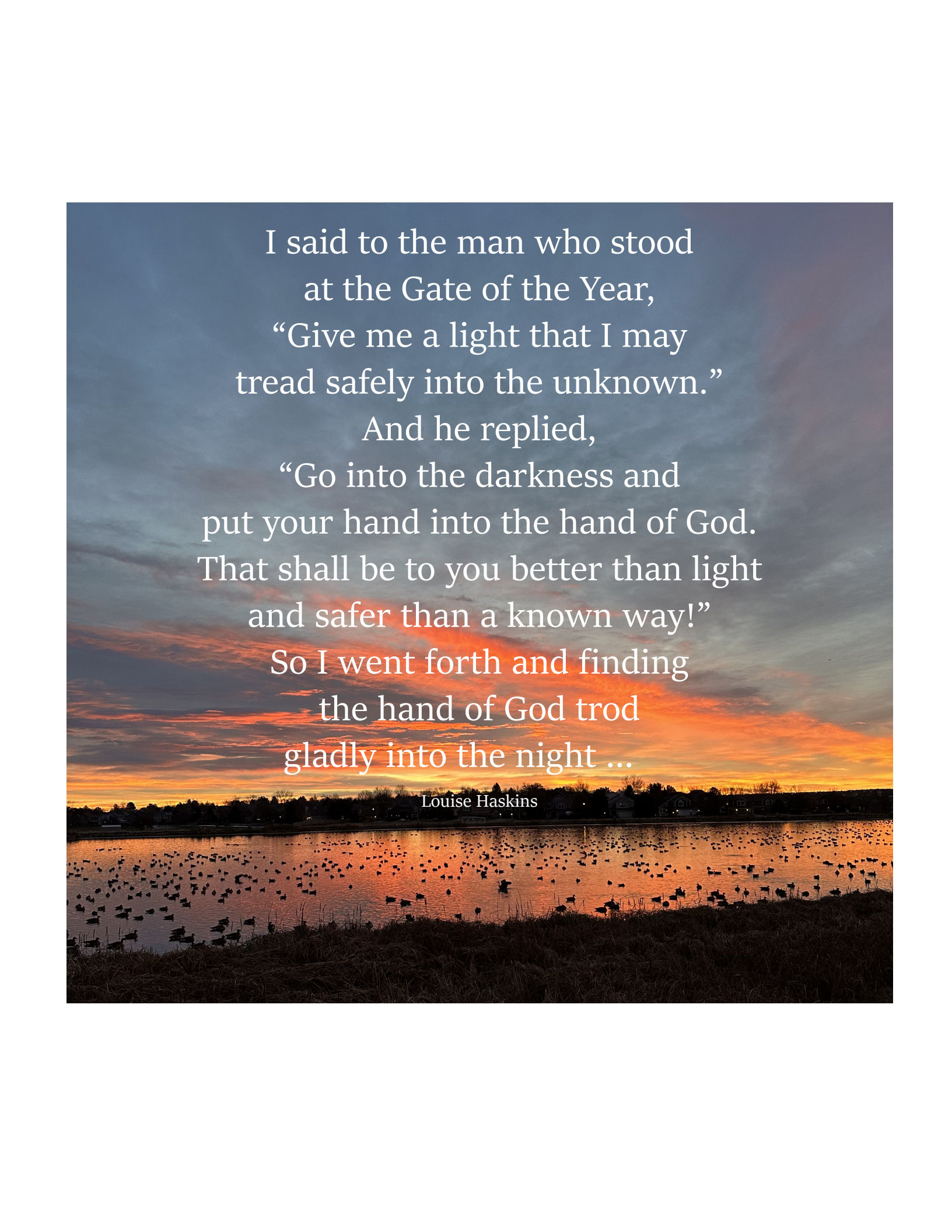


The Gate of the Year

21 Days With the Lord



I AM the Gate. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved.
He will come in and go out and find pasture.
John 10:9

A photograph of a sunset over a lake. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds, transitioning into a darker blue at the top. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the water. In the foreground, a grassy bank is visible. The middle ground shows a large number of ducks swimming in the lake. In the background, there are silhouettes of houses and trees along the shore.

I said to the man who stood
at the Gate of the Year,
“Give me a light that I may
tread safely into the unknown.”

And he replied,
“Go into the darkness and
put your hand into the hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light
and safer than a known way!”
So I went forth and finding
the hand of God trod
gladly into the night ...

Louise Haskins



© Vicki Lynn Bustos, December 2024
Photos provided by Family and Friends.

“Gate of the Year” - 21 Private Retreats Overview

21 Days WITH the Lord

Let’s unlock the gate of the year!

Designate 21 days to spend with the Lord; January 1-21 or dates you choose that coincide with a new beginning or direction in your life.

Fast

Abstain from specific food, meals, drink, activities or a combination during your 21 days. The aim is to remove distractions, offer our body as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1-2) and participate with Holy Spirit in His work. You decide what and how often to fast.

Book of John

The hope is that you will see the life of Jesus through His mission of grace and truth during the 21 Days by reading or listening to the 21 chapters of the Gospel according to John. John was one of three who were in Jesus’ inner circle. He is the only apostle of the original twelve who was not martyred. It is John who declares that “God is Love” in his letters (1st, 2nd, 3rd John), and it is this John who saw the glorified Jesus, heard, and recorded His words which we read in the final book of the Bible, Revelation.

Prayer

Thoughtful commentary and prayer prompts associated with the chapter for each day are offered for pondering and prayer.

