

WEEK THREE

prayers OF hope

monday - PRAY FOR ENDURANCE

We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love
romans 5: 3-5

I'm going to be honest. When we first started writing these prayer guides, I didn't think we'd need to make a "week 3"...but here we are. Most of us can grit our teeth and get through difficult things for short periods of time; however, as we settle in to what appears to be more of a marathon than a sprint, how can we continue to stay strengthened, hopeful, and not discouraged? The fact of the matter is that we will not be able to do this on our own strength. We are going to need renewed energy, hope, and strength each day that can only come from God Himself. But BE ENCOURAGED. He won't let us down. By His power, we CAN do this!

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for renewed strength to run the race ahead. Ask God for His supernatural strength and endurance. Allow yourself to take things day by day. Pray that God would allow this situation to develop strength of character in you during this season.

tuesday - PRAY FOR LEADERS

So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.
colossians 1: 9-10

We are in uncharted waters. No one has lead through a global pandemic before and our leaders have been asked to make incredibly difficult decisions. I don't envy them. These decisions they are facing affect so many people's lives and we hope they are not making them lightly. More than ever before, our leaders need wisdom and understanding, the type that can only come from God himself. Let's take some time today to pray for our leaders: our health leaders, our government leaders, our spiritual leaders. Pray that they would experience a personal revival in their lives as well as lead with wisdom, grace, and humility.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for our leaders. Here are a few suggestions.

Pray for our local pastors.

Pray for our government leaders: Governor Gavin Newsom, President Donald Trump, as well as our senators and men and women of congress.

Pray for our local leaders: Dr. Penny Borenstein (SLO County Health Officer), Wade Horton (SLO Emergency Services Director)

wednesday - PRAY FOR THE DISAPPOINTED

"But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you. I praise God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me?...You keep track of my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.

psalm 56: 3-4, 8

No matter what our circumstances, I think we can all confidently say that March/April 2020 has not turned out how we expected it to; how we had planned it. All our lives have been interrupted and we are all facing disappointments and lowered expectations. Canceled parties, birthdays in isolation, prom, graduation, vacations: all uncertain. How about instead of letting our disappointments sit and soak in our souls, let's give them over to the Lord. He is big enough to shoulder our sorrows. It's OK to be disappointed and grieve the loss of expectations during this season, while also agreeing we are doing what is best. God is close to the brokenhearted and He longs for you to bring your tears to Him.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Allow yourself to feel the disappointment today. Pour out your heart to God and allow Him to comfort you. Pray for seniors (specifically seniors in high school and college). Seniors are facing disappointment after disappointment as their last year is not what they've been looking forward to for years. If you know a senior, or someone dealing with disappointment, send them a card of encouragement.

thursday - PRAY FOR REST

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

matthew 11: 28-30

I'm not sure what the circumstances of your lives in quarantine look like. Maybe you find yourself with a ton of extra time on your hands with nowhere to go. Or maybe you have young children, or work in an essential service and life seems busier and more chaotic than ever before. Wherever you find yourself, may we find rest for our souls and use this time wisely. May we intentionally get to a quiet place and enter into life-giving practices. May we allow God to whisper to our hearts during this time of "quiet". May God refresh in us His love, His power, and His purposes for us.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Be still. Despite a schedule that seems all over the place, stay committed to practicing the Sabbath. Participate in an activity that revives your soul and gives you life, even if you feel like you don't have time for it.

friday - PRAY FOR FREEDOM

But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

2 corinthians 3: 16-18

It might seem ironic to pray for freedom during a season where we are giving up some of our freedoms to protect others. We might even feel a bit trapped. However, we believe God is going to use this time to break some longstanding strongholds in people's lives. Let's pray for breakthrough together! Many of the "distractions" have already been stripped away (things like sports, busyness, parties, etc.) And while none of those things are necessarily bad, may we find freedom in realizing that we never really "needed" them in the first place. May we allow this newfound freedom to change us more and more into His glorious image.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for breakthrough. If you know someone who struggles with an addiction, pray for them specifically. Spend some time asking God to point out areas of your life that have taken up too much residence in your heart and ask Him to give you freedom from those things.

saturday - PRAY WITH THANKSGIVING

Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy. Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him
and praise his name.
For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness
continues to each generation.
psalm 100: 1-5

During this time, it can be easy to let disappointment and fear creep in and start to build up walls around our heart. The antidote to this is thanksgiving! Despite our current circumstances, God is still good and He is bringing goodness out of even these circumstances. Today, let's spend some time thanking God for the ways He has shown up in our lives in the past. Thank Him for how He is working even now. Thank Him for how He is going to show up in the future...because, after all, this too shall pass.

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Make a list of things you are thankful for. Post a photo of a blessing in your life on social media.
Spend some time looking for the good. If you are thankful for a person, let them know.
Listen to the song, "Goodness of God" by Bethel Music and spend time praising God for the ways His goodness has run after you in your life.

***sunday* - PRAY FOR THE VULNERABLE**

"Give justice to the poor and the orphan;
uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute.
Rescue the poor and helpless;
deliver them from the grasp of evil people.
psalm 82: 3-4

This virus and the consequences of it have put those who were already vulnerable in the situation of being even more exposed. Not just the elderly or those with pre-existing health conditions...but those who were already struggling and now find themselves even more susceptible. My heart breaks for the children who have had their safe places of school stripped away from them and may find themselves spending all their time in an unhealthy household. God weeps for those who have lost their job, who are fearful of how they will put food on their tables. Pray for the homeless population who have no home to actually "shelter in home". While these situations can seem overwhelming to us, they are not too big for our God. He delights in protecting the vulnerable. He turns graves into gardens and He can show up even in these situations!

TODAY'S ACTION STEPS

Pray for God's supernatural protection over those who are most vulnerable. Pray for those with health concerns. Pray for miracles: financial miracles, spiritual miracles, relational miracles. If you know someone who is vulnerable, reach out and point them in the direction of resources. New Life Pismo has a drive-up food pantry to help those experiencing food insecurity.