

5 Day Prayer and Fasting Devotional - Pathway to Repentance

Over these next 5 days, we will be going on a journey to push us closer to Christ. This will be a focus on us, at first, and then outward towards the end as we reach out to those to restore broken relationships.

As we navigate through this journey we call life, we often get locked in our ways of sticking to our comforts and sins that draw us away from Christ. Many of us are followers of Christ, yet we continue to follow at a distance as we only dip a toe in the pool of His Grace. Or we rely too heavily upon His Grace and allow ourselves to remain in the same sinful state or falling back into it again and again.

Our goal is to identify these strongholds in our lives, to turn from them, and to seek Christ at a deeper level. It's from that relationship with Christ that our overflow will be of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) and we will see restored relationships, growth in our faith, and so much more.

To get the most out of this, I suggest that you consider fasting (consult your doctors if you have questions/concerns). You see, when we remove things from our lives that are distracting, it helps us to focus on Christ. Take a look at our website above for ideas on how you could fast.

Looking forward to these next 5 days with you!
In His Love,
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Day 1: Godly Sorrow - Recognizing the Need for Change

As we start out on this day and over the next 5 days, we will be pointing ourselves towards Christ and working our way through true repentance. This is an aspect of our lives that can truly be a hang up for each and every one of us .. whether it's going back to the vices (drinking, drugs, food, etc, etc) that we've been using to avoid a closer relationship to Christ. If it's not substances, maybe it's resentment, anger, broken relationships.

Our goal over these 5 Days would be to grow closer to Christ through identifying areas in our lives that are strongholds and keeping us from further growing our roots down into Him.

Take a look at this scripture and start reflecting on the area in your life that you are needing to address to change:

- **Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 7:10-11 "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly grief produces death. 11 See what this godly grief has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done!"
- **Questions:** What does "godly grief" mean to you? How does it differ from simply feeling upset or ashamed? When have you experienced godly sorrow in your life?
- **Application:** Spend time in quiet reflection and prayer. Ask God to reveal areas in your life where godly sorrow might be needed for true repentance. Journal your thoughts and feelings.

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Day 2: Shame & Guilt - Facing the Burden

As Christians, our guilt, in its deepest sense, is dealt with entirely when we are made right with God through trust in Jesus. This is what the Bible calls justification. It is a quick and decisive event that happens at conversion. But the process of applying the truth of the gospel to our lives—what the Bible calls sanctification—is a lifelong process and can be quite messy.

Shame will haunt us long after we deal with our guilt. But we cannot give it power in our lives. We must confront both our guilt and shame with the gospel of grace.

We must counter the voice of shame with the gospel reminder that we're whole, we're new, we're loved, we're forgiven, and we're adopted. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:38–39)

- **Scripture:** Psalm 38:4-5 "For my iniquities overwhelm me; they weigh heavily on me. My guilt has become a crushing burden too heavy to bear."
- **Questions:** How do shame and guilt manifest in your life? How do they impact your relationships with yourself and others? Have you ever used shame or guilt to manipulate or control others?
- **Application:** Confess to God any shame or guilt you carry. Seek forgiveness and ask for the strength to release these burdens. Practice self-compassion and remember that God's grace is greater than your mistakes.

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Day 3: Repentance - Turning Away from Sin

On Day 1, we identified the sorrow and the need for change .. in Day 2, we addressed the shame and guilt .. and today, we are tackling repentance. True repentance of turning away, an about face, from our sin(s) and going towards Christ to grow our roots deep down in Him.

Today, is a marked point in our lives. It's time to put the stake in the ground .. to live for Him. Let's tackle this head on – whether your sin is being untruthful, stealing, consuming things we shouldn't, or whatever it is in your life – let's give them fully to Christ and chase Him fully.

- **Scripture:** Luke 15:7-10 "Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. 8 "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins, and one of them is lost. Doesn't she light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she finds it, she rejoices and calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost coin!' 10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents."
- **Questions:** What does true repentance look like? It is not just saying sorry as it does require a change? What areas of your life need repentance?
- **Application:** Identify concrete steps you can take to demonstrate your commitment to change. Write down your commitment and revisit it daily. Ask God for strength and guidance in your journey of repentance.

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Day 4: Confession - Seeking Forgiveness and Healing

Today, is a continuation of the entire process. This is the confession part of the equation. We need others to hold us accountable for our turning towards Christ and away from our sins for the healing.

- **Scripture:** James 5:16 "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."
- **Questions:** Who can you share your confession with in a safe and supportive space? How can confession contribute to healing and growth?

- **Application:** Write a letter of confession to God, expressing your deepest regrets and seeking forgiveness. Consider sharing your confession with a trusted friend, therapist, or spiritual leader. Pray for the courage to be vulnerable and the grace to receive forgiveness.

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Day 5: Reconciliation - Restoring Broken Relationships

As we finish off this 5th day, this is where the fruit is seen from the steps that we are taking from the earlier days. You see, our sin, shame, guilt, and burdens of those often hurt those that are closest to us. Or, on the flip side, those that are struggling in the same way that we have been are often those that we treat the worst as if we are judging them for their sins to be more than ours.

Today's a great step for us all to take – to restore any broken relationships that we have in our lives that we have simply written off the other. We need to make the effort to restore the relationship and it's on the other person as to if they are ready. You'll need to be actively praying for them to be open and ready for the conversation and that God would lead it so that He would be honored in it.

Our job is to make the effort, the results are on God and the others.

- **Scripture:** Matthew 5:23-24 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother or sister; then come and offer your gift."
- **Questions:** Who in your life needs your forgiveness? Who needs your apology or effort to restore trust? How can you actively demonstrate reconciliation?
- **Application:** Identify relationships that need healing. Reflect on your role in the conflict and write a letter expressing your desire for reconciliation. Seek opportunities to actively show forgiveness and rebuild trust. Pray for the courage to take those steps and for the restoration of broken relationships.