A Deeper Look

Following the commentary and prayer prompt is “A Deeper Look” which are supporting scriptures that will help to increase understanding of the main chapter of the day.

Worship in Song

A daily suggested song is offered for you to search for on You Tube or online. The music offered include hymns and contemporary, lively and calming, old and new. Music is one way we can enter into worshipping the Lord. “You Tube” can provide easy access to the music. Search for songs with lyrics.

Scripture Declaration

A daily scripture to consider and close your daily time, declaring truth about our awesome God and our relationship with Him.

Other Encouragements

Connect

Connections with an individual or small group is a beneficial way to increase your learning and theirs. Gather in person, by video conference, or phone call. Decide how often, how long, and the format your time together will be conducted. You can connect for a simple one hour each of the three weeks or more often if you desire to do so and schedules agree.

Acts of Service

During your Gateway of the Year, perhaps the Lord will put acts of service on your heart where you can be His hand extended. Enjoy stepping out and serving others in Jesus’ name. For suggestions, see our website, Openbookministries.net and click on the “Weekly Missions” tab.

As you devote time with the Lord in your 21 designated days, even if you occasionally do not feel successful in your plan, remember that “success” is not the goal ... intimacy with the Lord is! Persevere ... He is always near ... His promises are true.

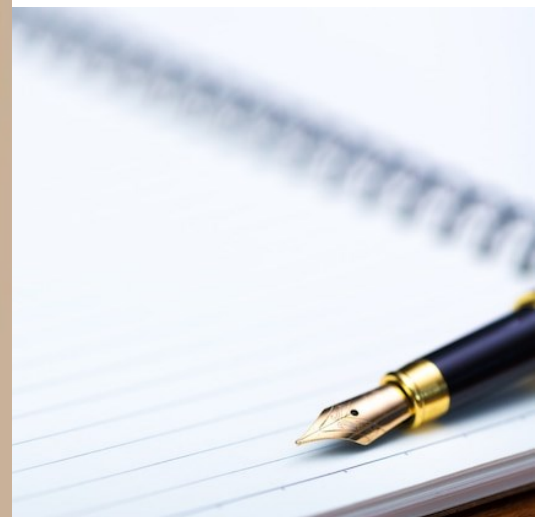


Is there a question, a hope, a desire that you have? Perhaps during your 21 days, you and the Lord can explore what's in your heart.

If you would like, jot down or draw what is on your mind, maybe as a prayer or simply as a “note to self” for the next 21 Days with Him.

Sidebar Notes...

- ◆ Feel free to print this pdf and also share it with family and friends. This 21 day devotional can benefit both women and men.
- ◆ We offer a brief story for your pondering at the beginning of each of the three week guides.
- ◆ If you need to engage in these devotions over a longer period of time, by all means set your own pace.
- ◆ The suggested Bible reading can serve as a springboard to a more in-depth study. To gain a fuller understanding, read the entire chapter associated with the verses.
- ◆ If you benefit from journaling, consider purchasing a notebook or journal to record your insights, questions, and thoughts. You can also use blank space on each page.
- ◆ Now ... let's begin!





Week 1 Devotion
Beyond the Gate

- Day 1, John chapter 1
Come and See
- Day 2, John chapter 2
Faith Challenge
- Day 3, John chapter 3
Nicodemus
- Day 4, John chapter 4
True Worship
- Day 5, John chapter 5
Stirred Up
- Day 6, John chapter 6
Discernment
- Day 7, John chapter 7
Righteous Judgment

Week 1 Devotion: Beyond The Gate



We gazed into the distance beyond the gate, hoping to see what was out of our sight. Nestled in the Colorado gold of the transforming Aspen trees ... was it a farmhouse, a pasture, horses, a river? We could only imagine who or what was so blessed to dwell in this blissful beauty?

Marble, Colorado—Autumn, 2021. At the base of the jeep trail that winds upward to the Crystal Mill, a gate with a humorous “no trespassing” sign blocked an undisclosed mystery that we could not explore. Some might jump the gate or find a way around it, but we long ago realized we enter only if invited. And so, the mystery remains ... what is beyond the gate?

Beyond Your Gate

Perhaps you wonder what is beyond the gate of your upcoming “new” ... your *new year, new pursuit, new adventure*. Or maybe you are wondering how you can freshen your daily, usual life. And for some, you might ask, “will this grip of grief ever release?” Is there a surprising vista you cannot yet see? A life-changing, joy-giving truth about the Lord, yet concealed, but awaiting your discovery. Is there hope and a future for you? (Jeremiah 29:11-14a)

With the Lord, you need not worry about a “no trespassing” sign.
“You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord ... (Jeremiah 29:13-14a)

A Return to the Gate

In September 2024, we returned to the gate in Marble, Colorado. It was still closed, but there were tire tracks and a worn pathway, evidence that the gate had not remained locked. Clearly it had been open and the road to the unseen mysteries had been traveled.

Fruitful Choice

“Returning” can be a fruitful choice. Reviewing, realigning, and reaffirming our faith can rejuvenate and reestablish. Revisiting truths long ago learned in our Bibles or seeing God in a new light is a true adventure.

The Creator awaits us.
He will fling the gate wide to glorious, golden wonders as we step through what has blocked us from the mystery beyond. Fasting, prayer, Bible reading, study, worship, and connections ... these wonderful spiritual disciplines are keys to unlock the Gate of the Year, to take us to a place we’ve longed to go, but not yet been.



Gate Key *Come and See*

John 1:3 (nkjv)

All things were made through Him [The Word, Jesus],
and without Him nothing was made that was made.



