Thank God for the times we have felt close to God; thank God for the difficult times when we have not just felt God close but known he was there, our strength and our friend.

Pray for those who help us know God better, our friends, family and fellow church members. Ask God to bless them today.

Tuesday

“Those in Christ Jesus will never be condemned”

There is a powerful message of criticism that we face each day; apparently we aren't the right body shape and we don't have the right house, car or family. But God's acceptance of us is complete and means that in this life and the next, we are chosen by Him.

Thank God For the message of love, acceptance and inclusion that we can only hear if we know God.

Pray for those who we know today need to know that they are not condemned or criticised but loved, accepted and included. Wait in a few moments of stillness and pray for them.

Wednesday

“A time to cry and a time to laugh”

Adverts, TV and films show sadness as a bad thing, something like an illness. But sadness is really helpful, it helps us grieve properly and frees us from repressed anger. There are also times to laugh, to just let go and laugh and giggle and see the funny and ridiculous side.

Thank God for those you have cried with, the trust you showed one another; the openness to each others' hurt. Pray God will bless them and that God will use *you* when someone needs to be vulnerable.

Pray for those who make you laugh; ask God to bless them and be their strength. Let your mind wander and remember the laughter. As those faces come in to your mind, pray for them.

Thursday

“The Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words”

Prayer isn't just spoken words, it is silence; painting; singing; poetry; shouting; crying; laughing. But because church prayers are carefully written, then we think ours must be. Today find a relatively quiet space and sit for a minute and allow your soul to speak to God.

Thank God for the languages he has given us, of silence, creativity and human emotion that add depth and meaning to our words.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide your quiet thoughts so that they sometimes lead you to God.

Friday

“Keep your minds on whatever is true, pure, right, holy, friendly”

We are on a journey of learning to see each person we meet as God's unique gift to the world. Difficult when they aren't nice people, easier when they are! This journey won't change them, but it will change us.

Thank God for those who build your life up and sustain you. Allow your mind to wander over the kindness and reassurance they show you.

Now thank God for those who do the opposite, those who make life a bit harder than it should be. We are not thanking God for their behaviour but for them as people. This act of prayer will bring us peace.