Fasting

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

Jesus, Matthew 6:16-17



The Gospel of John *(Read or Listen)*

John 1



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 1 contains the remarkable insight that Jesus is the Word and all things were created by Him and hold together through Him. That includes us. In this chapter we meet John the Baptist and Jesus’ first followers. Imagine you were one of the disciples Jesus spoke the words of verses 38 and 39: “What do you seek? ...

Come and See.” If you personalize the Book of John, then yes! ... these words are spoken directly to you! In the final verse of John’s Gospel, he wrote: “And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” John 21:25 We say “Amen” with John! Let us explore the big picture, the Creator’s good plans!

Lord, we pray that, as we journey through John’s record of Christ’s life, we will truly see Jesus!



A Deeper Look

Psalm 33:4-9 ♦ Psalm 139:14 ♦ Colossians 1:15-20
God’s Word Made by God Creator and Sustainer



Worship in Song

“Indescribable” by Chris Tomlin



Scripture Declaration

The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it. With Your help, Lord, I will faithfully steward the dominion You have given me over the works of Your hands.

Psalm 24:1, 8:6



Gate Key Faith Challenge

John 2:7-8 (nkjv)

Jesus said to them, “*Fill the waterpots with water.*” And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, “*Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.*” And they took it.



Fasting

“Fasting must forever center on God.
More than any other discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us.”

Richard Foster



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 2



Prayer Prompt

John 2 contains the record of Jesus’ first miracle (turning water to wine.) Because of this miracle, His disciples believed in Him (verse 11.) The timing for this was important. The disciples watched Jesus perform a tender act of love for the bride and groom, but soon they would be at the Passover in Jerusalem, and another “first” would occur. Jesus, in what may have appeared as a madman’s fit of rage, went into the temple with a whip of cords and drove out the money changers with their sheep and oxen, poured out the changer’s money, and overturned the tables. “*Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!*”

I wonder how the disciples’ faith held up as they watched their Teacher being angry, but sinning not?
Pray about how to strengthen your faith to trust, love, and obey God when you don’t understand Him.



A Deeper Look

Hebrews 11:1-3 ♦ Isaiah 61:1-3 ♦ 1 Timothy 3:16
Faith Jesus’ Ministry A Mystery Unfolded



Worship in Song

“I Believe It (The Life of Jesus)” by Jon Reddick



Scripture Declaration

I walk by faith and not by sight. Thank You, Lord, for giving Your written Word.

I submit to Your Word and My faith increases by hearing Your Word.

2 Corinthians 5:7 ♦ Romans 10:17



Gate Key
Nicodemus
John 3:17 (nkjv)

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.



Fasting

Isaiah 58:6

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?”



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)

John 3



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 3 contains the life-changing discussion between Jesus and Nicodemus and the testimony of John the Baptist. Consider the contrast: Nicodemus was a priest who should have understood spiritual truth and John was a common man who may have studied with a rabbi and certainly grasped the prophetic truth about Jesus. The good news is that Jesus did not condemn Nicodemus. Instead, He desired that He know the truth so the truth could set him free. God receives us from whatever life station or experience we come. John chapter 19 gives us evidence that Nicodemus came to faith in Christ. On the day of Jesus' crucifixion, Nicodemus joins Joseph of Arimathea to bring down Jesus' body from the cross and place Him in the tomb.

Pray about your own spiritual growth and any heart change you must make so you will be intentional in God's presence and grow into a deeper understanding of the Lord and His ways.



A Deeper Look

Luke 1:5-25, 57-80 ♦ John 19:38-42
John the Baptist' Birth Nicodemus' Faith Revealed



Worship in Song

“Who Am I” by Casting Crowns



Scripture Declaration

Behold! God is my salvation. I will trust, and will not be afraid.
For the Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.
Isaiah 12:2



Gate Key
True Worship
John 4:24 (nkjv)

[Jesus said,]
“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him
must worship in spirit and truth.”



Fasting

Fasting is one of the more important ways of practicing that self-denial required of everyone who would follow Christ (Matthew 16:24).
In fasting, we learn how to suffer happily as we feast on God.

Dallas Willard



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)

John 4



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 4 contains the stories of conversions, discipleship, and healing ... all vital aspects of Jesus’ ministry and the beautiful benefits He offers to us! The ultimate goal is that we will become true worshippers of our God Who created us. As we are transformed into worshippers whose focus is only on God, our life is filled with faith, hope, love, joy, and peace. We begin to understand and believe for the promises of Psalm 103. Our worship to God is a proclamation that He truly is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Pray Ephesians 1:15-21 for yourself and others.
Like the Woman at the Well, worship by telling others of Him.



A Deeper Look

Psalm 103 ♦ Romans 12:1-2 ♦ Ephesians 1:15-21
God’s Benefits Transformed Wisdom & Revelation



Worship in Song

“A Thousand Hallelujahs” by Brooke Ligertwood



Scripture Declaration

I will praise You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever.
Every day I will bless You, and I will praise your name forever and ever.
The Lord is righteous in all His ways, gracious in all His works.
Psalm 147:1-2, 17



Gate Key Stirred Up

John 5:7 (nkjv)

The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”



Fasting

But I, when they were sick—I wore sackcloth;
I afflicted myself with fasting; I prayed with head bowed on my chest.

Psalm 35:13



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 5



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 5 is a record of “stirred waters!” It begins with a crippled man whose hope for healing had been dashed because his faith had placed his faith on the stirring of waters that he could never reach. Were people healed in the waters or was it an urban legend? What ultimately matters is that the Living Water, Jesus, came and immersed the man in a healing that he did not have to scrape and crawl and compete to receive. Oddly, his healing stirred up the religious waters of dissension among the unbelievers. It did not matter. Jesus’ focus was the hope and soul of the 38 year cripple. Jesus still cares for us today. Our life and trouble matter to Him.

Pray about needed healing in others or yourself: physical, emotional, mental. Trust God in the midst of your circumstances. Above all pray that faith and hope in Christ is stirred and healed!



A Deeper Look

Proverbs 13:12 ♦ Romans 5:1-11 ♦ Psalm 121
Hope Peace With God My Help is God



Worship in Song

“I Speak Jesus” by Charity Gayle (featuring Steven Musso)



Scripture Declaration

You are the everlasting God; the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth. You neither faint nor are weary. You give power to the weak, and to those who have no might You increase strength. I wait upon You, Lord, and trust that you will renew my strength. I will mount up with wings like eagles because You promised!

Isaiah 40:28-31 (excerpts)



Gate Key Discernment

John 6:61b, 63 (nkjv)

... He [Jesus] said to them, “Does this offend you?” ...
“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing.
The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”



Fasting

Fasting does not ensure the certainty of receiving clear guidance from God.
Rightly practiced, however, it does make us more receptive to the One who loves to guide us.

Donald Whitney



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 6



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 6 has two themes, both which deal with bread and life. At the start of John 6, Jesus feeds 5000 men plus women and children. In the latter verses, He speaks an unusual challenge: “*Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life.*” Some who followed Jesus were offended. They liked His unique teachings and the free bread, but many could not swallow this statement so they grumbled and departed. Similar to the cleansing of the temple in chapter 2, the disciples were put in a position to decide if they would continue to trust and believe in Jesus. Jesus asked the twelve disciples: “*Do you also want to go away?*”

Peter said it all: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (verses 67-69.)

Pray for discernment and faith as you read the Bible and come across difficult events and passages.



A Deeper Look

Psalm 119:165 ♦ John 16:13-15 ♦ 2 Timothy 3:16-17
Unoffended Spirit of Truth Scriptures' Benefits



Worship in Song

“Word of God Speak” by Mercy Me



Scripture Declaration

The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,
piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow,
and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Lord I submit to the work of Your word.

Hebrews 4:13



Gate Key *Righteous Judgment*

John 7:24 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“Do not judge according to appearance,
but judge with righteous judgment.”



Fasting

So we fasted and implored our God for this,
and He listened to our entreaty.

Ezra 8:23



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 7



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 7 demonstrates the skewed understanding of Jesus’ half brothers, the Jewish community, and the Pharisees during the annual Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus gave a powerful instruction not to judge based on their own wisdom, knowledge, and experience. Our human judgment, whether determining a path to take, the facts about another, or an unknown motivation must be embarked upon with great caution and discernment. The wiser choice is to pause for 24 hours and give Holy Spirit time to speak. Otherwise, as in John 7:53, “everyone went to his own house.” And what did they do there? Humble themselves and pray? Or devise further plots against Jesus? Note in John 8:1, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives where He often prayed. **Pray, asking Holy Spirit to help you close the gate on judgment that is rooted in your own perceptions.**



A Deeper Look

Matthew 7:1-6 ♦ James 4:10-12 ♦ Psalm 4:4-5 ♦ Ephesians 4:29-32
Judging Others The One Judge Anger Management Relationship Builder



Worship in Song

“We All Need Jesus” by Danny Gokey (featuring Koryn Hawthorne)



Scripture Declaration

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self control Lord, I commit to live and walk in Your Spirit, and when I must make a judgment, I will be guided by the fruit of Your Spirit. I will restore others in the spirit of gentleness.

Galatians 5:22-6:1



Week 2 Devotion
The Rainbow Gate-Keeper

- Day 8, John chapter 8
The Great I AM

- Day 9, John chapter 9
Born Blind

- Day 10, John chapter 10
Good Shepherd

- Day 11, John chapter 11
Resurrection and Life

- Day 12, John chapter 12
The Table

- Day 13, John chapter 13
New Commandment

- Day 14, John chapter 14
Peace

Week 2 Devotion: The Rainbow Gate-Keeper

It happens all around the world! Rainbows. Sometimes even a double or triple rainbow!

We cannot help but pause in awe and wonder! And then we do our best to capture the magnificence on our camera. As glorious as our photo is, the actual experience overwhelmingly exceeds the still memory.

The rainbow is not one of *nature's* phenomena; it is created by *God* for a specific purpose that belongs to Him alone and benefits us. The Bible speaks of signs, evidence-producers. The rainbow is God's chosen sign of His promise to save and never again destroy despite our sin. God is, has, and will keep His promise!

I have often wondered why God chose to give Noah a rainbow as a sign of the covenant. Here are a few thoughts. The rainbow is a magnificent visual reminder of many important truths. It's shape is a picture of God's overarching love and His desire to connect with us. It closely resembles a translucent highway from earth to heaven and back to earth. A rainbow cannot be physically touched; it echoes the truth that God is Spirit and we must worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Its appearance is a snapshot of Jesus' journey to earth, ascension to His Father's right hand, and pending return to earth one day to rule and reign.

The rainbow is also an encouragement to pray ... to send our prayers upward to Our Father in Heaven and be confident that He will return an answer to us in His timing. A full rainbow is like an open gate.

We are invited to enter the presence of our Promise-Keeper, the Rainbow Gate-Keeper. *Vicki Bustos*

"Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying:

"And as for Me, behold I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, and with every living creature ...

Thus I establish My covenant with you; never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood: never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."



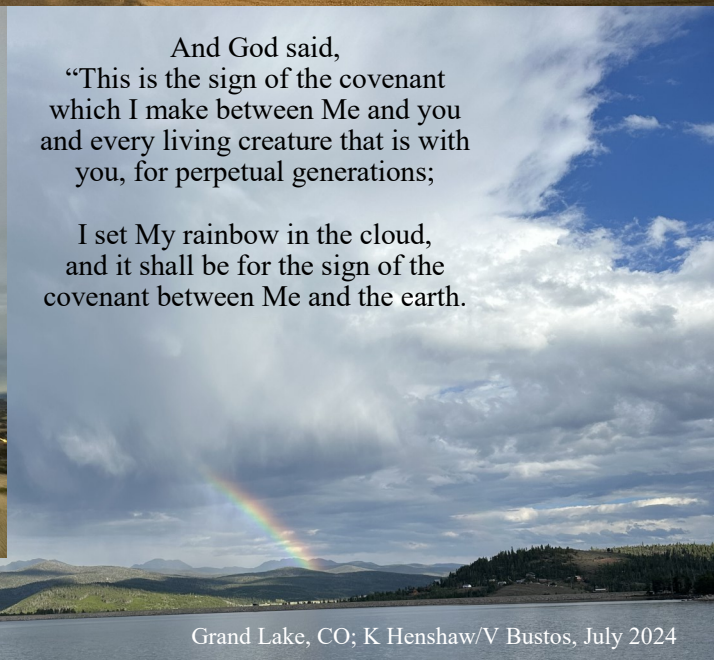
Wales, North Dakota; Curt Kram, September 2024



Red Rocks, CO; Darlene Maestas, August 2024

And God said,
"This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations;

I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.



Grand Lake, CO; K Henshaw/V Bustos, July 2024

Genesis Chapter 9:8-17



Gate Key
The Great I AM
John 8:58 (nkjv)

Jesus said to them,
“Most assuredly I say to you,
before Abraham was, I AM.”



Fasting

Fasting reduces the power of self so that the Holy Spirit
can do a more intense work within us.

Bill Bright



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)

John 8



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 8 begins with the story of the saving of the woman caught in adultery. Without a doubt, her salvation from the self-righteous who were condemning her is a picture of Christ’s mission for all mankind, God’s salvation through grace and truth. Throughout the remainder of the chapter, Jesus clearly defines His relationship with Father God and His own divine identity as “I Am.” His defense was made to the same group of scribes and Pharisees from whom he had rescued the woman. They came back again. At the end of chapter eight, “they took up stones to throw at Him,” possibly the same stones they dropped when Jesus said, “*He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.*” The same stones false religion throws at you. **Prayerfully commit to study and teach God’s Word so you and your family can know truth from error.**



A Deeper Look

2 Timothy 2:15 ♦ Exodus 3:11-15 ♦ Psalm 119:97-104
Approved by God *“I AM who I AM”* *Loving God’s Law*



Worship in Song

“Red Letters” by Crowder



Scripture Declaration

Jesus said: I AM the Bread of Life; I AM the Light of the World; I AM the Door of the Sheep, I AM the Good Shepherd; I AM the Resurrection and the Life; I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life; I am THE True Vine.

I say, ‘YES’ You are! I will study and surrender so I may know You, the Great I AM, more intimately.

John 6:35, 41, 48, 51 ♦ 8:12 ♦ 10:7 & 9 ♦ 11 & 14 ♦ 11:25 ♦ 14:6 ♦ 15:1 & 5



**Gate Key
Born Blind**

John 9:5 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“As long as I am in the world,
I am the light of the world.”



Fasting

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said,
“Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

Acts 13:2



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 9



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 9 is the story of Jesus healing the man born blind. In this story, we see light displacing the visual darkness of the blind man. A parallel lesson is that Jesus, the Light of the World, came to open the spiritually blind eyes of every one of us. Of interest is that the man did not ask to be healed, but Jesus' compassion compelled Him. In this healing, Jesus demonstrated the high purpose for the man's blindness: *“that the works of God should be revealed in him.”* That work is grace and truth. (John 1:17) The man had to take his own step of faith and obedience. Jesus instructed him to *“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.”* He returned with his sight. We do not know the answer to the question, “why isn't everyone physically healed?” But we do know that grace and truth are present in suffering and there is spiritual healing available to all. **Prayerfully ask that your eyes are opened to wonders you have never known about the Lord. Expect!**



A Deeper Look

John 3:19-21 ♦ Acts 9:1-22 ♦ 1 Peter 2:7-9
Into the Light Saul's Conversion Chosen Generation



Worship in Song

“Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord” by Michael W. Smith



Scripture Declaration

Lord, it is You Who opens my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law.
It is You Who gives me faith, the substance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
It is You who helps me to walk by faith and not by sight. Thank You Lord!
Psalm 119:18 ♦ Hebrews 11:1 ♦ 2 Corinthians 5:7



Gate Key
Good Shepherd
John 10:14 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“I am the good shepherd;
and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.



Fasting

Everything if given to God
can become your gateway to joy.
Elizabeth Elliott



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)
John10



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 10 contains Jesus’ teaching about the relationship between Himself - the Good Shepherd - and those who believe in Him - “His sheep.” Sheep in Christ’s flock know and hear the Lord’s voice and follow Him. In Jesus’ day, several different flocks might be penned together at night. When the morning dawned and it was time for the sheep to go into the pasture, each one knew its’ shepherds voice or whistle and would follow only him. Jesus said that His sheep will not even hear the voice of a robber, much less follow such a one. The Good Shepherd, Jesus, not only leads His sheep but He laid down His life for His sheep.

In Him we are safe, we are cared for, we are redeemed, known, and loved.

**Prayerfully examine your relationship with God as your Good Shepherd.
How do you know you are hearing His voice and not the voice of a robber?**



A Deeper Look

Isaiah 53:6-7 ♦ Psalm 23 ♦ Hebrews 13:20-21
Lamb of God Shepherd Psalm Prayer for You



Worship in Song

“Hear My Voice” by Lisa Bevill (God Calling)



Scripture Declaration

Good Shepherd! Door of the Sheep!
Giver of Abundant Life! The One Who Gave His Life For His Sheep!
Only You, Jesus.



Gate Key
Resurrection and Life
John 11:25 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.



Fasting

The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them,
and then they will fast in that day.

Mark 2:20



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)

John 11



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 11 reveals a stark contrast between those in relationship with Jesus and those in opposition to Him. The opposition missed out on the blessing of Lazarus being raised from the dead and instead they plotted to kill him because he was made alive again. Such odd thinking. More importantly, their defiance blinded them from understanding the eternal benefits of resurrection for themselves. When the sun rose on the third day after Christ’s crucifixion, instead of hope in Jesus as the resurrection and the life, they clung to their dead religion and false faith. But multitudes then and now rejoice and put their trust in Christ alone!

Pray and give thanks to Jesus for coming to this earth, living a sinless life, and dying for you as the spotless Lamb of God. And don’t forget to shout a Hallelujah that He overcame death the third day!



A Deeper Look

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 ♦ Romans 10:8-11 ♦ Romans 8:9-11
Christ’s Resurrection Believe & Confess Raised From The Dead



Worship in Song

“In Christ Alone (My Hope is Found) by Adrienne Liesching



Scripture Declaration

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;
and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God,
who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20



Gate Key The Table

John 12:36 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“While you have the light, believe in the light,
that you may become sons of light.”



Fasting

Idolatry is the root of every sin.
When we exalt God above every pleasure, need, and desire
we truly experience what it is like to follow wholeheartedly after Christ.
Author Unknown



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 2



Prayer Prompt

John 12 begins with an intimate supper between Jesus, his disciples, and Lazarus’ family. The chapter then transports us to Jesus’ very public triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. Most of the final verses in John 12 are in red letters ... Jesus speaking, teaching, appealing to the hearers to believe in Him! Just as it was in the earliest days when God visited Adam and Eve in the garden in the cool of the evening (Genesis 3:8), He yearns for our presence because He loves us. “Tables” are mentioned at various times in the life of Jesus. Zacchaeus, the hated chief tax collector, repented and was changed because he sat at the table with Jesus. All of us, sinners like Zacchaeus, are invited—even compelled—to Jesus’ table!
Pray for those you know and love who have not yet taken their seat at the table of faith in Christ.



A Deeper Look

Luke 19:1-10 ♦ Luke 14:14-24 ♦ Revelation 19:6-9
Zacchaeus’ Table The Great Banquet Marriage Supper of the Lamb



Worship in Song

“Come To The Table” by Sidewalk Prophets



Scripture Declaration

Lord, Your table will be full with multitudes who come from the east and the west,
from the north and the south! By faith I and those I love will be among them!

Luke 13:22-30



Gate Key
New Commandment
John 13:34b-35 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“...as I have loved you, you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”



Fasting

The devil said to Him [Jesus], “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”
Jesus answered, “It is written: Man shall not live on bread alone.”

Luke 4:3-4



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)

John 13



Prayer Prompt

John 13 highlights the moment during the last supper when Jesus washed the feet of His disciples...all twelve. Foot washing was expected because people wore sandals on dusty roads. The position to wash another’s feet is a humble place, on the knees and lower than the one whose feet were being washed. The disciples were distressed when Jesus knelt before them to wash their feet, but they learned His new commandment:

“... love one another as I have loved you ... by this all will know that you are My disciples.” John 13:34-35

Although you may have a difficult relationship with an individual, confess your short coming, ask Holy Spirit to empower you to love them according to 1 Corinthians 13, and pray for them. Cooperate with the Lord.

Pray about whose feet you need to wash ... not physically ... but who must you forgive, serve, honor?



A Deeper Look

1 John 4:7-21 ♦ Psalm 86:15 ♦ 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a
God is Love Steadfast Love Love Defined



Worship in Song

“My Everything” by Kari Jobe



Scripture Declaration

And now abide faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13



Gate Key
Peace
John 14:27 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you;
not as the world gives do I give to you.
Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.



Fasting

Fasting can bring breakthroughs in the spiritual realm that will never happen in any other way.
It is a means of God’s grace and blessing that should not be neglected any longer.

Richard Foster



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)
John 14



Prayer Prompt

John chapter 14 is the continuation of Jesus’ final teaching to His disciples in the upper room before His crucifixion. His rich instruction continues through chapter 16. In 14, Jesus comforts His disciples, answers questions they ask, and makes the initial introduction of the ministry the Holy Spirit will provide after Jesus’ departure. It seems His intent is to help His disciples live in peace despite the trouble and persecution they would face. Peace. God’s peace. We all need His peace. Sometimes it seems out of reach.

Philippians 4:6-8 teaches us how God’s peace will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
Pray and search what God says in the Bible about *peace*. We all desire God’s peace, a worthy pursuit.



A Deeper Look

Philippians 4:6-8 ♦ Romans 8:31-39 ♦ Isaiah 9:6-7
Think On These Things No Separation Unending Peace



Worship in Song

“Prince of Peace” by Josh Baldwin



Scripture Declaration

Whatever I have learned or received or heard or seen in You, Lord, I will put it into practice.
And the God of peace will be with me.

Philippians 4:9

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Reminded & Refocused

Week 3 Devotion: The Swinging Gate



A Simple Word Study

John 10:9 I am the Gate, the Door.

Door: (Strong's Concordance) <G2374>
A portal or entrance. Used of any opening.
An opportunity of doing something.

Psalm 24:7 Lift up your heads, you gates!

Psalm 100:4 Enter His gates with thanksgiving.

Gates: (Strong's Concordance) <H8179>
Entrance, marketplace, public meeting place.

Proverbs 8:34 Watching daily at the gates.

Gates: (Strong's Concordance) <H1817 > from <H1802>
Something swinging back and forth.
Doors of the heavens.

Proverbs 8:34

This speaks to me of the conversation going back and forth between us and God as we watch daily at His gates and wait by the posts of His doorway. We speak, He listens. Then the gate swings the other way and He speaks, we listen. Back and forth; a mutual love relationship that deepens over the years.

Cathy Smiley



Day 15



**Gate Key
Fruitful**

John 15:16 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in my name He may give you.”



Fasting

Then Elkanah her husband said to her, “Hannah why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? ...” Now Hannah spoke in her heart [to God]... Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.”

1 Samuel 1:1-18



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 15



Prayer Prompt

John 15 is the record of Jesus’ beautiful teaching about abiding in the vine. He provides a visual for His disciples saying that He is the true vine, His Father is the vinedresser, and we are the branches. Abiding in Him means to dwell or be present in His presence. Each of us surely desires to bring forth fruit in our lives that honors God. In our humanity, though, we may feel like we have disappointed God, others, and even ourselves. But with God, nothing is impossible. He parted the Red Sea, put flesh and breath in dry bones, and caused barren women to conceive and give birth. His life flowing in us can and will make us fruitful.

Pray for a fresh vision of being conformed to the image of Christ and fruitful for the Lord.



A Deeper Look

Romans 8:26-30 ♦ Galatians 5:22-26 ♦ Psalm 92:12-15
Holy Spirit Help Fruit of the Spirit Flourish



Worship in Song

“Be Thou My Vision” by Keith and Kristyn Getty



Scripture Declaration

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18



**Gate Key
Overcome**
John 16:33 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“... In the world you will have tribulation;
but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”



Fasting

Fasting helps cultivate that spiritual hunger by forcing the hunger issue on us and making us ask if we really do hunger for God.

John Piper



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)

John 16



Prayer Prompt

John 16 concludes Jesus’ teaching to His disciples before His crucifixion. In verse 1 we read Jesus’ reason for teaching as He did: “these things I have spoken to you that you should not be made to stumble.” Another word for “stumble” is “offended” and it carries the idea of entrapment, enticement, or being tripped up. The disciples would face personal failures, opposition, persecution, and ten of the twelve would be martyred.

When life hits us hard, we may ask faith-bending questions: “Where were You, Lord, when ___?”

John 16 teaches us that we have the Helper, the Holy Spirit, and we will overcome because Jesus did!
Pray about what it means to “overcome.” Talk to God about the steps you must take to overcome.



A Deeper Look

Hebrews 12:1-10 ♦ 1 John 5:4-5 ♦ 2 Timothy 4:6-8
Run With Endurance Faith Overcomes Finish Well



Worship in Song

“Look Up Child” by Lauren Daigle



Scripture Declaration

Lord, You have commanded me: Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.
I can do all things through You, Lord Jesus, Who strengthens me.

1 John 1:9 ♦ Philippians 4:13



**Gate Key
To Be Told**
John 17:3 (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
“And this is eternal life, that they may know You,
the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”



Fasting

And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”
Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil,
and when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

Matthew 3:17 & 4:1-2



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 17



Prayer Prompt

John 17 contains Jesus’ prayer to His Father after His final teaching with His disciples. We have every reason to believe His disciples listened as He prayed. What they heard with their ears is what we read today. Read Jesus’ prayer aloud in your own hearing. In it He prays for Himself, His disciples, and for all believers, both then and now: “*I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word...*”. Although generations apart, we are benefactors of the preaching and witness of the first disciples and apostles. And now we are they; our story is to be told, the good news shared with the next generation. **Pray about who is in your life who needs to hear your salvation story. Ask for an open door to share.**



A Deeper Look

Acts 1:1-8 ♦ Deuteronomy 11:18-21 ♦ Proverbs 4:10-27
Jesus’ Instruction Teach God’s Word Keep Your Heart



Worship in Song

“The Blessing” by Kari Jobe (featuring Cody Carnes)



Scripture Declaration

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16 ♦ 2 Peter 3:9



Gate Key
What is Truth?
John 18:37b (nkjv)

[Jesus said]
You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born,
and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear
witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.



Fasting

Prayer needs fasting for its full growth.
Prayers is the one hand with which we grasp the invisible.
Fasting is the other hand, the one with which we let go of the visible.
Andrew Murray



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)
John 18



Prayer Prompt

John 18 and 19 are difficult chapters to read. Contained in their verses is the record of Jesus’ final persecution and death. In John 18, we read of Jesus’ arrest, His protection of His disciples, Peter’s denial, and Pilate’s interaction with Jesus. During that interaction, Pilate asked the question, “What is truth?” Ironically, before him stood “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Asking the question and seeking the answer are two vastly different things. “What is truth?” is not a question to be winked at or dismissed. The answer is not illusive. God promises in His Word that if we search for the answer, we will not be disappointed. In addition our hope and joy and assurance will increase! Let us search. Our forever depends on it. **Pray; ask the Holy Spirit to lead you more deeply into insights about God and His ways, the truth.**



A Deeper Look

Jeremiah 29:11-13 ♦ Ephesians 1:13-23 ♦ Psalm 25:5
Gods Plans-Your Participation The Hope of Your Calling Be Led



Worship in Song

“The Jesus Way” by Phil Wickham



Scripture Declaration

The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.
The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth.

Psalm 119:160 ♦ Psalm 145:18



Day 19



Gate Key Passover Lamb

John 19:17-18 (nkjv)

And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.



Fasting

For godliness with contentment is great gain.
For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.
And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.
1 Timothy 6:6-8



The Gospel of John

(Read or Listen)

John 19



Prayer Prompt

John 19. Death is hard. Grief can lock us into a cycle of internal stress. However, the torturous flogging and crucifixion of the sinless Christ...well, we sigh deep and want to turn away. And yet we can and should honor Jesus' death by remembering how He fulfilled His Father's will. In the Old Testament, we read the story of the Passover; this story brings clarity to Jesus' crucifixion. As the tenth and final plague strikes Egypt and the firstborn of each household dies, Israel's children are safe behind their doors that had been marked with the blood of a spotless, innocent lamb. Death "passes over" them. Today, by faith, we apply Jesus' blood to the doorposts of our life. He, God's only Son, died for our sins in our place so we can live forever in His place.

Prayerfully linger in God's presence. Take holy communion. Read Luke 22:14-20.



A Deeper Look

Exodus 12:1-14 ♦ Isaiah 53 ♦ Colossians 1:19-23
The First Passover *Passover Lamb* *Reconciled to God*



Worship in Song

"Worthy Is The Lamb" by Hillsong



Scripture Declaration

You, Jesus, are the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world.
Indeed, Christ our Passover, was sacrificed for us.
With Your blood You purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation!

John 1:29 ♦ 1 Corinthians 5:7b ♦ Revelation 5:9-14



Day 20



Gate Key
Image Bearers
John 20:1 (nkjv)

Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.



Fasting

Fasting reminds us that our source of life is found only in God. Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

Jeremy Hunt ♦ Matthew 4:4



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)
John 20



Prayer Prompt

John 20! Jesus' resurrection! This chapter gives us the glorious news that Christ did not remain dead in a tomb! Death is the enemy of all humanity. In the second chapter of the Bible, the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Life are introduced. The tree offered God's highest desire for us who are created in His image...life forevermore with Him! Instead, Adam and Eve chose to disobey and death entered the world. Now, Jesus' resurrection puts on display God's mighty power, confirms Christ's claim that He is Messiah, and fulfills God's plan to redeem us. We have borne the image of the man of dust (Adam.) Because of Jesus' resurrection we are invited to become a new creation and bear the image of the heavenly Man, Christ! (1 Corinthians 15:49)

Pray and praise God that you can live Easter morning everyday of your life!
Ask Jesus to help you live as a new creation in Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17)



A Deeper Look

1 Corinthians 15:20-26 ♦ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ♦ Revelation 22
Defeated Enemy *Reunited* *Come Lord Jesus!*



Worship in Song

"He's Alive" by Don Francisco



Scripture Declaration

Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?
But thanks be to God Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!
I have been raised with Christ Jesus into new life!

1 Corinthians 15:55 & 57



Gate Key
Reminded & Refocused
John 21:10-12a (nkjv)

Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish which you have just caught. Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, “Come and eat breakfast...”.



Fasting

What’s important in all this is that if you keep a holy day, keep it for God’s sake; if you eat meat, eat it to the glory of God and thank God for prime rib; if you’re a vegetarian, eat vegetables to the glory of God and thank God for broccoli. None of us are permitted to insist on our own way in these matters.

Romans 14:6-7 (The Message Version, Paraphrased)



The Gospel of John
(Read or Listen)

John 21



Prayer Prompt

John 21 is the final chapter in the Gospel of John, It is the record of the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead. In this chapter, Peter and six other disciples seem uncertain about their futures, so they return to what they’ve known: fishing. From the shoreline they hear a voice:

“*Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.*” And find some fish, they did!

Their net was so full they could not draw it in! This was not the first time they experienced a catch too large to bring to shore. When Peter was initially called to follow Jesus three and a half years earlier, he was told he would become a “fisher of men.” Now, on the post-resurrection shoreline, this calling was resurrected in the heart of Peter. He was reminded and refocused beyond a job to God’s ministry!

Pray about your passion, gifts and talents. Lord God, resurrect in each of us Your will to conform us to Your image and to fulfill through us Your individually designed purpose. Amen! Romans 8:28-31



A Deeper Look

Luke 5:1-11 ♦ Ephesians 2:4-10 ♦ 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Called to Follow Created for Good Works New Creation in Christ



Worship in Song

“When the Saints” by Sara Groves



Scripture Declaration

You, Eternal God, have shown me, a mortal human, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of me?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with my God.

Micah 6:8

The Gate of the Year



**We pray that in your 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer,
that a gate has opened more widely for you into the life and love Jesus has for you.
May you press into this great adventure of knowing your Creator.
Amen**

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